Protection Monitoring 2023

Aruba

Context

UNHCR and HIAS conducted a protection monitoring exercise in Aruba with refugees, asylum-seekers and migrants to better understand their profiles and protection needs. Data collection was implemented through **567 surveys (507 face-to-face surveys and 60 self-administered online surveys)**, assessing **1,397 people** in all eight districts of Aruba from **May 20 to December 7, 2023**. Surveys were applied at a household level, with a member of each household answering on behalf of the whole group. Assessed households had at least one person without permanent residency in Aruba. Data was collected by UNCHR and HIAS field and protection teams using KOBO Toolbox in places where people accessed work, social, commercial, and religious activities, among others. The findings of this survey, although indicative of the population of refugees, asylum-seekers, and undocumented migrants in Aruba, **are not statistically representative.**

1,397
Total people assessed*

3 people
Average household size

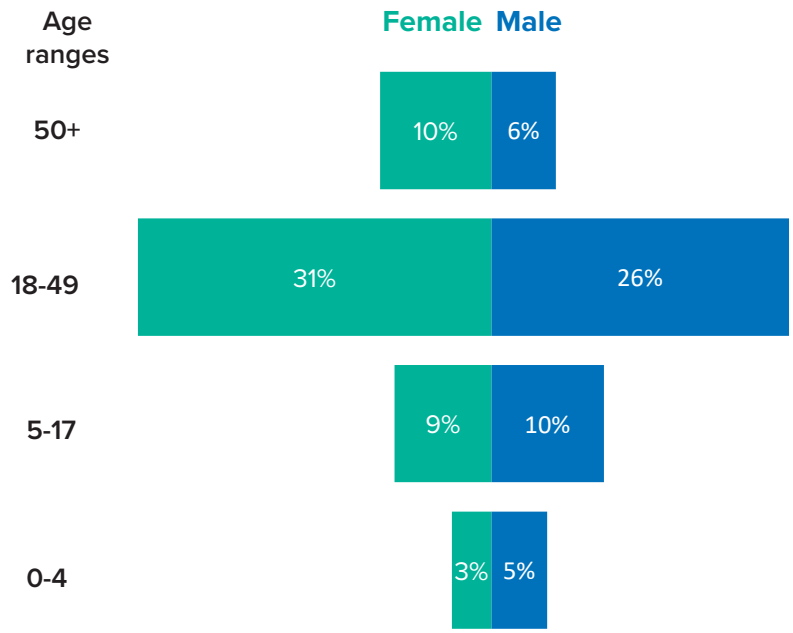
46%
Male

53%
Female

Assessed individuals were part of households with at least one foreign national **without permanent residency in Aruba.*

Less than 1% of assessed individuals responded "other" or did not answer.

Sex and age of assessed individuals**



***Does not include assessed individuals that responded "other" or did not answer (less than 1%).*

The boundaries and names shown and the designations used on this map do not imply official endorsement or acceptance by the United Nations.

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Demographics and Respondent Profiles

Average age of assessed individuals

31 Years | **29** Years | **33** Years

Country of origin of assessed individuals

67% Venezuela

21% Colombia

7%* Aruba

3% Dominican Republic

Other countries of include: Brazil, Chile, Cuba, Ecuador, Guyana, Peru, Philippines, and Suriname.

Including children born in Aruba that* ***do not have access to Dutch nationality.*

1% of assessed individuals were **children at risk of statelessness** due to lack of access to documentation in their parents' country of origin.

Main languages spoken by assessed households

Spanish **99%**
English **12%**
Others **1%**
Papiamento **36%**
Dutch **6%**

Other languages include Portuguese, and French.

8%

of assessed households reported living with pregnant or lactating women.

36%

of assessed households reported living with someone with a critical or chronic medical condition.

13%

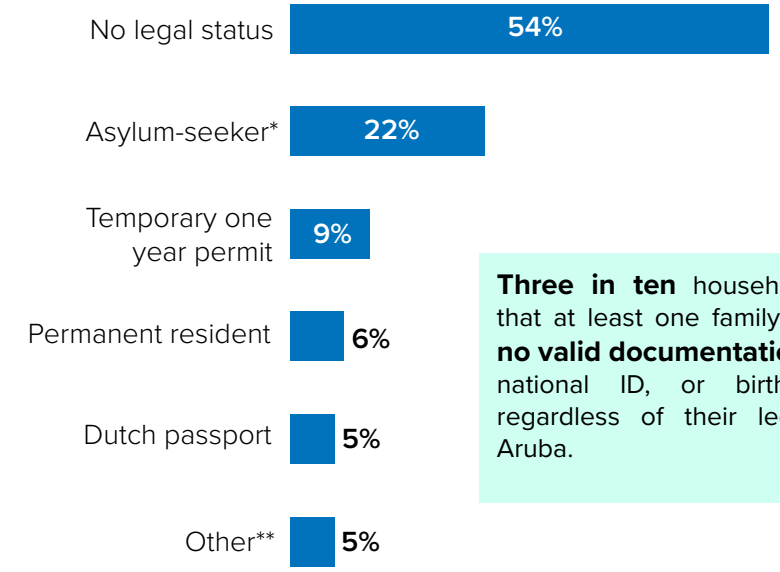
of assessed households reported living with someone with a disabilty.

79%

of assessed households reported having dependants outside of the country.

Documentation

Legal status in the country



Three in ten households reported that at least one family member had **no valid documentation** (passport, national ID, or birth certificate), regardless of their legal status in Aruba.

-Assessed individuals were part of households with at least one foreign national ***without permanent residency*** *in Aruba.*
65% of assessed asylum-seekers reported not having confirmation that their application was received and registered by the* ***Department of Integration and Management of Foreigners (DIMAS)**.*
***Others include family reunification permits, and both valid and expired tourist visas.*

50% of households with dependants abroad reported having at least one child (under 18) outside the country. Furthermore, **1 in 10 households** reported that a dependant had previously **been denied entry to or deported from Aruba.**

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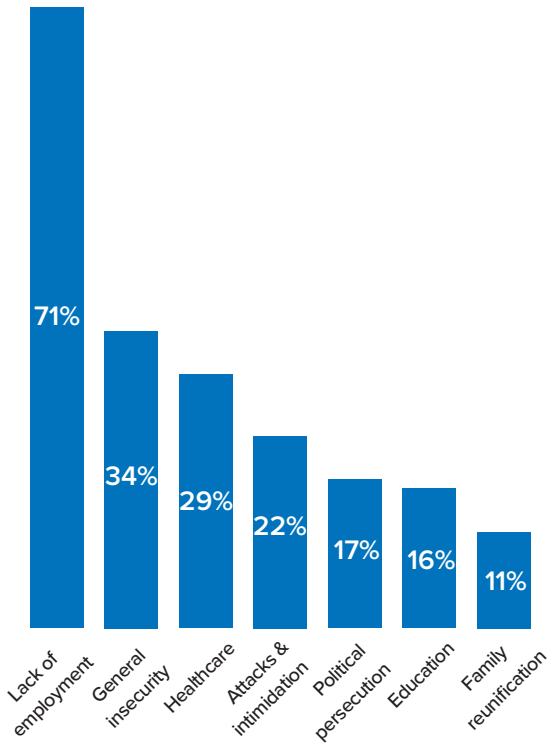
Push factors

Main reasons for leaving country of origin

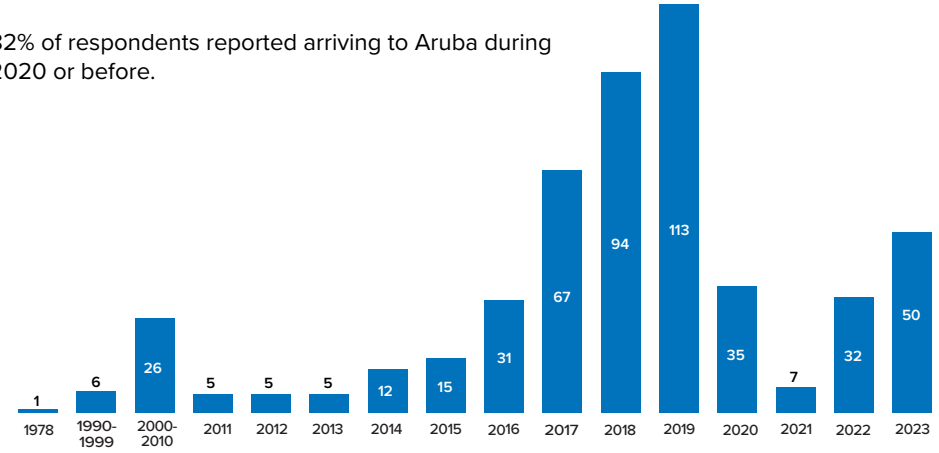


Half of the assessed individuals (51%) reported **two or more reasons** for leaving.
For those interviewed households that reported leaving their country of origin due to attacks or political persecution, the reasons were related to: **political opinion, gender-based violence, family disputes, and gang violence.**

Access to territory and asylum

Respondents' year of arrival to Aruba

82% of respondents reported arriving to Aruba during 2020 or before.



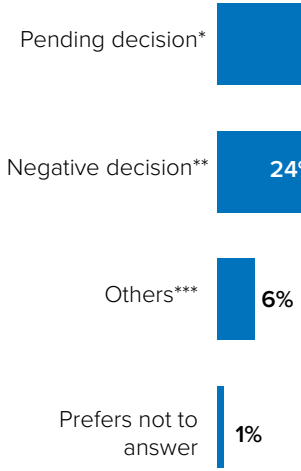
92%

of respondents reported having the intention to stay in Aruba during the next 12 months.

96%

of respondents reported entering the country regularly.

Status of asylum applications



51%

of assessed households reported that at least one family member had applied for asylum in Aruba.

*Includes households that reported not receiving confirmation that their application was registered by DIMAS.
**Includes households that reported appealing a negative decision.
***Includes asylum seekers awaiting their first interview with DIMAS, and asylum seekers that withdrew their claim.

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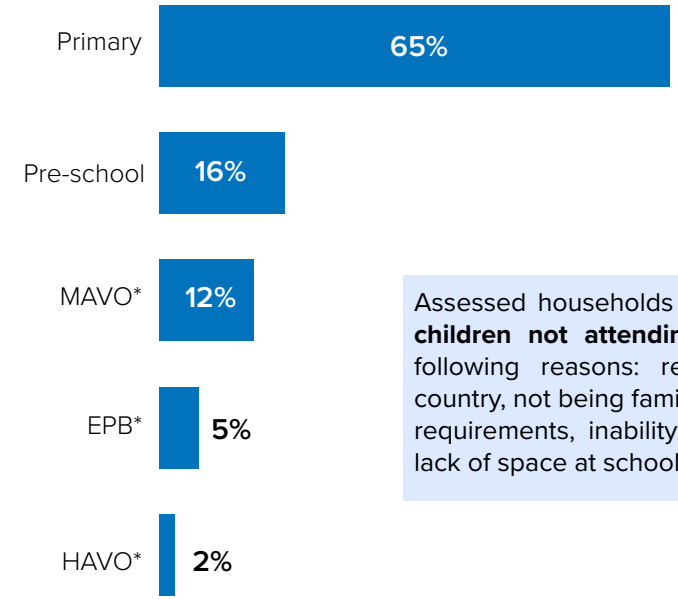
Education

92% of assessed school-aged children (4-17) were **currently enrolled** in school.

95% Boys **88%** Girls

Education level assessed children were enrolled in



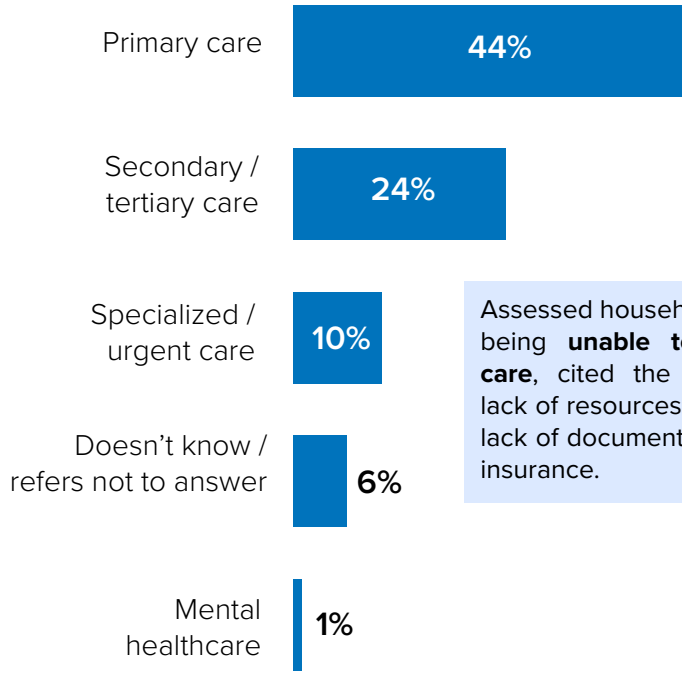
Assessed households that reported having **children not attending school,** cited the following reasons: recent arrival to the country, not being familiarized with the entry requirements, inability to cover costs, and lack of space at schools near their homes.

MAVO: *Secondary General Secondary Education*
EPB: *Lower Vocational Education*
HAVO: *Higher General Secondary Education*

Health

43% of respondents that needed **health services** during the past 12 months reported being **unable to access care.**

Type of healthcare required during the past 12 months



Assessed households that reported being **unable to access medical care**, cited the following reasons: lack of resources to cover expenses, lack of documentation, and of health insurance.

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Livelihoods

72% of assessed adults reported working during the previous 30 days.

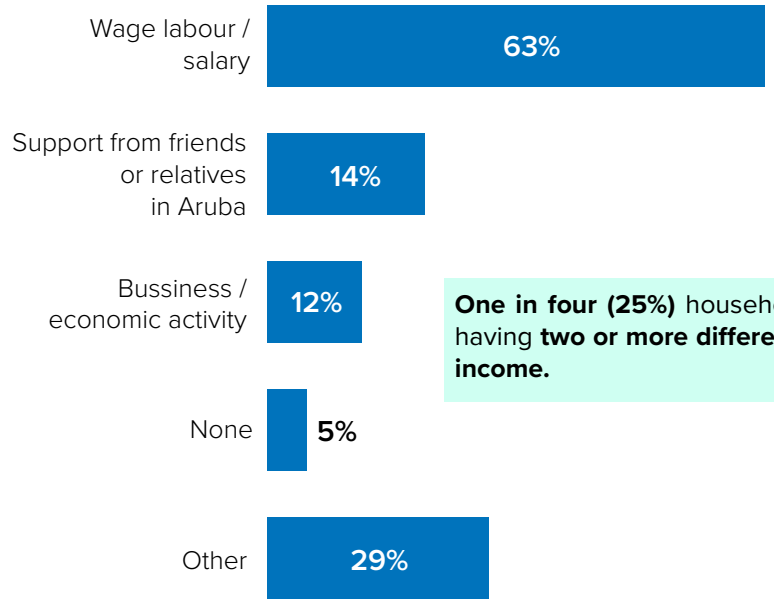
83% Men

64% Women

However, most of this work was informal. **At least 85% of assessed adults of working age, reported working informally,** without a contract. The most common reasons reported for not working were **lack of documentation (19%)**, **lack of opportunities (9%), childcare (6%), health issues, disabilities, and pregnancy.**

Working informally placed respondents **at risk of exploitation** in Aruba. Several assessed individuals who had worked informally **reported incidents related to the lack of payment by the employer**, even after several days or months, with the threat of being reported to the police for being undocumented.

Main reported sources of income during the last 30 days

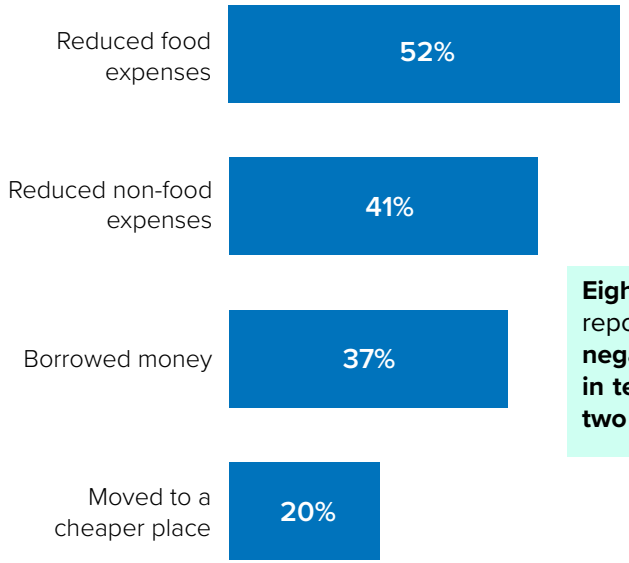


One in four (25%) households reported having **two or more different sources of income.**

Percentages do not add up to 100% as respondents could select multiple answers

Other reported income sources include assistance from NGOs, savings, remmitances, loans, and sale of assets.

Negative coping strategies reported during the last 30 days



Eight in ten (84%) households reported engaging in at least **one negative coping strategy**, while **six in ten (56%)** households engaged in **two or more**.

Percentages do not add up to 100% as respondents could select multiple answers

Other reported negative coping strategies include spending savings (11%), buying goods on credit (10%), selling productive assets (4%), sending household members to work elsewhere (2%), and involving children in income-generating activities (1%).

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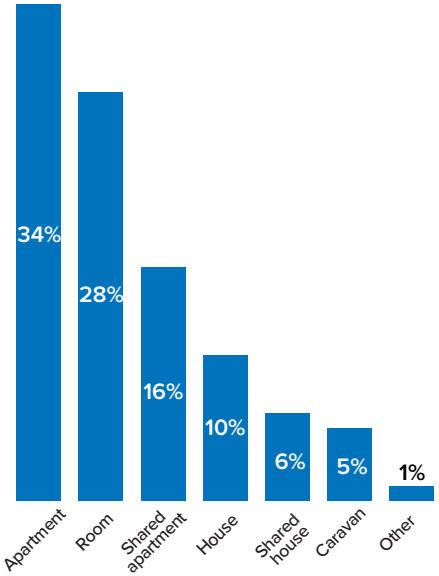
Housing

Type of dwelling the household lives in



Eight in ten households reported experiencing dificulties affording to pay their rent.

On average, respondents living in a house had **two** separate habitable rooms, while respondents living in an apartment had a **single** habitable room.

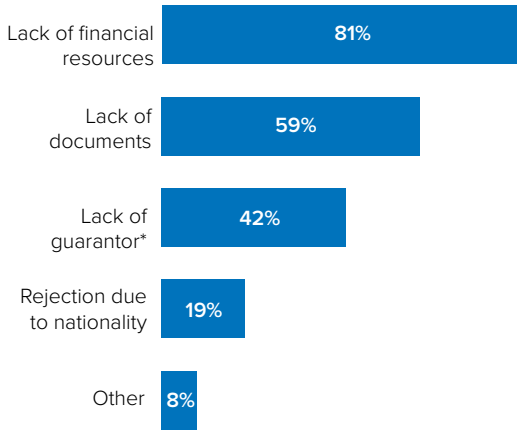
63%

of interviewed individuals do not have a rental contract for their current housing, only a verbal agreement.

43%

of assessed households reported having difficulties finding a place to stay.

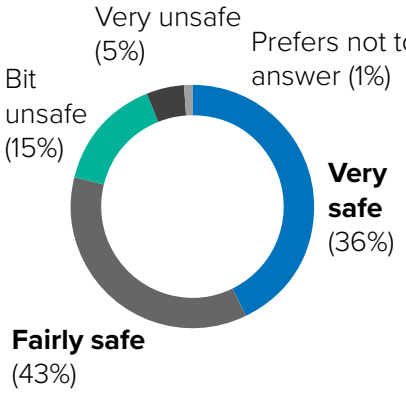
Reported obstacles finding a place to stay



**Having a guarantor is not a requirement by law, but is often requested by landlords as a liability measure.*

Safety

How safe do you feel walking alone in your area/neighbourhood after dark:



Most reported feeling unsafe due to fear of police / government agents, lack of documentation , and the risk of deportation

At least one in ten households reported having members who had experienced **issues related to their safety** in Aruba during the last 12 months.
Reported incidents included work abuse, verbal harassment, threats, theft, injuries, sexual harassment, physical assault, and bullying at school. In most cases, incidents were not reported due to **fear of deportation, and lack of confidence in authorities.**

Seven in ten assessed households described their interactions with host community members as **positive or very positive.**

7% of households reported there were areas in their community where girls and women felt unsafe or were at increased risk for violence. The reported risks were associated with the sale or use of drugs, sexual harassment, and being mistaken for sex workers.

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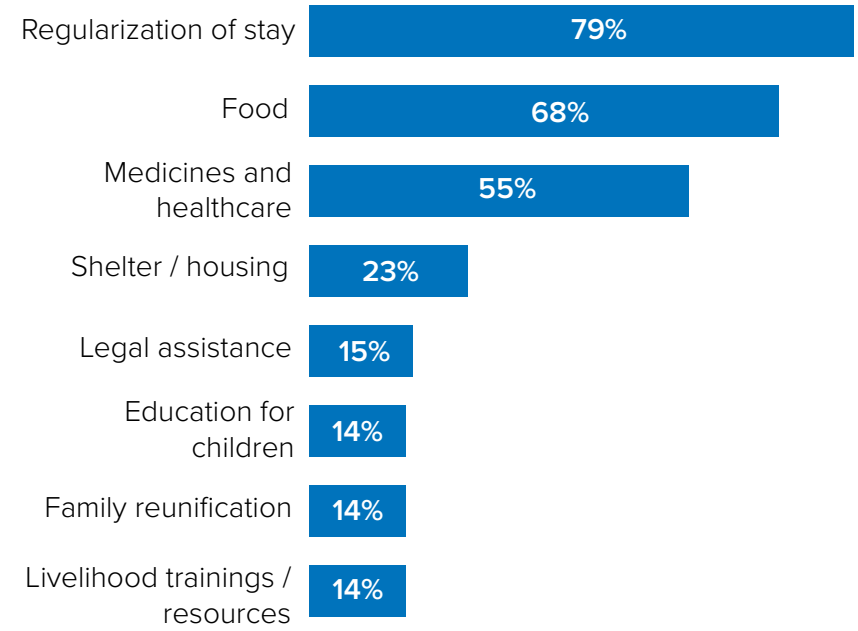
Main needs

What are your three priority needs to improve your household's current living conditions?



Other reported needs included language skills, psychosocial support, childcare items, access to credit, Internet and telephone access, and drinking water...

22%

of households reported knowing of vulnerable population in their community, with humanitarian needs and **not receiving assistance** from organizations or the government.

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UNHCR Multi Country Office for Belize, Cuba, Panama, Nicaragua and Southern Caribbean
Data Sources: UNHCR Protection Monitoring, conducted from the 20th May to 7th December 2023
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