Mixed Movements Monitoring
Honduras
June 2024

People in mixed movements highlight the humanitarian assistance available in Honduras, as well as the solidarity and hospitality they received in the country.
UNHCR/Lucía Martínez

Highlights of the month

28,360

refugees and migrants entered, registered and transited through Honduras in June 2024 according to the National Migration Institute (INM), **which is an increase of 6% in comparison to the same month in 2023.**

As not all people register with INM, UNHCR and its partners present in border areas estimate that **more than 40,000 people** on the move entered Honduras in June.

At least **32%** of the individuals in mixed movements interviewed by UNHCR and its partners reported having **international protection needs** because they had to flee their country of origin due to violence or persecution.

47% of the interviewed persons reported having suffered some form of **mistreatment or abuse during their journey** from their country of origin or last residence to Honduras. **21%** stated that they suffered mistreatment or abuse **in Honduras.**

The **main needs** reported by refugees and migrants on the move are **food, clothing and footwear, water, medical assistance and medicines.**

Official Data

Total Irregular Entries 2023:

545,043

Total Irregular Entries January to June 2024:

248,035

Total number of different nationalities who entered Honduras irregularly in 2024:

111

Irregular Entries June 2024:

37% Female

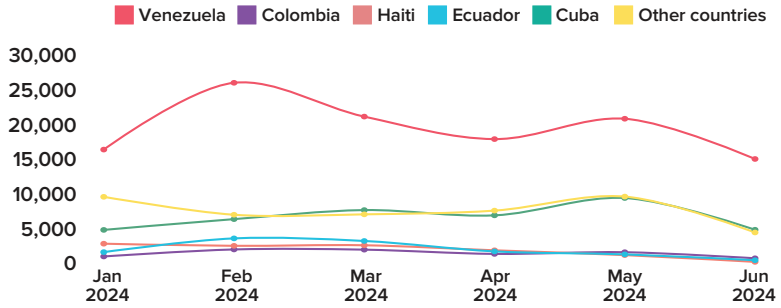
63% Male

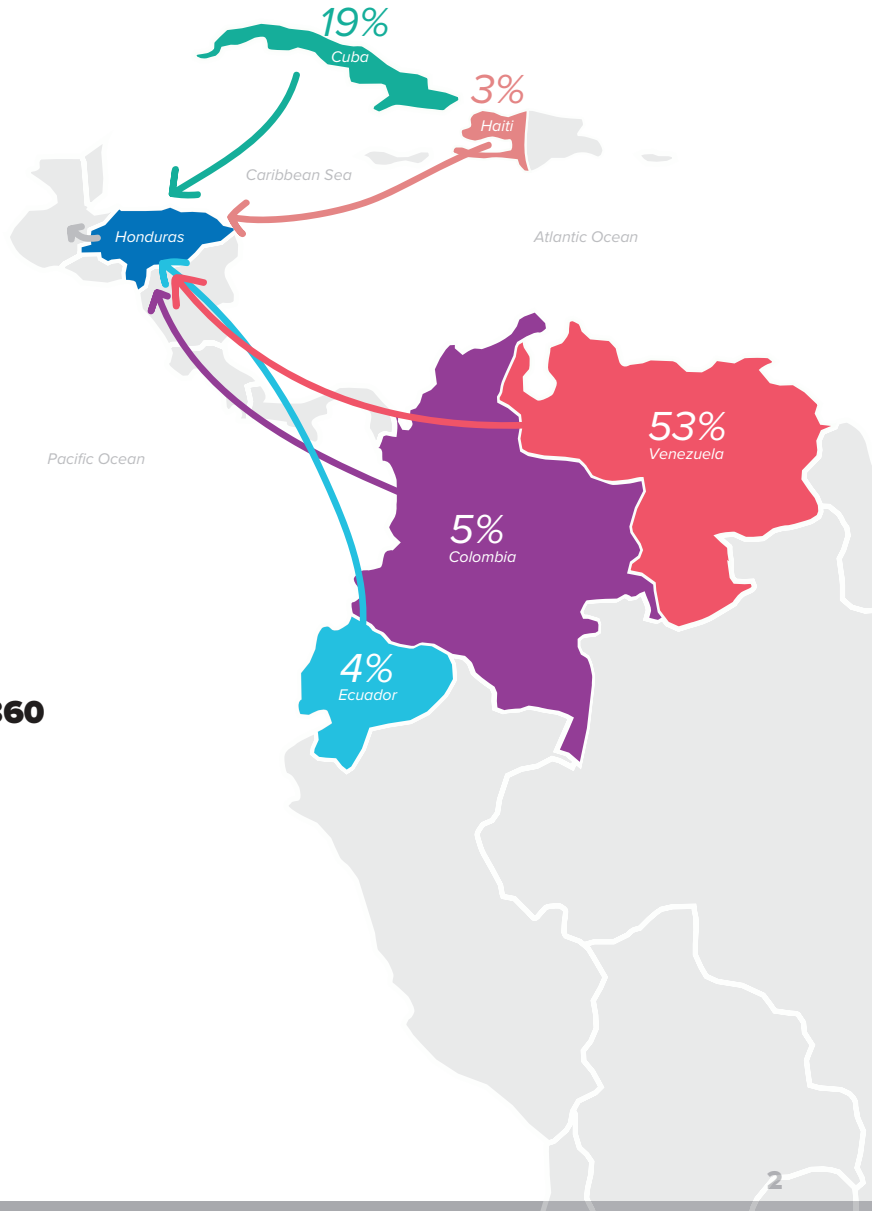
75% Adults

25% Children and adolescents

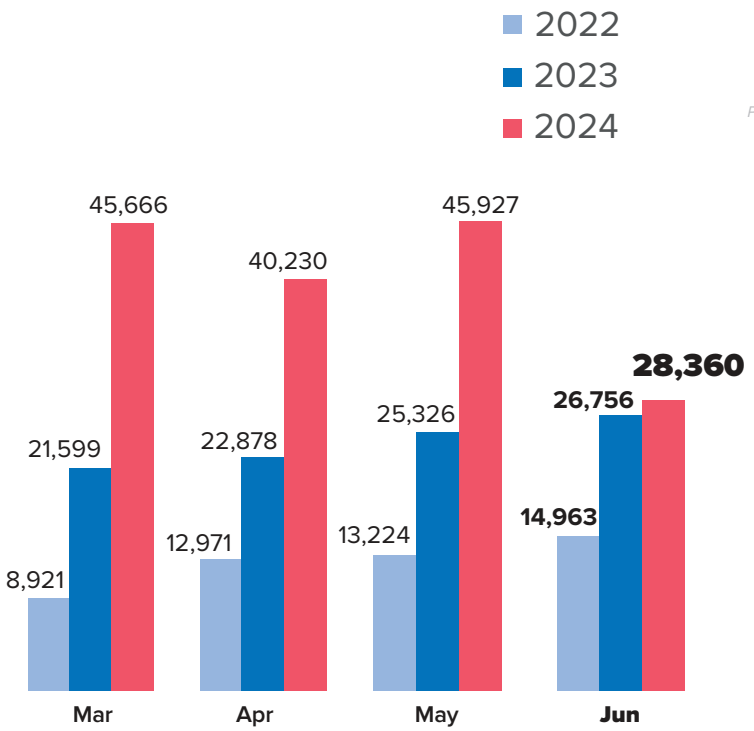
Nationalities:

*These **5 nationalities represent 83%** of all refugees and migrants who entered Honduras irregularly in June 2024.*





Irregular entries March - June:



Note: the migratory amnesty was introduced in August 2022 and so before that, many persons on the move did not register with INM in order to avoid paying the fine for irregular entry, therefore figures are lower in 2022.

Mixed Movements Protection Monitoring Results

*UNHCR, the UN Agency for Refugees collects monthly information on the **profiles, vulnerabilities and protection needs** of refugees and migrants who enter Honduras through the border with Nicaragua and transit through the country towards the border with Guatemala. The information is compiled through individual interviews conducted at the main hotspots throughout Honduras, with a focus on the entry and exit borders. The preliminary results presented here are indicative only and should not be interpreted as representative of the total population of refugees and migrants who are part of mixed movements.*

Interviewed Population Data

177
Persons interviewed

Interviewed Individuals by Sex:

49% Female
50% Male
1% Non-binary

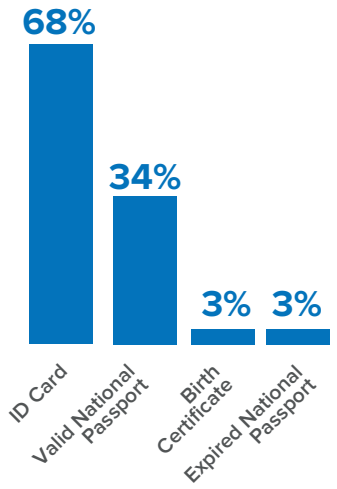
Average age:

32 Years

Travel Group Composition:

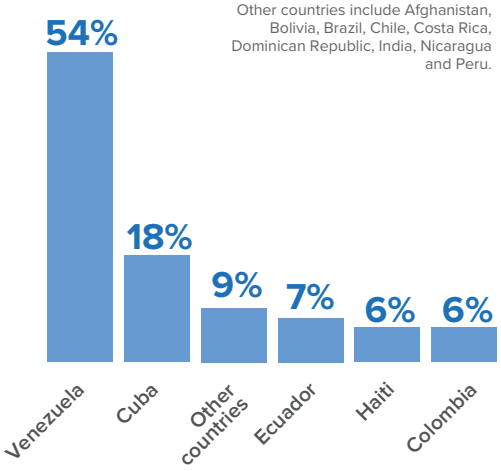
70% Adults
30% Children and adolescents

Documents Carried



Nationality

Other countries include Afghanistan, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Costa Rica, Dominican Republic, India, Nicaragua and Peru.

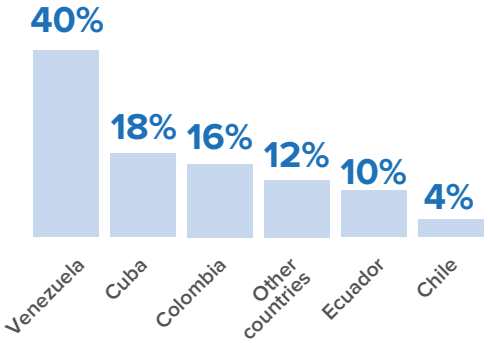


Note: since 54% of the respondents are from Venezuela, the report's results will be mostly weighed by answers from Venezuelans, as well as by Spanish-speakers as they represent 90% of the respondents. Speakers of other languages were interviewed in smaller numbers due to their lower numbers, language barriers, and in some places, due to the presence of smugglers.

Country of residence in the past year

Other countries include Afghanistan, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Costa Rica, Dominican Republic, Haiti, India, Mexico, Nicaragua, and Peru.

All interviewed individuals were asked where they lived in the last year to include persons who were residing in their country of origin as well as those living elsewhere.

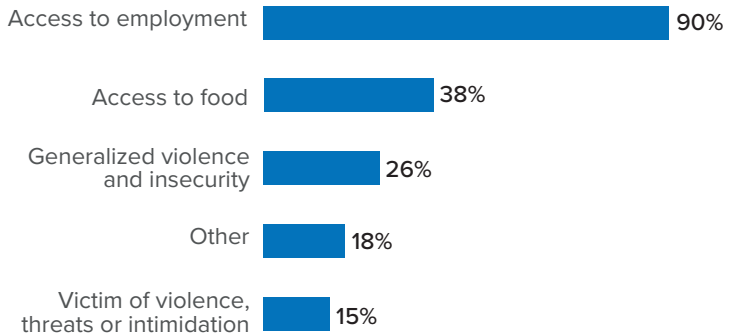


22% of the interviewees lived outside of their country of origin and mainly resided in Colombia (50%), Chile (18%), Ecuador (13%), Brazil (8%), Peru (5%), Dominican Republic (3%), and Mexico (3%).

Children in mixed movements passing through Honduras find recreational spaces at the El Pescadero Humanitarian Space.
UNHCR/Lucía Martínez

Push factors

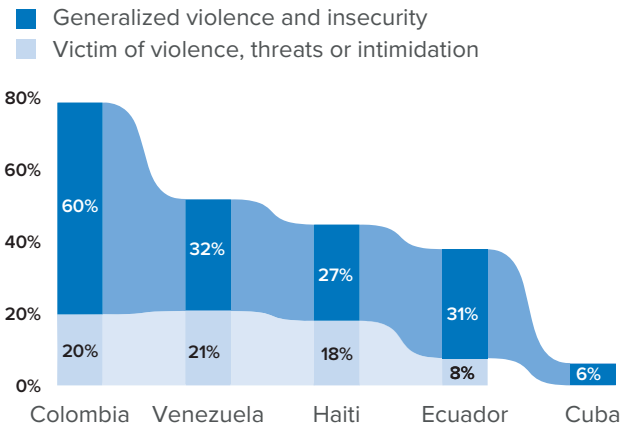
Reasons for leaving country of origin



Other reasons include the political situation and limited opportunities.

Some people indicated various reasons for leaving their country of origin. 61% of the reason "generalized violence and insecurity" was reported by women.

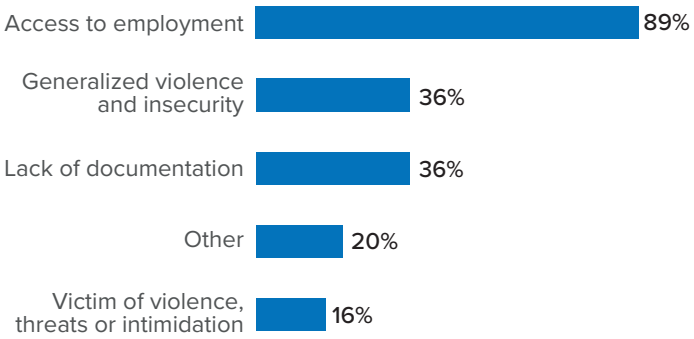
Violence-related reasons for leaving country of origin by nationality



Note: as evidenced in the previous graph, there are several reasons why the persons left their countries of origin, including those related to violence and economic opportunities. This graph only shows the percentage of individuals by nationality who indicated fleeing their country due to violence-related incidents.

Reasons for leaving country of habitual residence

(only includes those who were living outside their country of origin in the past year)



Other reasons include to improve quality of life and to reunite with family.

Some people indicated various reasons for leaving their country of residence.

86%

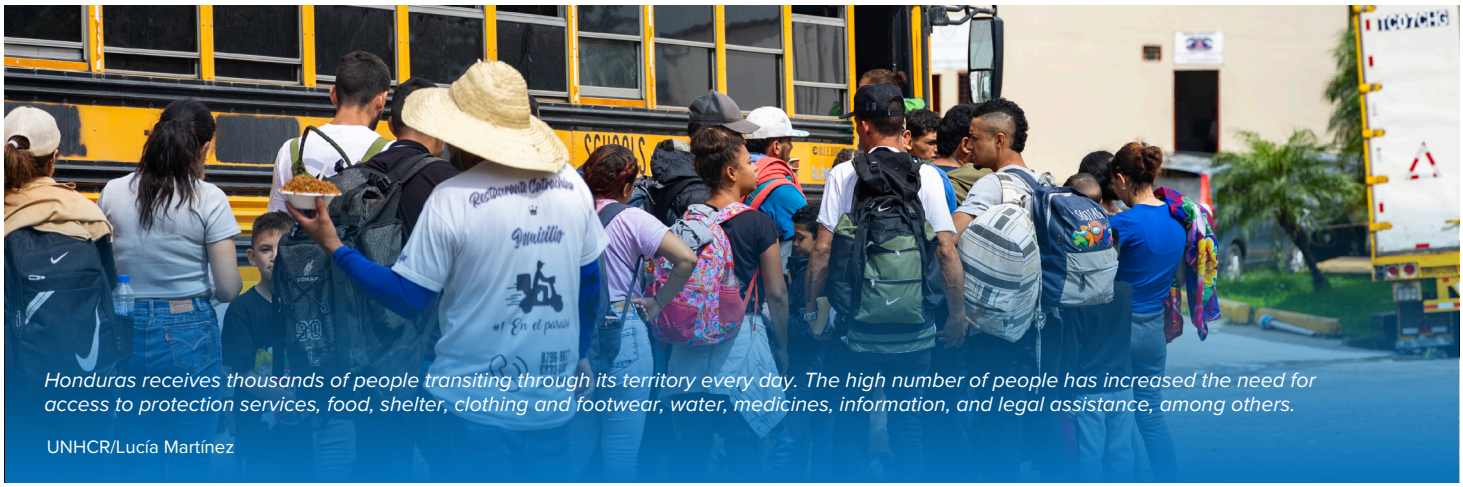
of the interviewed individuals **left their country** of origin/residence **less than four weeks ago.**

100%

reported an intention to **stay in Honduras for less than a month** (usually, less than a week) to continue their journey to their destination.

98%

of the interviewed individuals reported the United States as their intended final destination. Additionally, 1% indicated Canada and 1% indicated Mexico as their intended final destination.

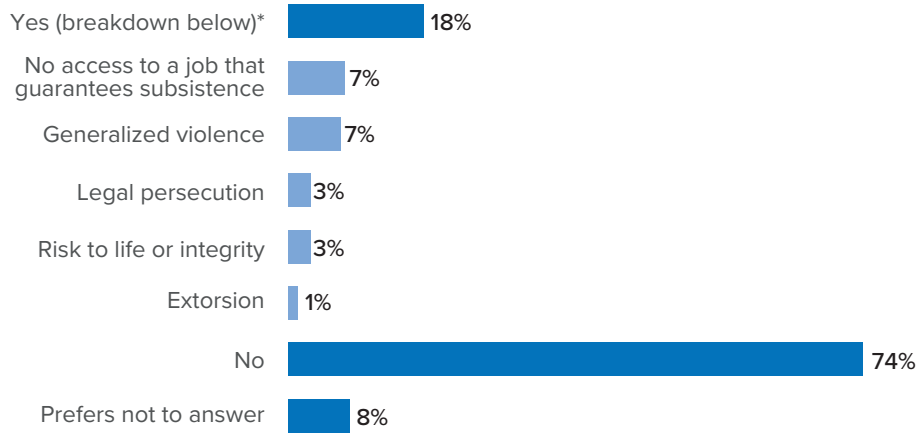


Honduras receives thousands of people transiting through its territory every day. The high number of people has increased the need for access to protection services, food, shelter, clothing and footwear, water, medicines, information, and legal assistance, among others.

UNHCR/Lucía Martínez

Risks of return

Would you encounter any risks if you had to return to your country of origin?



Some persons indicated that they would face several risks if they had to return to their country of origin.

The majority of respondents reported limited access to employment as the main reason for leaving their country of origin (see page 4). At the same time a significant percentage of people indicated that they would encounter risks if they had to return to their country, including generalized violence, legal persecution, life risk, and extorsion. In other words, even if people left their country for employment reasons, it does not mean that they would not face other risks if they had to return to their country of origin.

Another important factor to take into account is that people in mixed movements with protection needs tend to not disclose a lot of information about the reasons that forced them to flee their country of origin.

Did you experience any mistreatment or abuse during the journey?

47% answered **yes**

Of these persons, 75% reported theft, 49% fraud and 27% threats.

Did you experience any mistreatment or other forms of abuse at the border or within Honduras?

21% answered **yes**

Of these persons, 76% reported theft, 50% threats and 37% fraud.

Some persons indicated various forms of mistreatment.

Protection Concerns

47% of the interviewed individuals reported traveling with somebody with specific protection needs, of these:

79% Survivors of violence in their group (sexual, physical, or psychological)

12% Pregnant or/and lactating women

4% Single parent traveling with children and 1% unaccompanied children

1% Critical or chronic medical condition

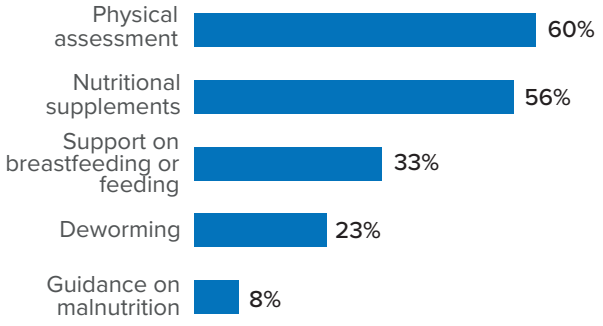
2% Elderly persons

5% Disability: physical (2%), visual (2%), and mental (1%)

Children and Adolescents On the Move

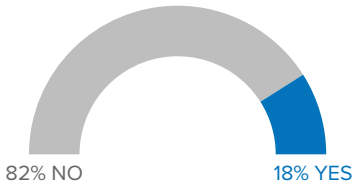
Since the start of your journey:

Which humanitarian aid services has the child traveling with you received?



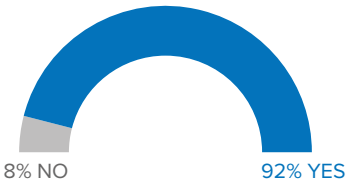
*Ages 0 months to 5 years

Has any child or adolescent in your group been separated from their parents or legal guardian?



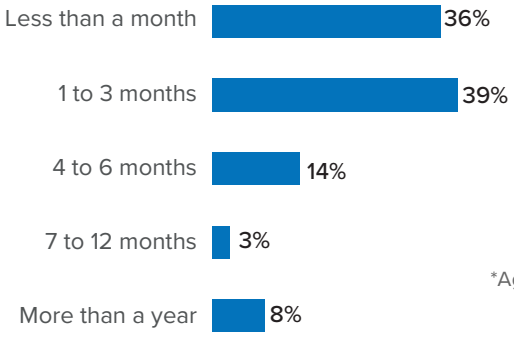
*Ages 0 months to 17 years

Do the children traveling with you have a complete vaccination schedule?



*Ages 0 months to 5 years

How long has the child or adolescent not received an education?



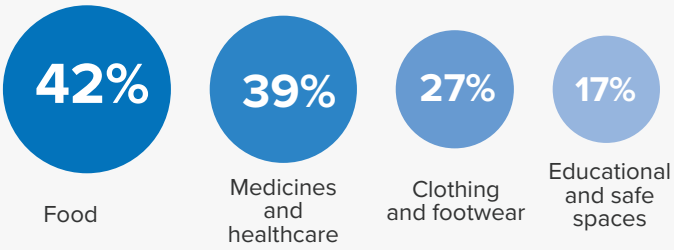
*Ages 6 to 17 years

Main needs

Travel Group's Main Needs

Other main needs reported by persons on the move include: information on protection and migratory alternatives, internet and telephone access, shelter, food and items for children, and legal assistance.

Childrens' and Adolescents' Main Needs

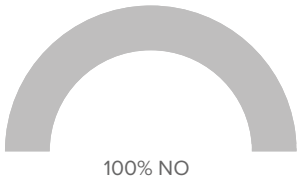


*Ages 6 months to 17 years

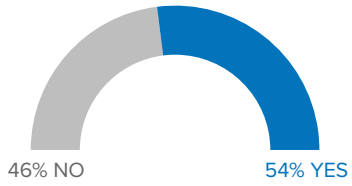
Other main needs reported: food supplements and vitamins, psychological support, weight and height assessments, and recommendations on child or adolescent feeding.

Access to asylum and programs implemented by the United States Government

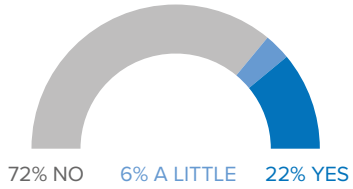
Have you previously applied for asylum?



Have you been informed of the opportunity to seek asylum in Honduras?

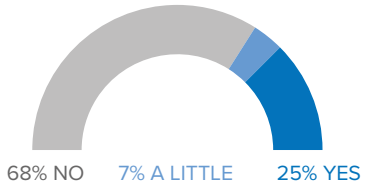


Are you aware of the United States Government's Parole Program?



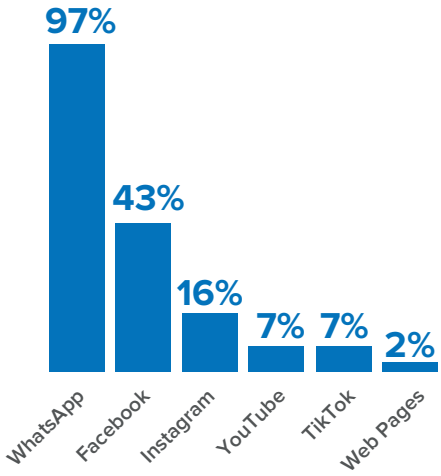
Only citizens of Cuba, Haiti, Nicaragua and Venezuela were asked this question, as the parole program only applies to these nationalities.

Do you know how the United States Government's CBP One application works?

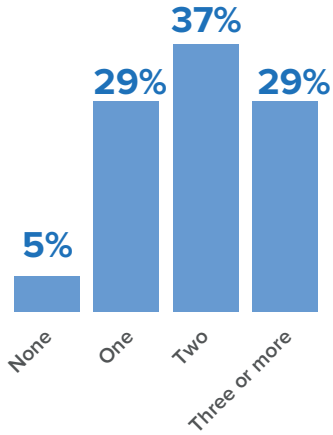


Access to information and food

Which digital platforms do you use to get information during the trip?



How many meals did you eat yesterday?



Main findings of the Focal Group Discussions with people on the move

With the objective to complement the information provided in the individual interviews (previous section), UNHCR organized three focal group discussions in Danlí, Choluteca and Ocotepeque, with Venezuelans, Colombians, Salvadorans and Nicaraguans in mixed movements to obtain more information on their profiles and needs. One of the focal groups was conducted with women, one with men and the third one mixed. The main findings are:

1

Reasons for leaving the country of origin

Participants from El Salvador and Nicaragua indicated that they left their country of origin because their lives were at risk and due to this, they sought asylum in Honduras. At the same time, some Venezuelans and Colombians mentioned that they had to leave their country due to the risk of their children being forcibly recruited by organized crime groups. Other persons indicated that their objective is to be reunited with their relatives in the country of destination.

On the other hand, several Venezuelans stated that they had left Venezuela several years ago to live in Colombia. However, despite having been issued a Temporary Protection Status by the Colombian authorities, they decided to sell all their belongings and start their journey to the north of the continent due to the lack of employment, difficulties in accessing health services and incidents of xenophobia they had suffered.

2

The route

The Venezuelan and Colombian participants in the focal group discussions stated that they took the route from Medellín, Colombia, to Necoclí or Turbo and then to Acandí. They then crossed the Darien jungle (which took them 4 days), Panama (2 days), Costa Rica (1 day), Nicaragua (1 day) and, at the time when talking to UNHCR in Honduras, they had already been staying for 5 days in the country. Regarding the cost of the bus fares, people mentioned that in Panama they paid 60 USD to cross the country, in Costa Rica 30 USD and in Nicaragua 50 USD. The Colombians mentioned that in addition they had to pay 150 USD to the Nicaraguan authorities to obtain a transit permit.

All participants stated that Honduras is the country along the route where they have received the best treatment so far. They highlighted the humanitarian assistance available such as access to information, internet, accommodation and medical services, as well as the support received from host community members such as food or small amounts of money.

While several of the participants are unsure about whether they would undertake the journey again or discard it altogether because of the risks they have been exposed to along the way, one Venezuelan (who is travelling with his disabled son) mentioned that he would make the trip again because his son needs specialized medical treatment that he hopes to find in the country of destination.

3

Protection incidents suffered during the journey

Most people on the move reported having suffered incidents such as robberies, scams, assaults, discrimination or have been victims of extortion, mainly in the Darien jungle. One Venezuelan even mentioned having witnessed a murder that took place precisely in the Darien. Some participants also reported that they were robbed in Costa Rica. Furthermore, they stated that since they started their journey, they have observed that the route is controlled by human traffickers who spread false information with the aim of getting people in mixed movements to hire their services.

The crossing of the Darien jungle has been described by several people as a traumatic experience due to the levels of violence suffered on the way, including seeing dead bodies. In addition, the participating women stated that they feel at constant risk of suffering sexual violence, as they have met several women who were raped in the Darien.

In addition, due to the scams they have suffered along the route, several people commented that they ran out of financial resources and are therefore forced to sell food in Honduras in order to raise money.

4

Access to food and basic services

Regarding access to food, most of the participants indicated that they have faced difficulties during the journey and have often only been able to eat one meal per day. Some also mentioned that they suffered from illnesses, especially their children, due to the consumption of poor quality food and non-potable water. In addition, they pointed out that in several places they have been sold food and drinks at prices significantly higher than those charged to local people. At the same time, several people highlighted the solidarity of some of the host communities located along the route, who offered them food.

5

Main needs

All participants indicated that their main needs are linked to the lack of financial resources for transport and food. The other needs they mentioned are: medical assistance (especially for children), water and sanitation services, hygiene products for children, and more information about the humanitarian assistance available along the route (especially shelters). They also recommended to improve the signposting of the available humanitarian services.

6

Country of destination

The majority of the participants indicated that their country of final destination is the United States. A small number mentioned that they are heading to Canada because they consider that the country offers good job opportunities. The Salvadoran and Nicaraguan asylum-seekers commented that their goal is to settle permanently in Honduras.

Main findings of the interviews carried out with key informants

In addition to the individual interviews conducted with refugees and migrants on the move and the focal group discussions, UNHCR interviewed two humanitarian actors in Tegucigalpa and Ocotepeque, obtaining the information detailed below:

1

Profiles of people in mixed movements

Both key informants indicated that refugees and migrants who arrive at the humanitarian assistance points are mainly from Venezuela and to a lesser extent from Colombia, Ecuador, Haiti and China, among others. Chilean girls and boys assisted are usually children of Haitian parents who previously resided in Chile. While about half of the people in mixed movements are men (mainly with an average age between 20 and 40 years old), the other half are women, girls and boys. According to the key informants, the most vulnerable profiles identified are: pregnant women; single mothers travelling sometimes with up to 3 or 4 children; unaccompanied children travelling with other people (relatives or acquaintances) indicating that their parents are in the country of destination.

In terms of language, most people in mixed movements speak Spanish, followed by English, Haitian Creole, Portuguese and French.

While people on the move do usually not stay for more than 30 minutes at the Agua Caliente exit border with Guatemala, in Tegucigalpa people tend to stay for several days, often in informal spaces they use as accommodation or they camp in public spaces that expose them to different protection risks.

2

The route

In 2024, the vast majority of people in mixed movements entered Honduras from Nicaragua through Las Manos border, and to a lesser degree via the Trojes border. People then travel by bus or on foot to Danlí and then to a bus terminal in Uyuca (located about 15km outside of Tegucigalpa) from where most people take direct buses to Agua Caliente border with Guatemala. Some people also walk from Uyuca to Tegucigalpa due to lack of financial resources, exposing themselves to traffic accidents and other risks.

According to key informants, while Cubans as well as people from some African and Asian countries usually arrive by plane to Nicaragua, many of the other nationals walked across the Darien and then continued their journey by bus.

Regarding transport costs, key informants indicated that the cost of crossing Honduras from the Nicaraguan border to the Guatemalan border ranges from 50 to 60 USD per person.

3

Protection incidents and risks

Key informants expressed that people in mixed movements have reported to them protection incidents on the route that occurred mostly outside of Honduras, such as in the Darien jungle, which include gender-based violence, robbery, extortion, assaults, charging of excessive prices (especially for transportation and food), discrimination, among others. Key informants also mentioned that a person's gender, age, economic situation, as well as not being able to communicate in Spanish, greatly influence the level of exposure to protection risks.

While in Tegucigalpa, the protection risks derived from the lack of shelters that meet minimum standards stand out, in Danli women on the move that were forced to carry out survival sex were identified.

4

Main Needs

Among the main needs reported are: food (especially for children); drinking water; medical assistance and access to medicines; psychological assistance; shelter; WASH facilities; information on humanitarian assistance and protection services available.

In addition, organisations providing medical assistance in Honduras raised their concern about the fact that sick people travelling in groups often prioritise continuing the journey to not lose their group rather than staying for a few days to receive the required medical treatment.

5

Country of destination

With regard to the country of destination, key informants stated that most refugees and migrants on the move are heading towards the United States, while a small number of people mention Canada or Mexico as their final destination, often because they have family members residing in those countries. When asked about the route they plan to use, people usually indicate that they will enter Guatemala on foot through informal border crossings located close to Agua Caliente to go to Esquipulas and from there continue their journey towards Tapachula in Mexico.

Pregnant women, single mothers and unaccompanied children are among the most vulnerable profiles according to key informants interviewed by UNHCR. UNHCR and its partners have humanitarian and information spaces in strategic locations along the route to minimize protection risks.

UNHCR/Lucía Martínez

UNHCR ACNUR
La Agencia de la ONU para los Refugiados

UNHCR Honduras
Data Sources: UNHCR Protection Monitoring, carried out between 3 and 13 June 2024.
Feedback: Sara Naama, Associate Information Management Officer, naama@unhcr.org
Marco Baumgartner, Associate Protection Officer, baumgarm@unhcr.org

For up-to-date information on the situation of mixed movements in the Darien crossing that impacts flows in Honduras, **please click here.**

UNHCR thanks the contributions of donor countries such as

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Belgium partner in development
In partnership with Canada
german humanitarian assistance
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Schweizerische Eidgenossenschaft Confédération suisse Confederazione Svizzera Confederaziun svizra Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation SDC
UKaid from the British people

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PEACEBUILDING FUND

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*As of June 2024