



Mixed Movements

Overview of key figures and trends

520k

People entered Panama through the Darien province in 2023 (111k only in Q4).



63% VENEZUELAN
11% ECUADORIAN
9% HAITIAN
5% CHINESE
Main nationalities in the Darien province in 2023.



Number of irregular entries in the Darien province in 2023 is the **HIGHEST IN HISTORY**



111k

Individuals crossed the Darien in the last quarter of the year, 14% more than the same period in 2022.

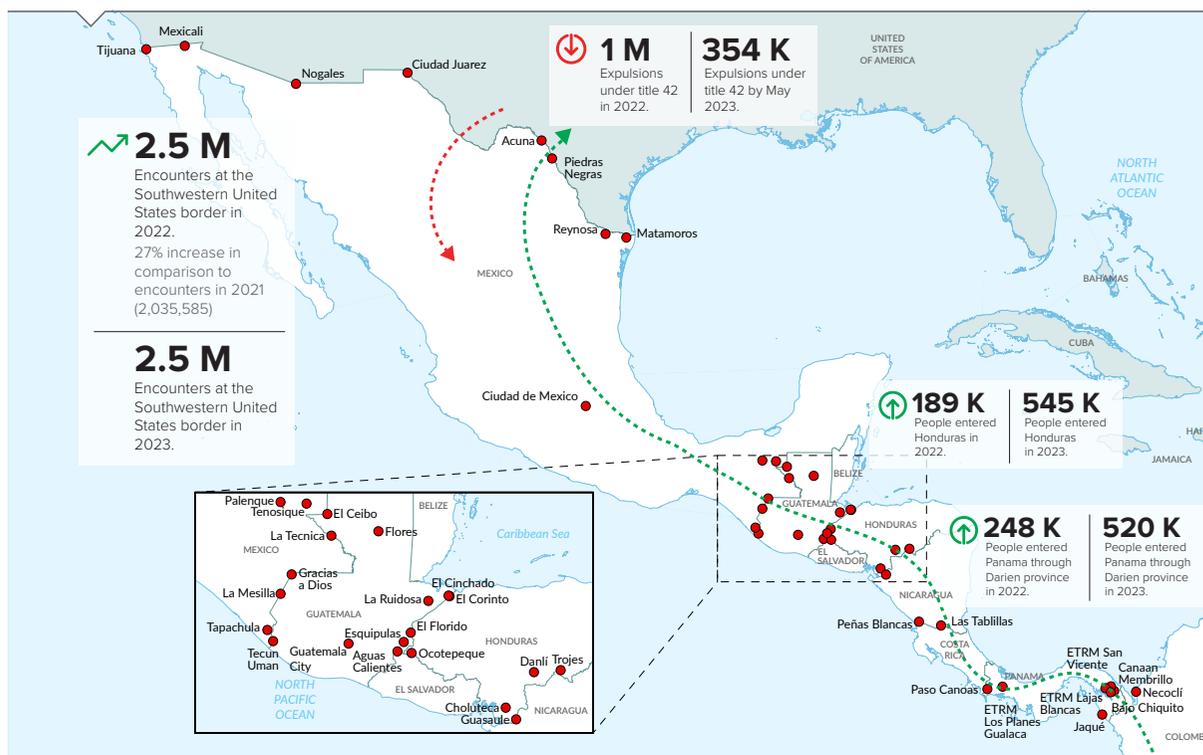
+144k

Individuals have applied for asylum in Mexico in 2023.



270k

Monthly encounters recorded at the Southwest border of the United States in September 2023. Highest number recorded in 2023.



In 2023, Central America and Mexico experienced an unprecedented surge in human mobility, marked by a significant increase in the number of individuals engaged in mixed movements across Central and North America. A multifaceted interplay of factors, encompassing violence, insecurity, human rights violations, poverty, inequality, and the detrimental impacts of climate change and disasters, has led to the intensification of cross-border movements. Additionally, the spread of misinformation and expectations on changes in US policies regarding territorial access post the lifting of Title 42, coupled with the perception of improved labor opportunities, has further contributed to the rising influx of individuals across the region. Despite increasing restrictions and border controls, thousands of individuals from various nationalities embarked on perilous journeys, often moving irregularly, or seeking resorting to the services of smuggling networks. This resulted in heightened risks, including fatalities, disappearances, extortions, sexual violence, and other severe human rights violations, as evidenced by the alarming number of 862 individuals reported missing.

The upsurge in mixed movements not only exposed refugees and migrants to severe dangers but also placed significant pressure on reception arrangements that were ill-prepared to cope with the increasing demand for essential services such as shelter, food, and healthcare. The dire situation at border crossings and reception facilities, struggling to cater to these needs, highlights the urgent need for a comprehensive and coordinated response to address the complex challenges of these mixed flows and ensure the safety and well-being of individuals in mobility.

Despite a seasonal decline in arrivals registered in the Darien during the final quarter of 2023, which was, however, 14% higher compared to the same period in 2022, the year witnessed a staggering total of 520,085 arrivals, indicating a 110% increase from the previous year. The majority of these individuals, constituting 63%, originated from the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, while Ecuadorians accounted for 11%, and Haitians made up 9%.

Note: This map is for illustration purposes only. The boundaries and names shown, and the designations used on this map do not imply official endorsement or acceptance by the UN.

Sources: [Instituto Nacional de Migración - Honduras, 2023](#), SENAFRONT: Panama, UNHCR, United States (U.S.) [Customs and Border Protection](#) (U.S.) Department of Homeland Security.



Mixed Movements

Overview of key figures and trends

The influx of arrivals from outside the continent in the Darien also continued to increase throughout the year, comprising 10% of all nationalities. Noteworthy among these were individuals from India, Afghanistan, and China, the latter constituting the most significant in number. Of the total individuals crossing the Darien, 5% originated from Asian countries, and another 5% from African countries.

In Honduras, there has been as well a significant increase in irregular movements, with official figures reporting 545,043 entries in 2023, marking a 189% surge from the previous year. This uptick could be attributed to the migration amnesty implemented in early August 2022, which led to an increased registration rate at INM (National Migration Institute) offices, as it mitigated concerns over fines. Additionally, in response to the growing demand, the INM expanded its operational capacity. The primary nationalities are Venezuelans (42%), Cubans (16%), Haitians (15%), and Ecuadorians (8%). Significantly, specific nationalities, particularly Cubans, Haitians, and certain African groups, often opt to bypass the Darien crossing, choosing instead to enter via air to bordering countries and then proceed northward.

In Guatemala, during 2023, Venezuelans and Hondurans were the primary nationalities involved in mixed flows, followed by a smaller number of Ecuadorians and Nicaraguans, according to various reports.

The primary route for individuals arriving from the Darien and Nicaragua initiates at Esquipulas on the southern border, with Tecun Uman serving as the exit point. Hondurans predominantly utilize the route through El Cinchado (Izabal), exiting through La Técnica or, increasingly, El Ceibo due to pronounced security concerns in La Técnica. In contrast to other countries, protection monitoring reports reveal that Guatemala experiences an exceptionally high incidence of protection-related issues, particularly theft and extortion by public officials.

In Mexico, authorities reported more than 686,000 incidents involving individuals in an irregular situation. The predominant nationalities are Venezuelans (28%), Hondurans (15%), Guatemalans (10%), Ecuadorians (9%), and Haitians (6%). Compared to 2022, the number of incidents has risen by 58%. In terms of asylum applications, over 144,000 new claims were registered in 2023, marking a 131% increase from the same period in 2022. The leading nationalities among asylum seekers in Mexico are Haitians (33%), Hondurans (27%), and Cubans (11%).

Data gathered from various monitoring initiatives in the region distinctly indicates that the primary objective for the majority of individuals in mixed movements is to reach the United States, although some have intentions to settle in Mexico. As of December 2023, there were over 2.5 million reported encounters at the U.S. Southwest land border. The most prevalent nationalities among these encounters are Mexicans (28%), Venezuelans (14%), Guatemalans (10%), and Hondurans (9%). In 2023, Notably, the number of Venezuelans encounters in 2023 increased by 115% in comparison to 2022.

Ensuring access to updated and accurate information for individuals involved in mixed movements is a continuous priority. This includes information on the availability of essential services, such as secure shelter spaces along the route, access to national asylum processes, eligibility for resettlement and other pathways, including the U.S. Parole Program, and the CBP One App. Without reliable information, individuals are left vulnerable to deception, more susceptible to accepting offers from smugglers, and at a higher risk of experiencing extortion, fraud, robbery, and abuse.



© UNHCR/Ilaria Rapido Ragazzino

Buduka fled Nigeria with his wife, his daughter, and his son. After several flights from his hometown to Tokyo, Istanbul and Caracas, they walked through the Darien province five days to reach Panama: "I never expected to see all the dangers and risks in the Darien, climbing the mountains, crossing the waterways".

When asked about the reason why he crossed Darien, he replied: "If you had to choose, would you choose death or would you choose danger?". Once in the country, he and his family sought asylum: "I needed to come to Panama because I feel it is safe here.

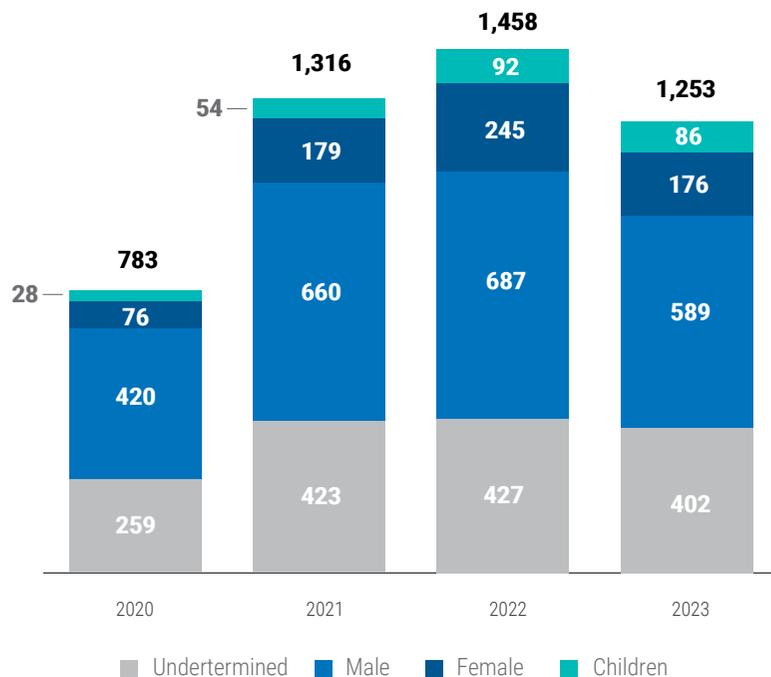
Now I want my children to go to school, get a quality education and live a good life". His daughter wants to be a pilot, and his son a football player. "I will support them, no matter what they choose to be".



Missing migrants in the Americas

- Since IOM began monitoring deaths and disappearances of migrants and people on the move, between 2014 until 31 December 2023, 9,072* cases have been recorded in the region. Actual figures may be a lot higher as not all deaths are recorded ([MMP, 2023](#)).
- From the second week of November through the last week of December, MMP investigated and followed up on multiple mass crossings of migrants on the Rio Grande, particularly in Piedras Negras, Coahuila and Eagle Pass, Texas where we recorded at least 15 migrant drownings as a result of these incidents ([Idem](#)).

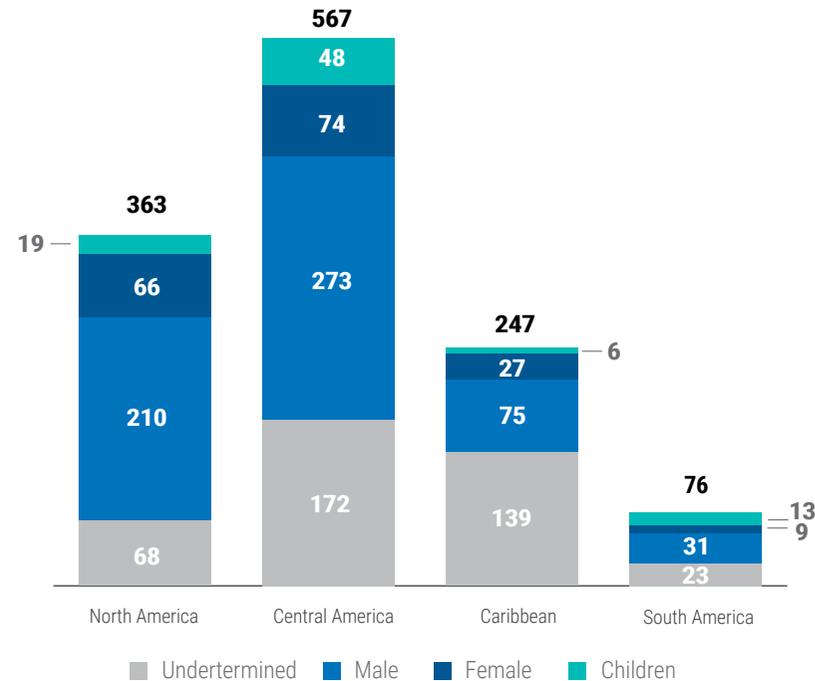
Total of missing people on the move recorded in the Americas by sex and age group (2020 - 2023)



Source: [Missing Migrants Project](#), 2023.

*As of December 2023. The number of missing migrants in 2023 has been updated retroactively and is available at missingmigrants.iom.int

Total of missing people on the move recorded in the Americas by subregion, sex and age group, 2023



Source: [Missing Migrants Project](#), 2023.



Mixed Movements Colombia

 **372 k**
Exits from Necocli recorded by Maritime companies in 2023.

 **1,020**
Daily average exits from Necocli recorded by Maritime companies in 2023.

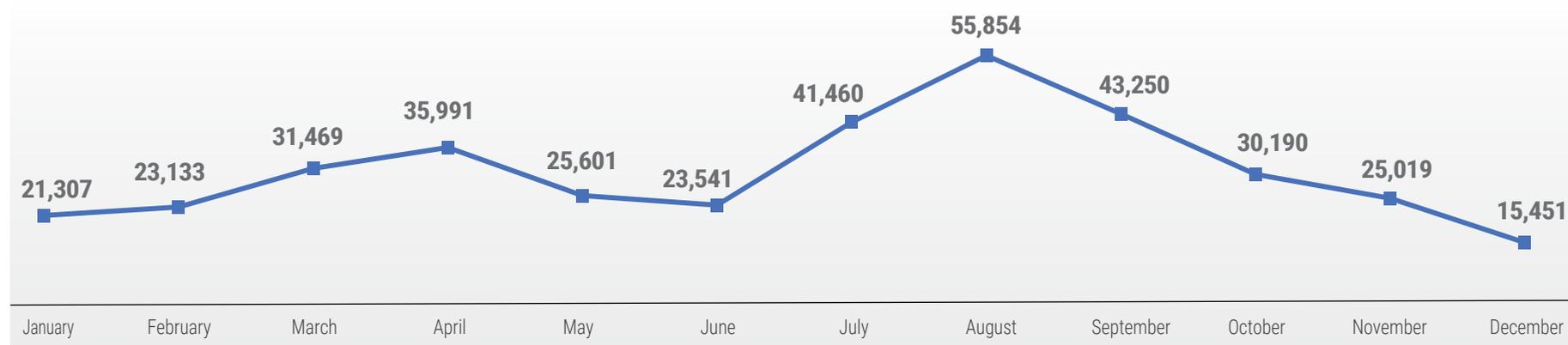
 **50%**
Decrease in exits from Necocli in the fourth quarter compared to third quarter of 2023.

 **VENEZUELAN
ECUADORIAN
HAITIAN
CHINESE**
Most important nationalities using maritime companies in 2023.

Based on data provided by 55,873 refugees and migrants surveyed during the registration process in accommodation services and Points of Attention and Orientation (PAO), between October and December 2023, 71% expressed the intention to live in Colombia, (mainly in Antioquia, Bogotá D.C. and Norte de Santander). 14% indicated their willingness to return to Venezuela, while another 14% were in transit to a third country. 1% engaged in a pendular movement between Colombia and Venezuela.

Monthly flows of all nationalities recorded by maritime companies in Necoclí 2023

1 January 2023 – 31 December 2023



Source: [GIFMM-R4V, 2023](#)



Mixed Movements Colombia - Health

28,115

Individuals accessed health services offered by international cooperation in 2023.

The most frequent provision of services were in the municipalities of Necoclí and Apartadó.

144

Cases managed in the last two months of 2023

with the case management tool promoted by PAHO.

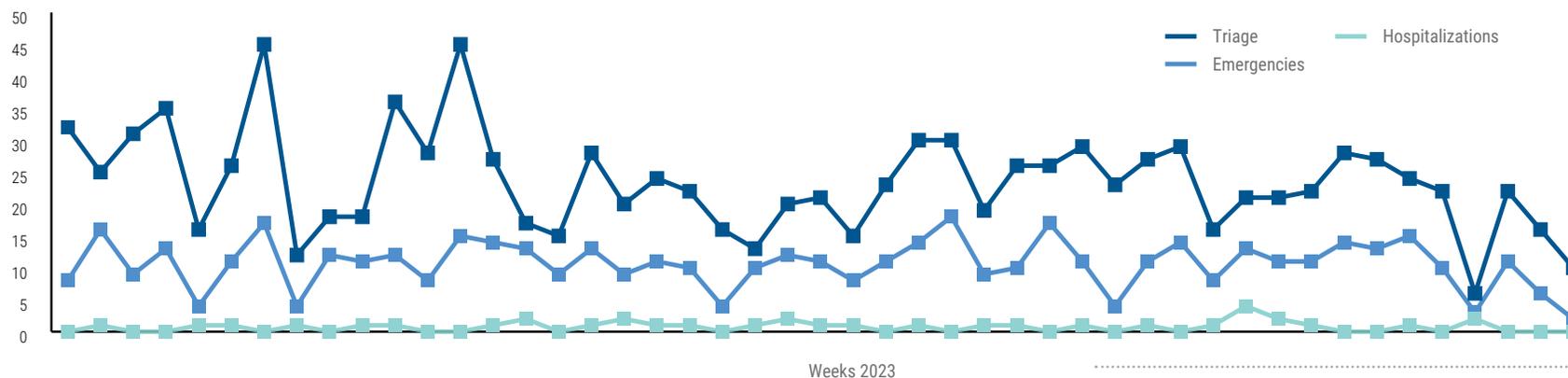
97%

Prenatal check-ups provided to Venezuelan refugee and migrant women.

**MEDICINES
SPECIALIZED TESTS
PSYCHOSOCIAL SUPPORT**

were the services that require the most management.

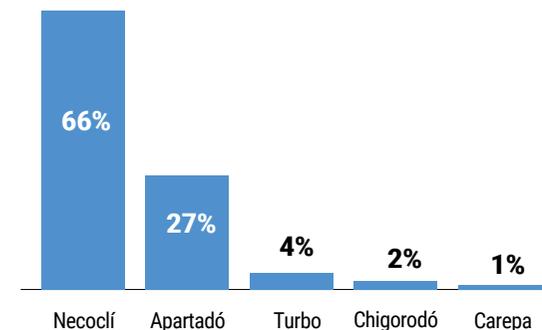
Access to health care for refugees and migrants by week in 2023



The main cause of admission to the health service was triage (1,984 in total), followed by emergencies (531 in total) and finally hospitalizations (240 in total). Graph 1 shows the fluctuation of these services for refugee and migrant population by week in the year 2023. It is important to note that 877 referrals to a higher level of care were derived from these services.

The main causes of hospitalization were mainly women related to childbirth and different types of infections, which include respiratory tract disorders, skin disorders, specific and nonspecific febrile syndromes.

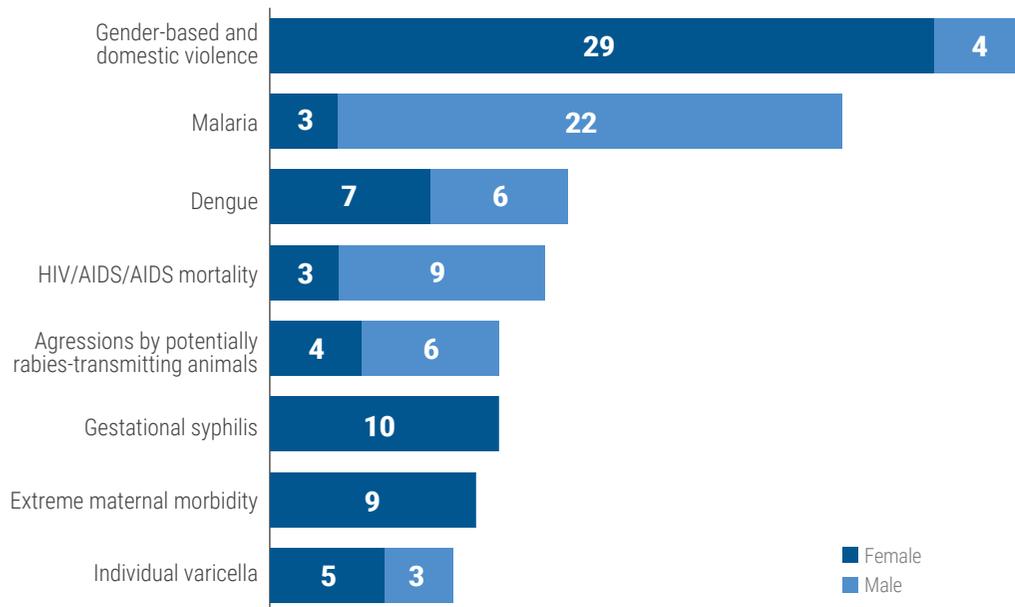
Access to health care by municipality | 2023





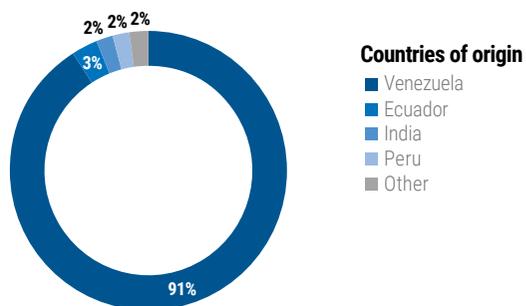
Mixed Movements Colombia - Health

Classification of events by sex in 2023

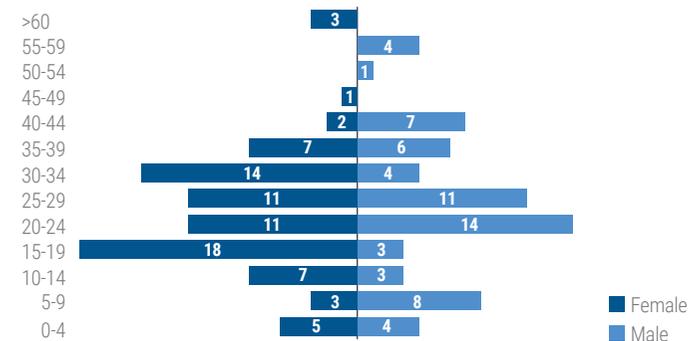


A total of 147 events of public health concern were identified in 2023 for the refugee and migrant population of the Urabá subregion.

Dengue and malaria are the most frequent outbreak events, as well as HIV and gestational syphilis, which should be monitored both in the migrant population and in host communities.



Distribution of events by sex and age



Source: Sivigila Antioquia. Epidemiological Week 52 of 2023.



Mixed Movements Panama – Darien

520,085

People entered irregularly through the Darien Province in 2023.



63% VENEZUELAN
11% ECUADORIAN
9% HAITIAN
5% CHINESE

Main nationalities in 2023 in the Darien.

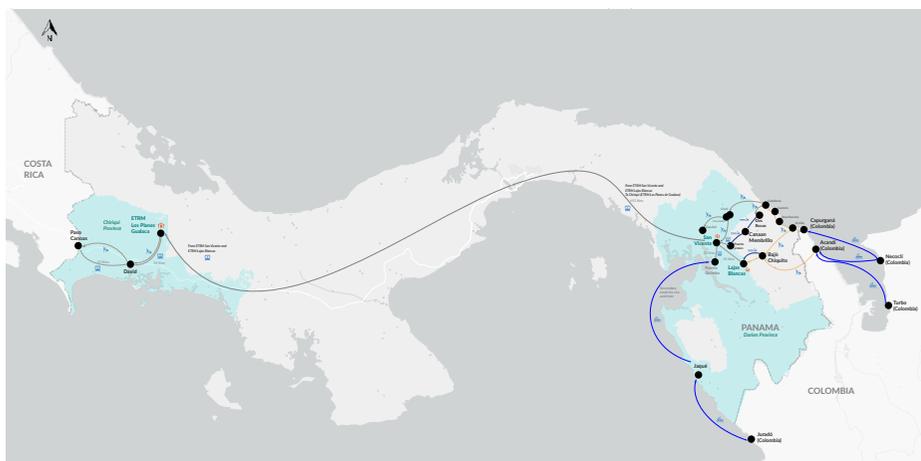


81,946

Irregular entries in the Darien Province registered in August, representing the highest number in 2023.

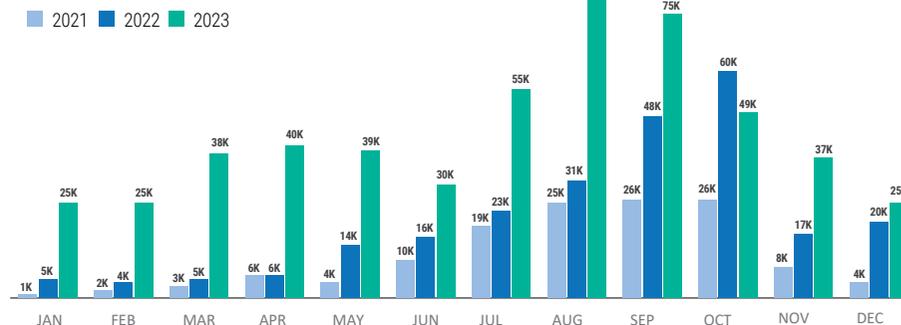
× 2 times

more irregular entries in the Darien in 2023, compared to 2022.

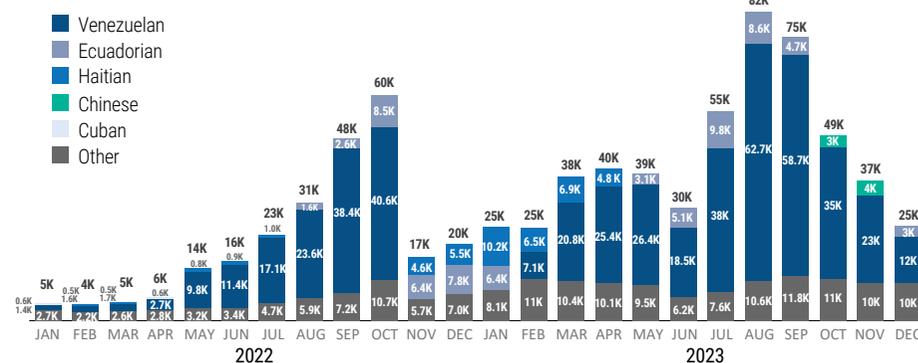


Source: [UNHCR, 2023](#).

Irregular entries Darien | 2021 - 2023



Irregular entries by nationalities | 2022 - 2023



Irregular entries by age groups | 2022 - 2023



Source: [Migraciones Panama](#).



Mixed Movements Panama – Darien



328

Individuals were interviewed by UNHCR between October and December 2023, entering Panama from Colombia in the Darien Province (Migration Reception Centers Lajas Blancas, San Vicente and Paso Canoas).



56%

Men



44%

Women



33

Average age



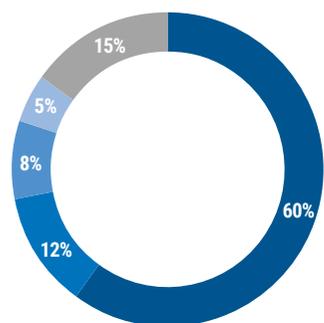
22

Different nationalities interviewed



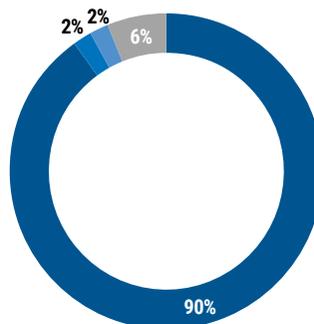
41%

Reported to have experienced protection incidents during their journey through the jungle.



Countries of origin

- Venezuela
- Colombia
- Ecuador
- Haiti
- Other



Countries of intended destination

- United States
- Mexico
- Canada
- Other

Food security



80%

of people faced lack of food and adopted severe coping strategies.

39% have regularly skipped meals and 41% spent whole days without eating.

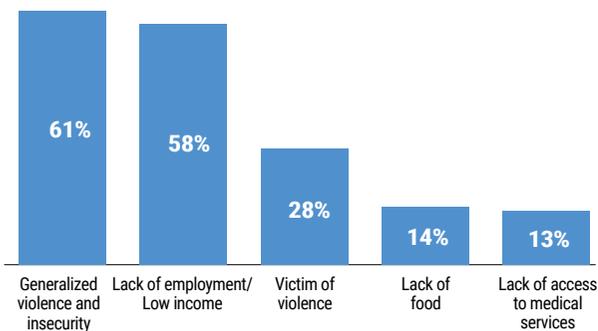


53%

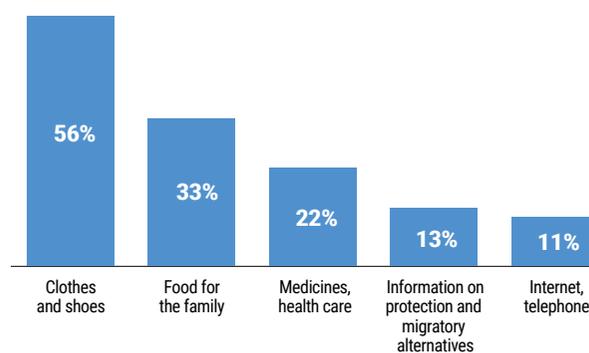
Have an insufficient food consumption.

46% consumed one meal only and 7% none the day before the interview.

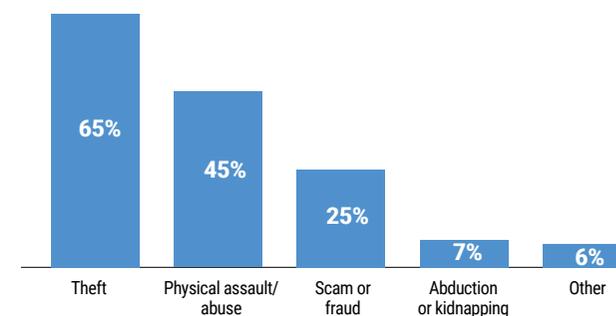
Main reasons to leave country of origin (More than one option could be selected)



Main needs now and to continue the journey (More than one option could be selected)



Main protection incidents in the Darien (More than one option could be selected)





Mixed Movements Panama – Darien & Chiriqui



643

Individuals were interviewed at temporary migratory reception stations Darien and Chiriqui by OIM, between October and December 2023.



51%
Men



49%
Women

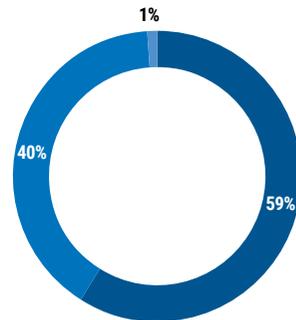


82% VENEZUELAN
11% COLOMBIAN
4% ECUADORIAN
3% HAITIAN

Main nationalities interviewed



31
Average age



Intention to return to country of origin

- Yes
- No
- Prefer not to answer

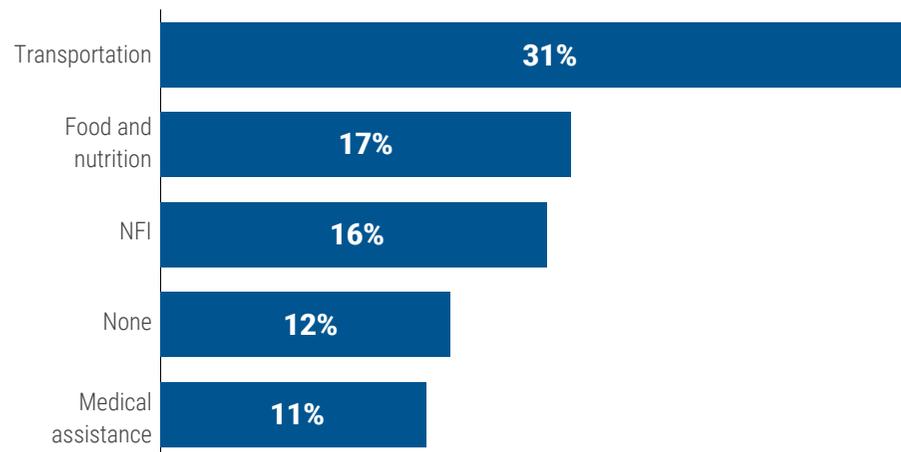


77%
of interviewed individuals have completed secondary education.

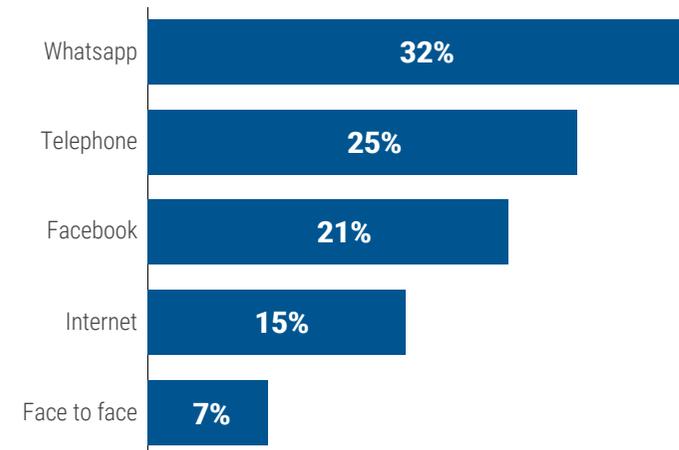


96%
of individuals mentioned the United States of America as their primary destination.

Main needs



Information channels used by refugees and migrants





Mixed Movements Costa Rica

2,986

Individuals interviewed by OIM between October and December 2023.

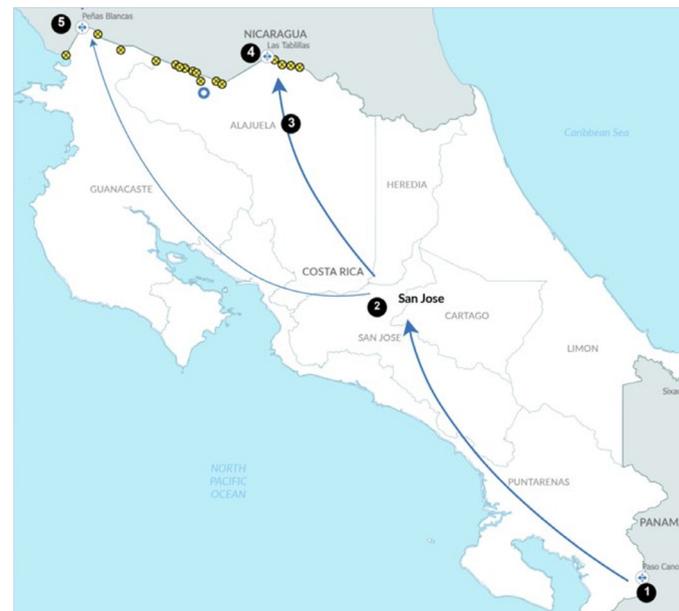


84% VENEZUELAN
6% COLOMBIAN
4% ECUADORIAN
3% HAITIAN

Main nationalities interviewed.

46%
Women

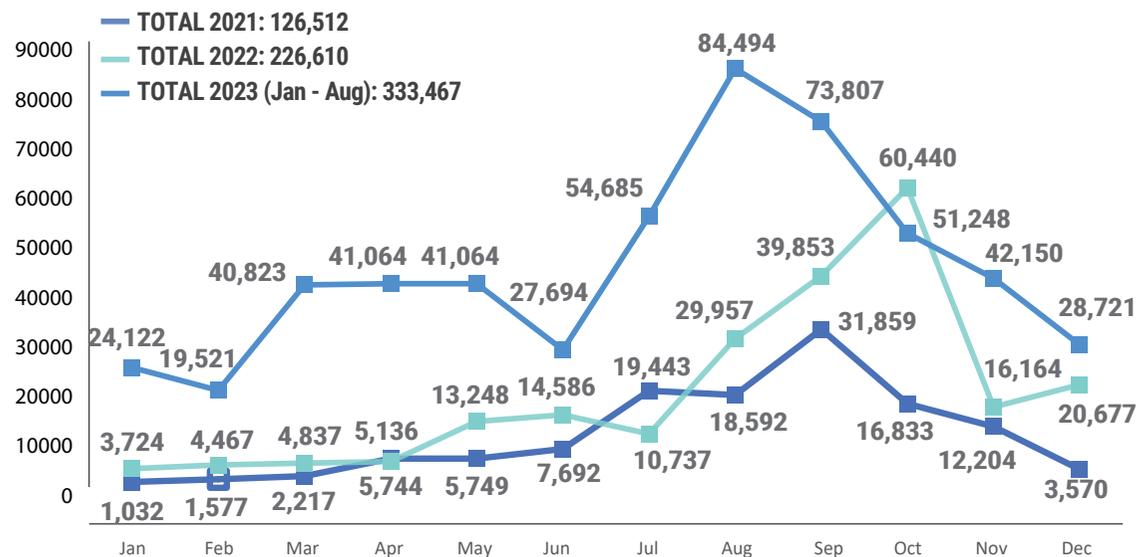
54%
Men



Note: This map is for illustration purposes only. The boundaries and names shown, and the designations used on this map do not imply official endorsement or acceptance by the UN.

Source: [Interactive data dashboard on migrants moving through the Americas in Costa Rica](#)

Recorded departures of refugees and migrants from Panama to Costa Rica



Source: Migration Reception Station at Los Planes of Guacala, Chiriquí, Panamá, 2022-2023.

*Data available as of August 2023.

During December 2023, around 28,721 people entered the country in November 2023 as part of the migratory flow across the Americas. The majority would have entered through Paso Canoas, on the border with Panama (99 %) with a daily average of 926. It is estimated that the number of entries between January and December 2023 (529,348) have exceeded the 2022 total (226,610) by 133 per cent (DTM, 2023b).



Mixed Movements Costa Rica



613

Individuals were interviewed by UNHCR between October and December 2023.

Interviews took place in Ciudad Neily, Paso Canoas and Los Chiles.



50%

Men



48%

Women



2%

Non binary



30

Average age



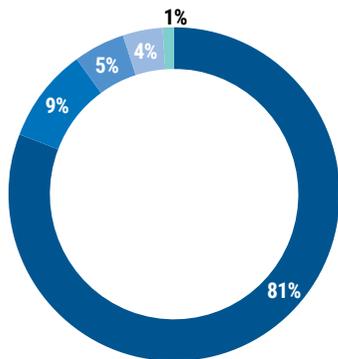
53%

Reported that the fear of generalized violence and insecurity was a reason to leave the country of origin.



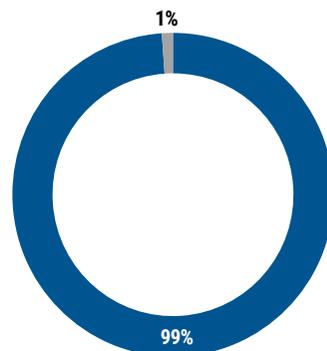
58%

Reported to have experienced protection incidents in the route.



Countries of origin

- Venezuela
- Colombia
- Ecuador
- Haiti
- Peru



Countries of intended destination

- United States
- Other

Food security



72%

of people had food security issues in the last month.

55% spent whole days without eating and 17% have regularly skipped meals.

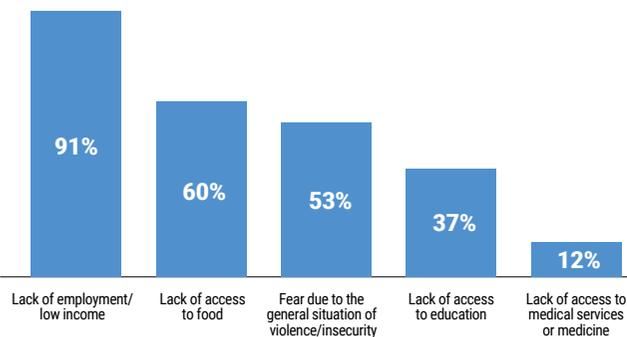


71%

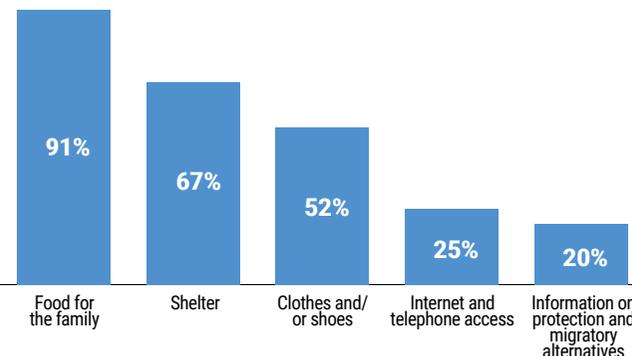
Have an insufficient food consumption.

47% consumed one meal only and 24% none the day before the interview.

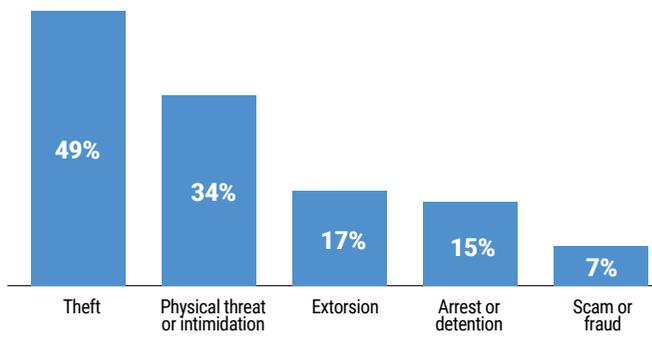
Main reasons to leave the country of origin (More than one option could be selected)



Main needs now and to continue the journey (More than one option could be selected)



Main protection incidents during the route (More than one option could be selected)



Source: Mixed movement monitoring UNHCR-WFP, Costa Rica, 2023.



Mixed Movements Honduras

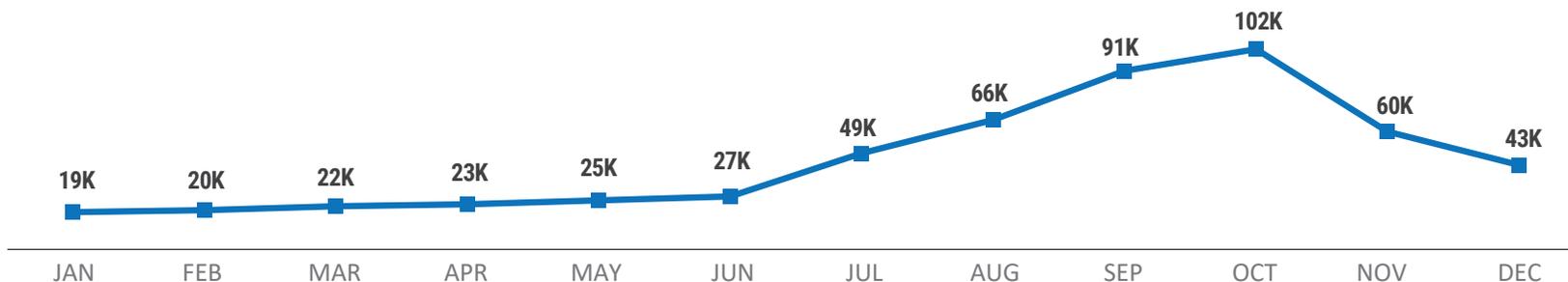
545 K
People entered Honduras irregularly in 2023.

144
Different nationalities entered Honduras irregularly in 2023.

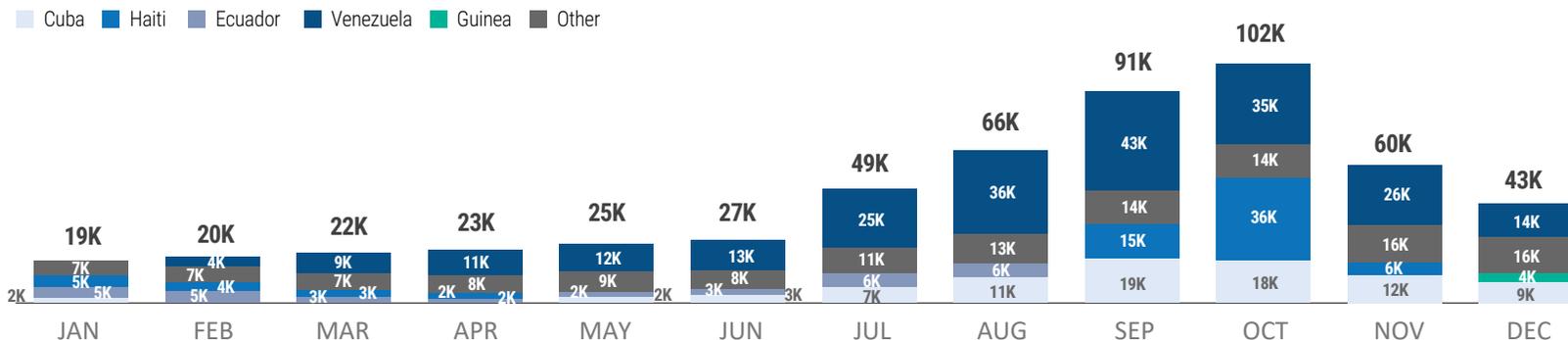
42% VENEZUELAN
16% CUBAN
15% HAITIAN
8% ECUADORIAN
Main nationalities in 2023 in Honduras.

102 K
Irregular entries during October represented the highest number registered in 2023.

Monthly irregular entries in Honduras | 2023



Monthly irregular entries in Honduras by country of origin | 2023



Source: Instituto Nacional de Migración - Honduras, 2023



Mixed Movements Honduras



504

Individuals were interviewed by UNHCR between October and December 2023.



57%

Men



42%

Women



1%

Non binary



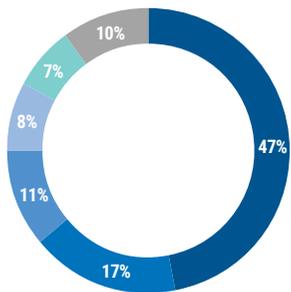
32

Average age



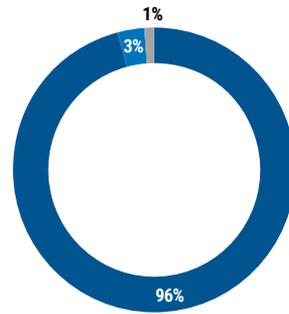
38%

Reported to have experienced protection incidents during their journey.



Countries of origin

- Venezuela
- Cuba
- Ecuador
- Haiti
- Colombia
- Other



Countries of intended destination

- United States
- Canada
- Other

Food security



49%

of people have food security issues in the last month.

34% have regularly skipped meals and 15% spent whole days without eating.

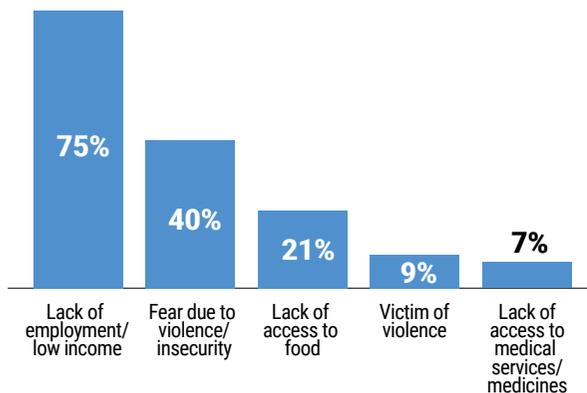


32%

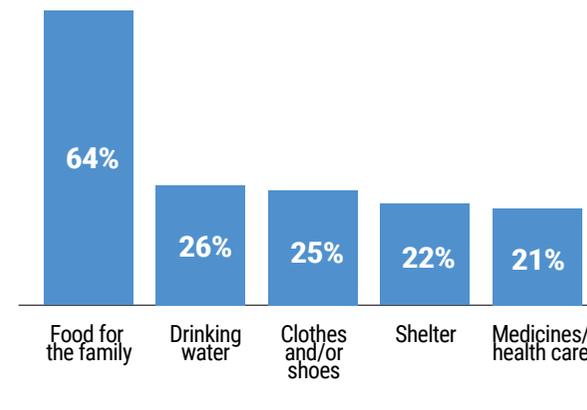
Have an insufficient food consumption.

28% consumed one meal only and 4% none the day before the interview.

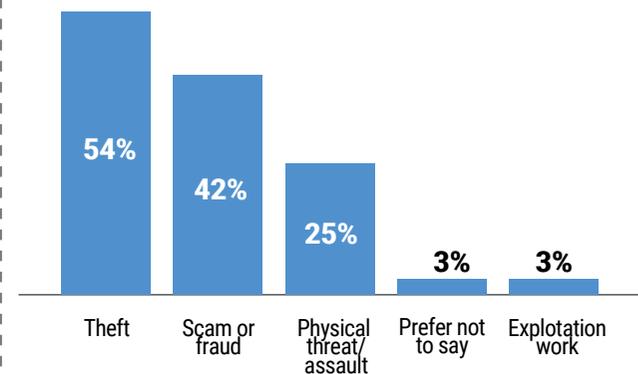
Main reasons to leave the country of origin (More than one option could be selected)



Main needs now and to continue the journey (More than one option could be selected)



Main protection incidents in the route before arrival to Honduras (More than one option could be selected)





Mixed Movements Guatemala

1,411

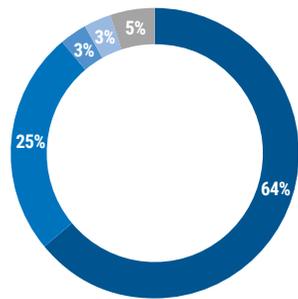
Individuals were interviewed by UNHCR between October and December 2023.

Interviews were conducted in several provinces and border points including Petén, Chiquimula, Izabal, San Marcos, Huehuetenango as well as the capital Guatemala City.

58% Men
42% Women

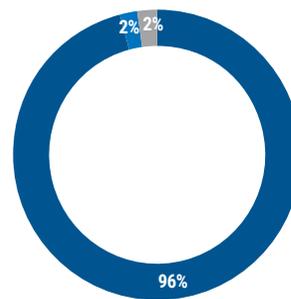
31 Average age
84% Reported to have experienced protection incidents in the route.

41% Reported that the fear of generalized violence and insecurity was a reason to leave the country of origin.



Countries of origin

- Venezuela
- Honduras
- Ecuador
- Colombia
- Other



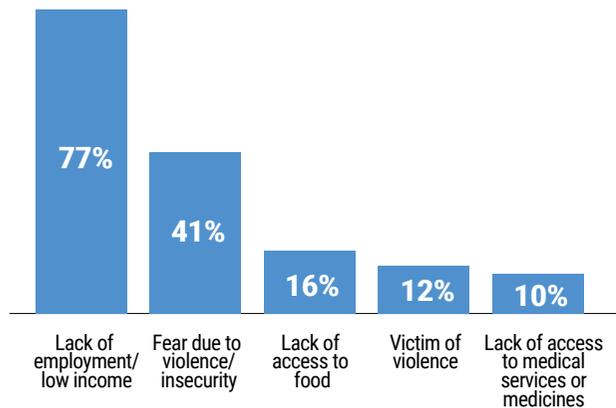
Countries of intended destination

- United States
- Mexico
- Other

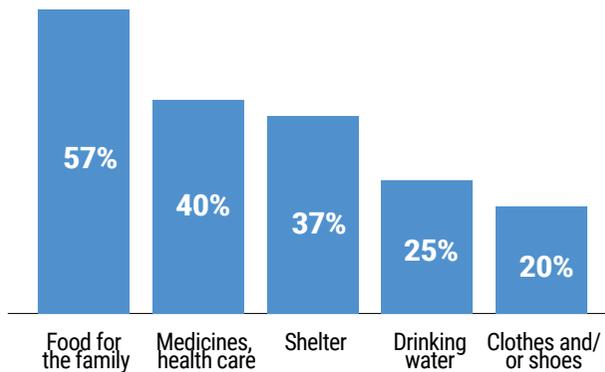
Food security
71% of people had food security issues in the last month.
52% have regularly skipped meals and 19% spent whole days without eating.

54% Have an insufficient food consumption.
50% consumed one meal only and 4% none the day before the interview.

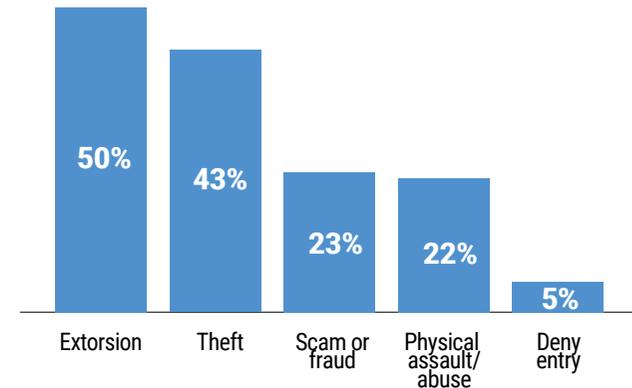
Main reasons to leave the country of origin (More than one option could be selected)



Main needs now and to continue the journey (More than one option could be selected)



Main protection incidents during the route (More than one option could be selected)



Source: Mixed movement monitoring UNHCR-WFP, Guatemala, 2023.



Mixed Movements Guatemala

1,788

Individuals were interviewed by DTM Guatemala between October and December 2023.

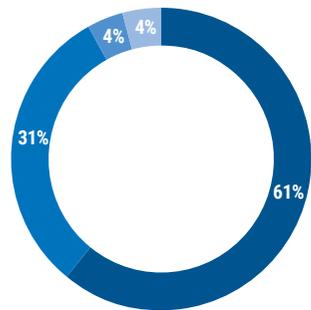
58%
Men

42%
Women

31
Average age

17%
of women were pregnant or breastfeeding.

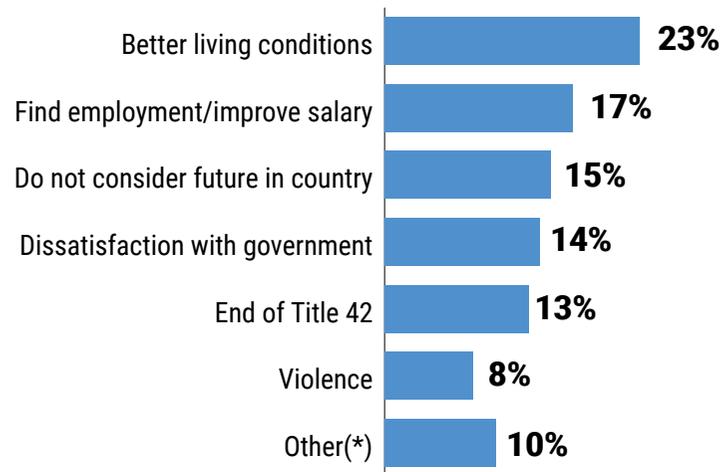
35%
of people interviewed reported having completed secondary education.



Countries of origin

- Venezuela
- Honduras
- Colombia
- Ecuador

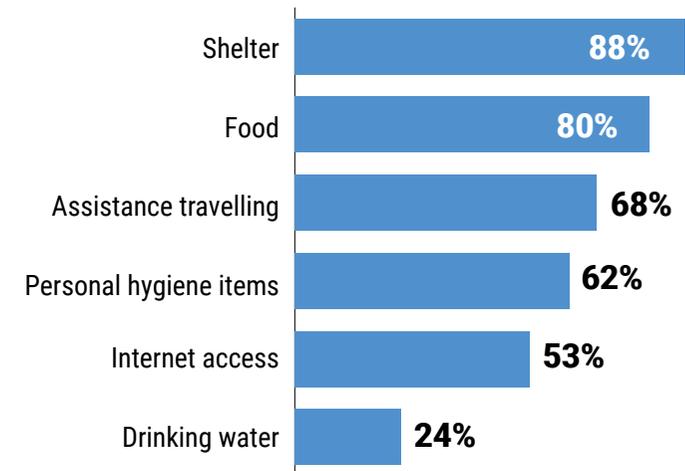
Main reasons to leave the country of origin**



*"Other" category includes: family reunification, improving access to food; threats; discrimination; improving education; devaluation of education; currency devaluation; improving wages and income; and some feel persecuted for their political activities in their country.

**Includes data between 21 April – 30 November 2023.

Main needs now and to continue the journey**



Note: The interviewees had the possibility of selecting several options, so the percentages will not add up to 100%.

*Includes data between 21 April – 30 November 2023.

Source: [Interactive data dashboard on migrants in transit through the Americas](#)

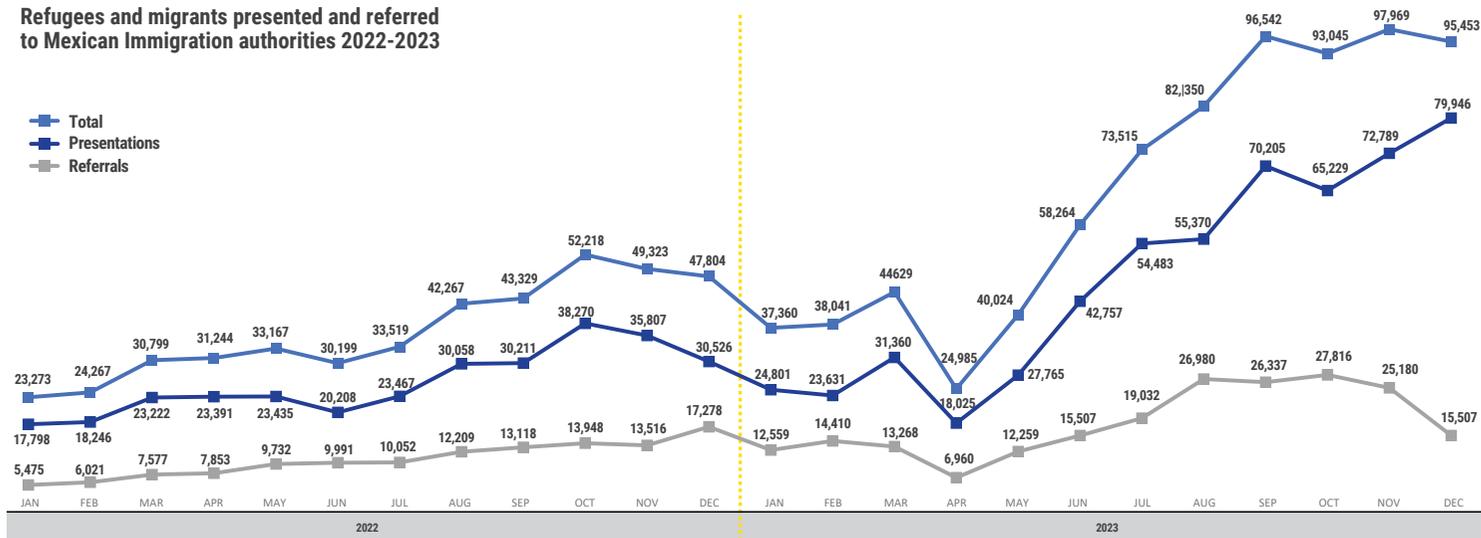
Source: [DTM Flow Monitoring \(21 April – 30 November 2023\)](#)



Mixed Movements

Refugees and Migrants presence in Mexico (presentations and referrals)

Refugees and migrants presented and referred to Mexican Immigration authorities 2022-2023



77%

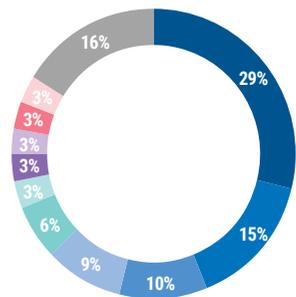
Increase of presentations and referrals of refugees and migrants from January to December 2023 in Mexico

compared with the total events of refugees and migrants with irregular situation in the same period in 2022.

97,969

November is the month with the highest number of irregular events compared to the last two years.

Refugees and migrants presented and referred to Mexican Immigration Authorities by country of origin and demographic group, January – September 2023

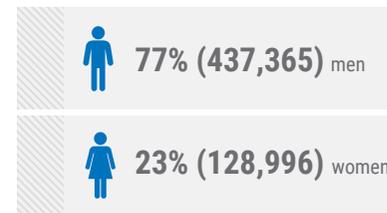


Main nationalities

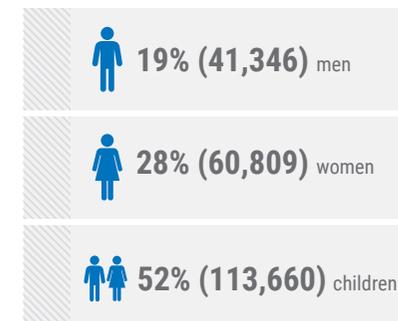
- Venezuelan
- Honduran
- Guatemalan
- Ecuadorian
- Haitian
- Cuban
- Colombian
- Salvadoran
- Senegalese
- Nicaraguan
- Other

Totals by demographic groups (Jan - Sep 2023):

Presentations



Referrals



29% VENEZUELA
15% HONDURAS
10% GUATEMALA
9% ECUADOR
6% HAITI

Main countries of origin in 2023.



Asylum trends in Mexico

144,286

Asylum applications were lodged in Mexico in 2023, representing an increase of 20% compared to 2022 (COMAR, 2023).



31% HAITI
29% HONDURAS
13% CUBA
5% OTHER
4% EL SALVADOR

Top countries of origin in 2023 (COMAR, 2023).



33 k

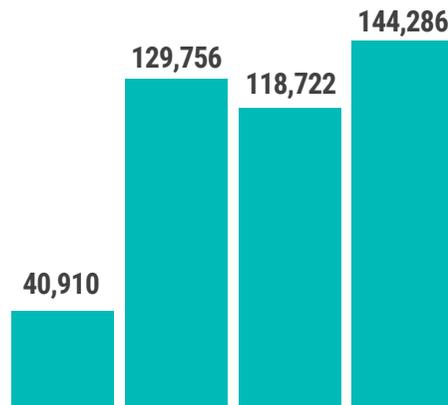
Asylum-seekers registered by UNHCR in Mexico in 2023.



70%

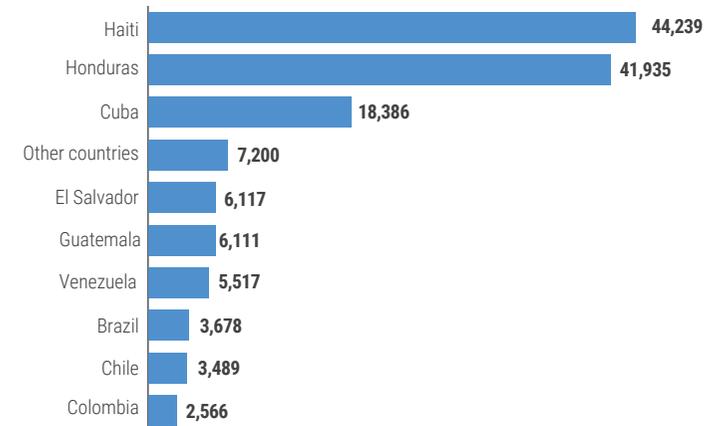
of asylum-seekers interviewed by UNHCR in Mexico in 2023, have specific protection needs.

Asylum Applications in Mexico 2020-2023 (Jan-Jun)
 (all nationalities)



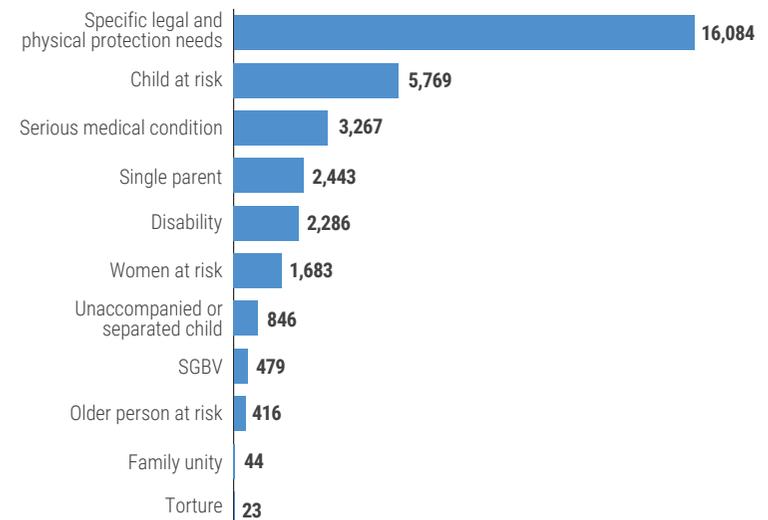
Source: COMAR, 2023.

Top 10 Asylum applications in Mexico by country of origin in 2023



Source: COMAR, 2023

Mexico: Asylum-seekers with protection needs registered by UNHCR in 2023



Source: UNHCR, 2023.



Mixed Movements Mexico

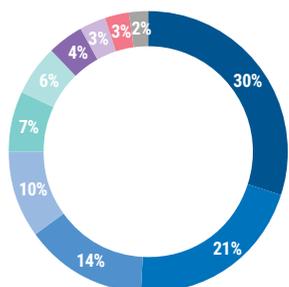
1,113
Individuals were interviewed by UNHCR between October and December 2023
Interviews took place in 18 cities across Mexico.

48% Men
52% Women
34 Average age

42%
Reported that being a victim of violence, threats or intimidation was one of the main reasons to leave the country of origin.
41% cited lack of employment.

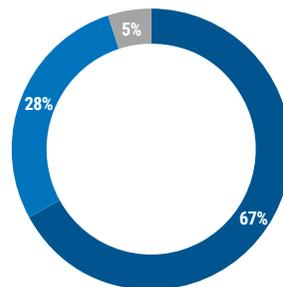
53%
Reported to have experienced protection incidents in the route.

69%
Reported one of their main needs was food for their family.



Countries of origin

- Honduras
- Venezuela
- Cuba
- Guatemala
- El Salvador
- Haiti
- Ecuador
- Colombia
- Nicaragua
- Other



Countries of intended destination

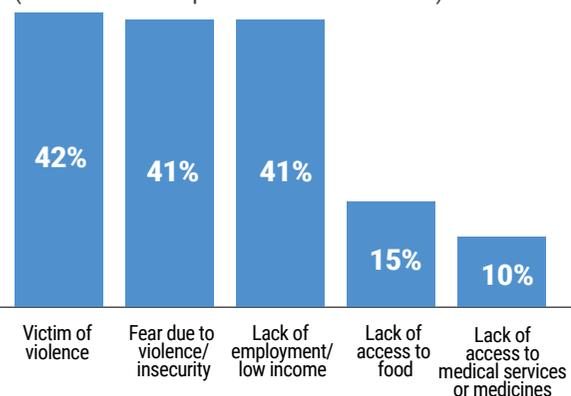
- United States
- Mexico
- Other

Food security

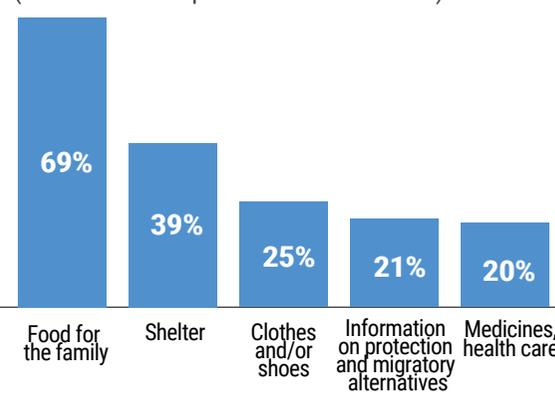
37%
of people had food security issues in the last month.
30% have regularly skipped meals or 7% spent whole days without eating.

21%
Have an insufficient food consumption.
18% consumed one meal only and 3% none the day before the interview.

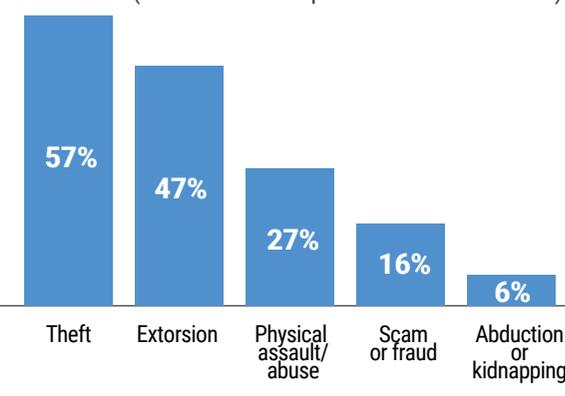
Main reasons to leave the country of origin (More than one option could be selected)



Main needs now and to continue the journey (More than one option could be selected)



Main protection incidents in the route before arrival to Mexico (More than one option could be selected)





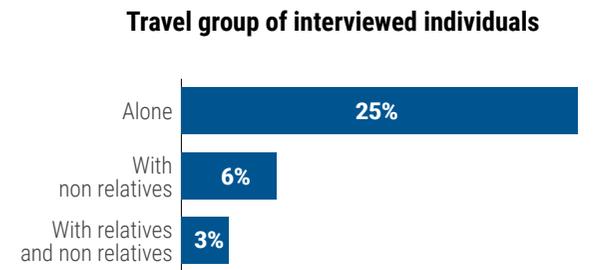
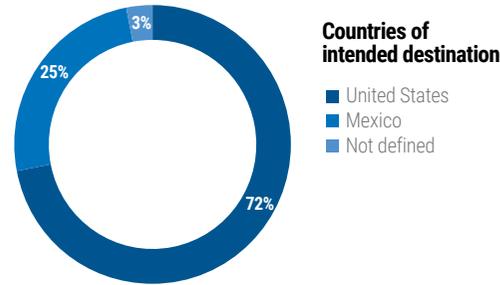
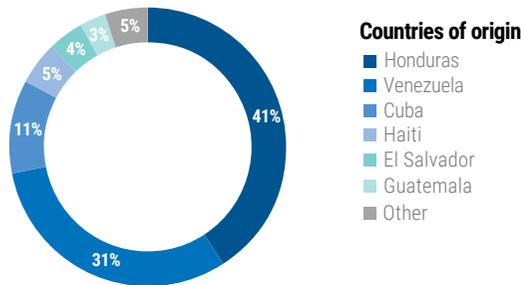
Mixed Movements Mexico South Border

195 Individuals were interviewed by IOM in Tapachula between October and December 2023.

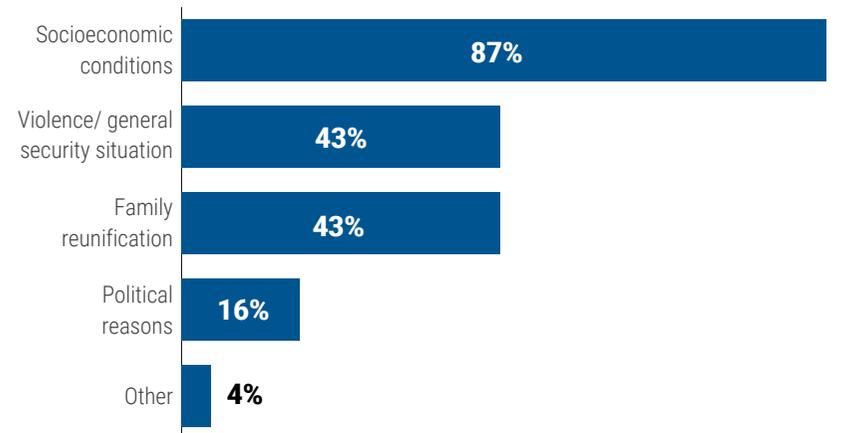
48% Men

52% Women

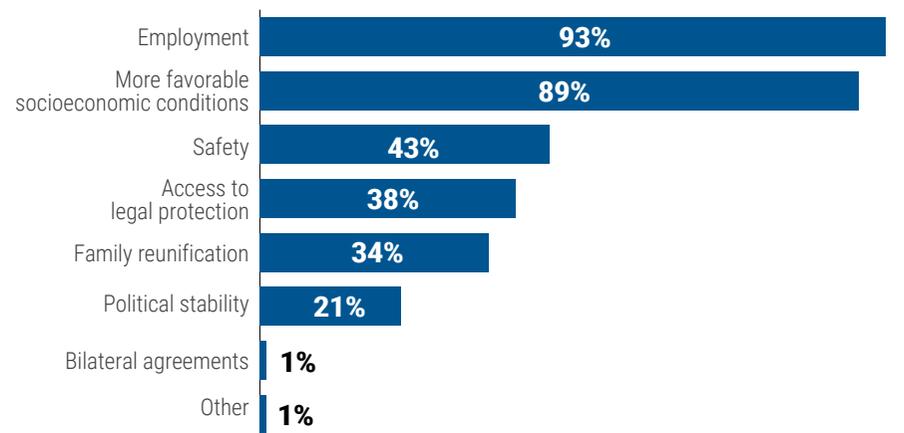
49% Were between 26 and 35 years old.



Main reasons to leave the country of origin (More than one option could be selected)



Main reasons to choose country of destination (More than one option could be selected)





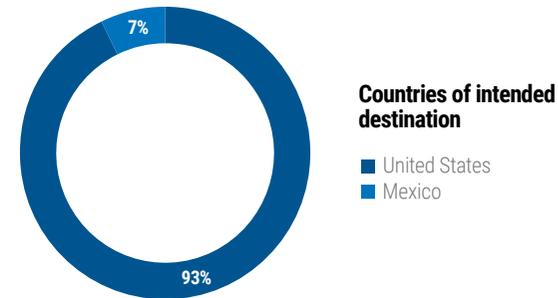
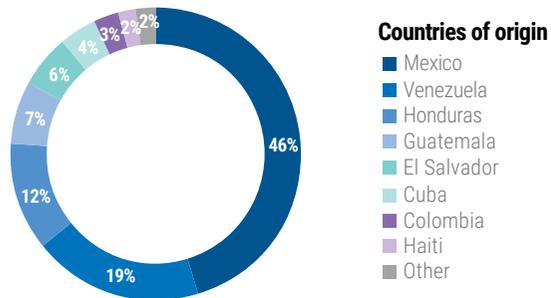
Mixed Movements Mexico North Border

598 Individuals were interviewed by IOM in Ciudad Juarez and Tijuana between October and December 2023.

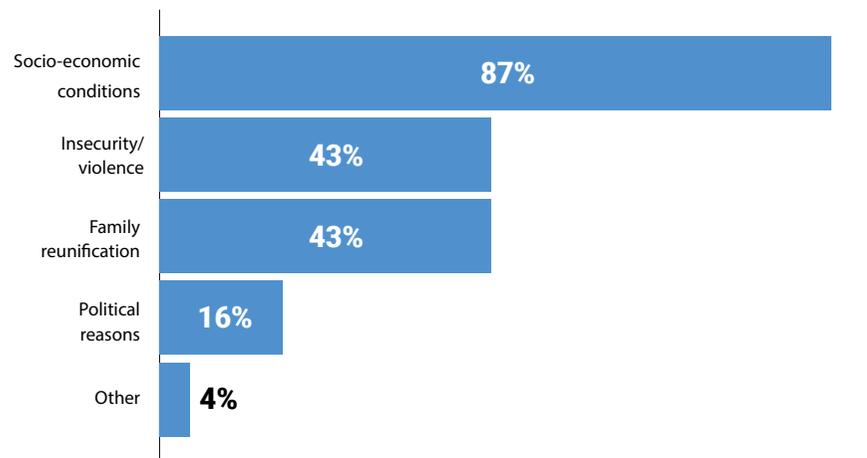
44% Men

56% Women

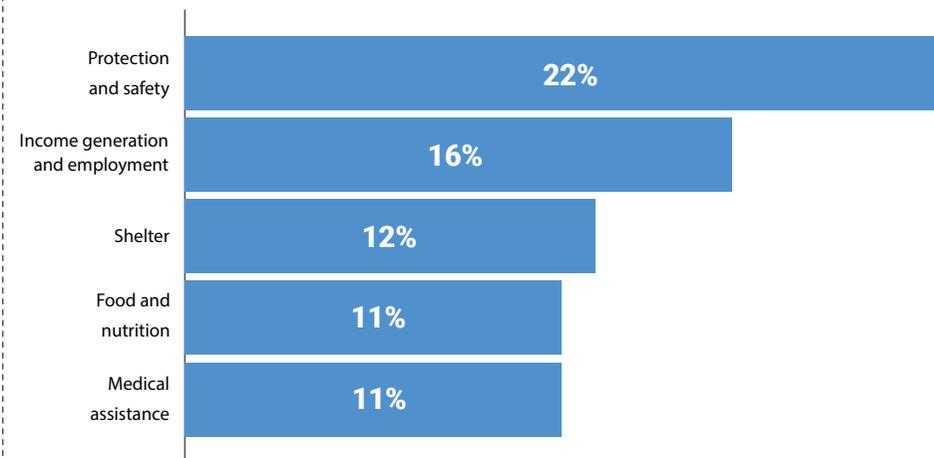
34 Was the average age



Main reasons to leave the country of origin



Main needs



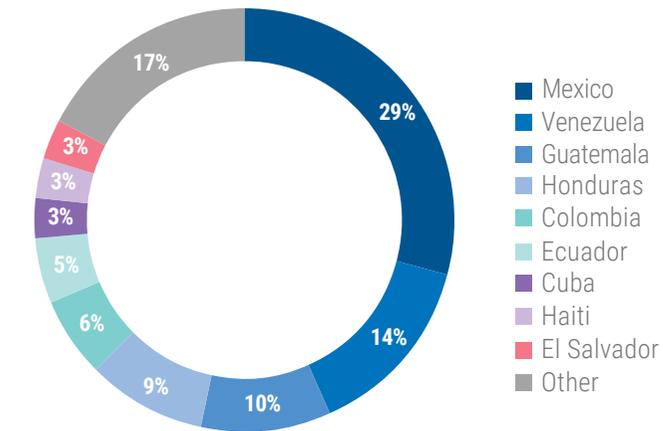


Land Border Encounters in Southwest in United States

2.5 M
Encounters at the Southwestern United States border in 2023 (2,542,079), representing a 1% decrease in comparison to encounters in 2022 (2,579,026)

29% MEXICAN
14% VENEZUELAN
10% GUATEMALAN
9% HONDURAN
6% COLOMBIAN
Main nationalities in 2023.

Main country of origin in United States Southwest land border encounters in 2023



57%
Were adults travelling alone and 38% moving in family units.
in 2023

5%
Were unaccompanied children and adolescents.
in 2023

9%
Increase in the encounters from the last quarter of 2022 compared to the same period in 2023. December (302,034) is the month with the highest number of encounters recorded in 2023.

United States Southwest land border encounters, 2021-2023



Source: United States (U.S.) [Customs and Border Protection](#) (U.S.) Department of Homeland Security, 2023.



Returns to Northern Central American countries (El Salvador, Honduras and Guatemala)

152,095

Guatemalans, Hondurans and Salvadorians were returned from the United States, Mexico and other countries

from January to December 2023.

22%

Decrease in total returns from January to December 2023

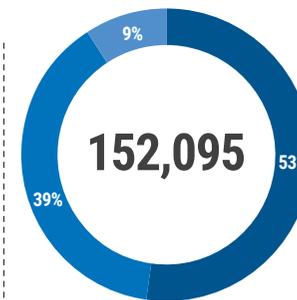
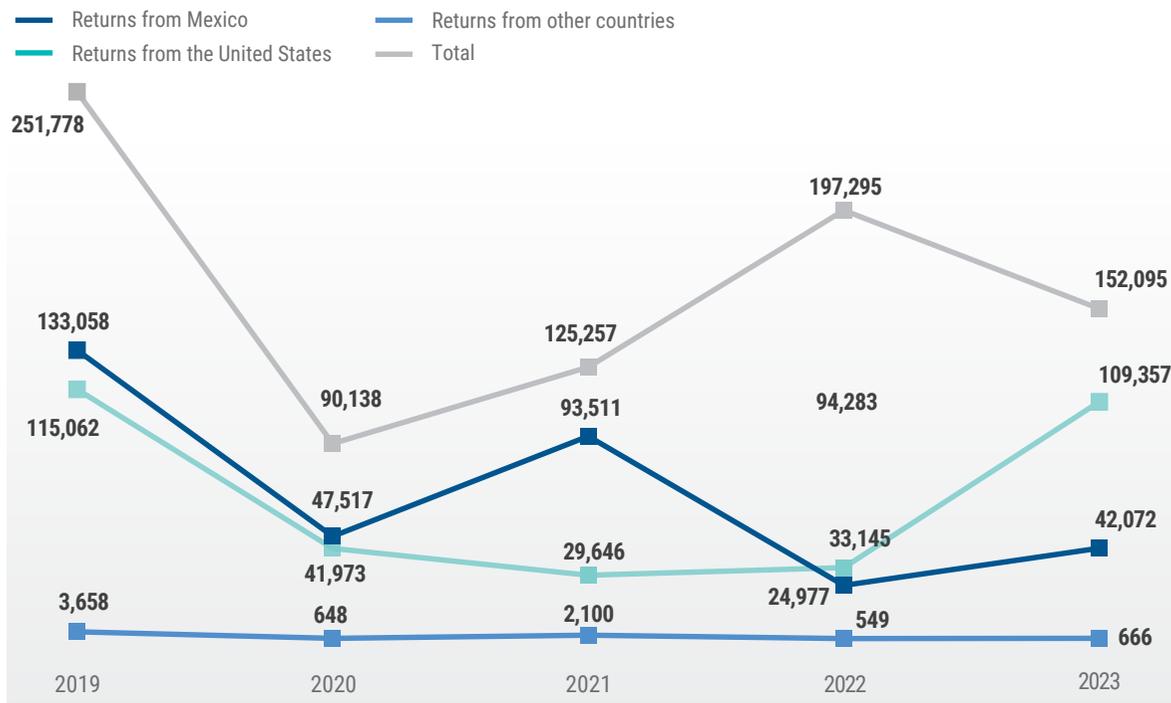
in comparison to the same period in 2022.



53% GUATEMALA
39% HONDURAS
9% EL SALVADOR

were the countries with the higher figures of returns from January to December 2023.

Returns from Mexico, United States and other countries, 2019-2022 (January - December*)



Returns by destination country in 2023

- Guatemala
- Honduras
- El Salvador

Returns 2022 (January - December)

Returns 2023 (January - December)



61% (120,243)
Men



21% (41,192)
Women



18% (35,860)
Children and adolescents

58% (88,958)
Men

22% (33,109)
Women

12% (30,028)
Children and adolescents

Source: IOM, [Unidad de información para los países del norte de Centroamérica Dashboard](#), 2023.

* Figures for Honduras have a cut-off date as of July 2023.