

Mixed Movements Monitoring

July - September 2024



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Key Figures



5,571

Individuals were interviewed from July to September 2024.



46

Nationalities interviewed



52% VENEZUELAN
18% HONDURANS
9% COLOMBIANS
5% CUBANS
3% SALVADORANS
13% OTHER

Main countries of origin of respondents



32

Average age of respondents



GUATEMALA: 1,593
MEXICO: 1,558
PANAMA: 1,023
COSTA RICA: 660
HONDURAS: 532
CHILE: 205

Number of interviews per country



50%

Men



49%

Women



1%

Non-binary, prefer not to answer



56%

Travelling with family



40%

Travelling in families with children

Introduction and scope

In recent years, the Americas have experienced a significant increase in mixed movements, in which individuals and groups engage in human mobility using similar routes and means of transport for various reasons. The diverse population includes asylum-seekers, refugees, victims of human trafficking, unaccompanied and separated children (UASC), stateless persons, and migrants in vulnerable situations, among others.

To understand these dynamics, UNHCR and WFP launched a regional monitoring project in 2023, aiming to identify trends, profiles, and protection and food security needs of those on the move. Since the second quarter of 2024, UNICEF joined the project,

contributing to data collection and analysis, particularly on child-related indicators around nutrition, health, education, primary needs, and humanitarian assistance received.

Accurate data is crucial for informing evidence-based decision-making about responses, discussions in UN forums, and regional collaboration. The project's report explores the drivers of human mobility, profiles of individuals on the move, risks encountered along the journey, conditions in transit countries, food security, child protection, and intentions. The insights gathered aim to effectively shape policies and enhance humanitarian efforts.


Key Findings

- 63% of respondents cited violence as the primary reason for leaving their country of origin, the highest rate recorded since data collection began in 2023. This figure increases to 69% for those traveling with children, compared to lower rates among groups traveling without children.
- Individuals who reported experiencing or witnessing protection incidents are more likely to face heightened food security challenges and vice versa. This quarter, 66% of people who witnessed or had been victims of protection incidents also reported resorting to severe food coping strategies.
- Almost one in three respondents left their country of origin due to a lack of food, a slight increase from the previous quarter (27%). Food security remains a critical factor in the decision to leave one's country of origin, representing one of the main push factors behind mixed movements in the region.
- The food security situation of respondents in Costa Rica deteriorated significantly, with 85% of respondents resorting to severe coping strategies, the highest of all countries of interview and a 12 percentage-point increase from last quarter (73%)
- 64% of respondents traveling with children under 5 years of age reported employing severe food security coping strategies, like skipping meals or going an entire day without eating, compared to 54% of those without young children.
- 51% of respondents who had been residing in a previous host country, different from their country of origin, left without applying for legal status. This represents a notable increase compared to previous quarters, driven by persistent challenges in accessing legal pathways across the region.

Methodology

 **Q3** 2024
7th round of data collection

 **7** Countries of data collection: Panama, Costa Rica, Honduras, Guatemala, Mexico, Chile (new) and El Salvador (Pilot).¹
 **14** Partners

 Qualitative research in
COLOMBIA
HONDURAS
EL SALVADOR

The seventh round of data collection for the Mixed Movements Monitoring initiative was conducted from July 1st to September 30th, 2024. Chile joined the initiative this quarter, extending its reach further into South America. As in previous rounds, data was also collected in Panama, Costa Rica, Honduras, Guatemala, and Mexico.

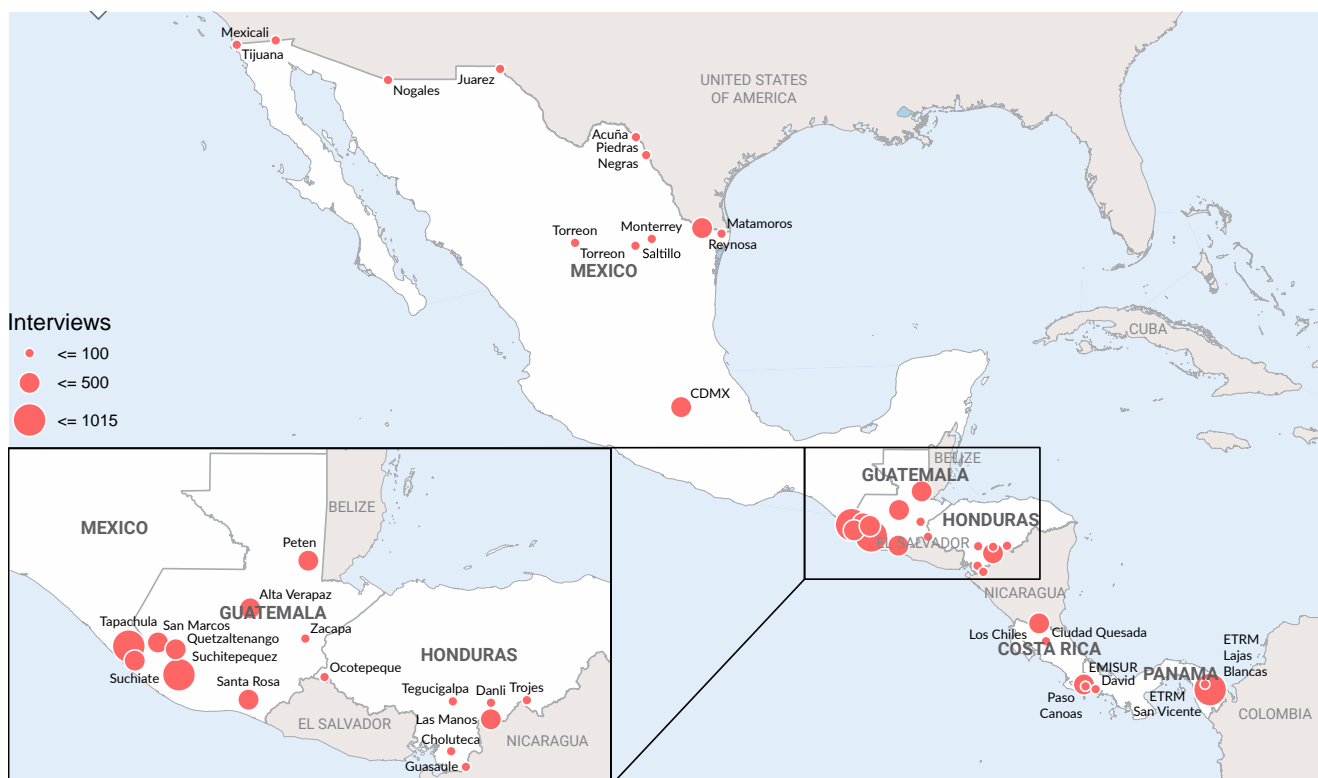
This round incorporated several key improvements in the questionnaire, particularly in the breakdown of data by age categories for children and family composition, enhancing its implementation at transit points. The research approach also included qualitative methods, such as focus group discussions, key informant interviews in Honduras and El Salvador, as well as field observations recorded in Colombia's Necocli Field Diary.²

The data analysis involved a collaborative process featuring an interagency joint interpretation session and consultations with field colleagues and experts across various areas of expertise. The report integrates official government data and secondary sources to complement the primary findings and provide additional context.

Methodological challenges emerged, including limited access to new points along the routes, difficulties reaching highly vulnerable populations, and overcoming linguistic and cultural barriers with individuals from other continents, which are not part of the sample. While the findings reflect the experiences of interviewed individuals, they provide valuable insights into trends in human mobility, protection risks, food security, and child protection among populations involved in mixed movements across the region.

Data collection locations

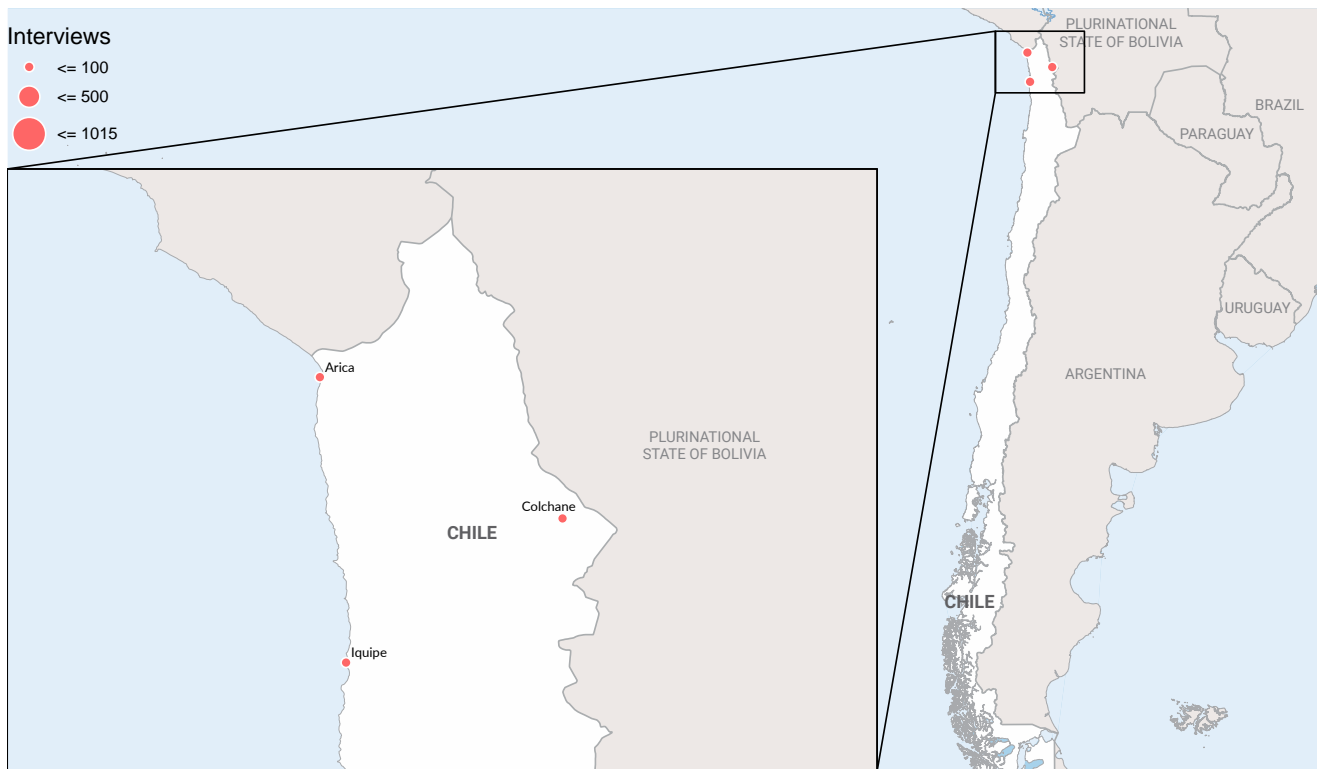
80% of the interviews in this round were conducted at formal and informal border crossing points, as well as nearby collective and temporary shelters. Additionally, interviews were held at non-border locations, such as strategic transit facilities, bus terminals, shelters, and reception sites.



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

¹ Agencies and partners in El Salvador have launched a pilot phase for data collection under the Mixed Movements Monitoring initiative. As this phase is dedicated to testing and refining data collection processes, quantitative findings from El Salvador will not appear in the current report. However, qualitative insights will be included to offer preliminary perspectives.

² The Necocli Field Diary was developed by UNHCR Colombia and partners as a qualitative tool to identify protection risks and incidents encountered by refugees and migrants in Necocli before the crossing of the Darien jungle.



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Mixed Movements Monitoring results

Human Mobility Context

Between July and September 2024, the number of individuals arriving in the Darien jungle declined significantly, continuing the downward trend observed since June. From January to September 2024, a total of 269,988 people crossed through the Darien, representing a 36% decrease compared to the same period in 2023. Several factors may explain this decline, including stricter measures announced by the government of Panama and initiatives to strengthen deportations. These changes may have led individuals to delay their journeys or opt for alternative routes, such as maritime travel from Colombia to Costa Rica via smuggling networks. Mixed Movements Monitoring reports have also noted an increase in the diversity of nationalities interviewed in other Central American countries, such as Honduras, suggesting a greater reliance on alternative routes to reach northern Central America.

Additionally, there was a significant decrease in the number of Chinese nationals crossing the Darien. This shift may be attributed to Ecuador’s introduction of visa requirements for Chinese citizens, which might have disrupted a common route through Ecuador and into the Darién, as well as Brazil’s new airport procedures for persons in transit, which have predominantly impacted extracontinental nationalities.

The number of children crossing the Darien has also seen a significant reduction. In 2023, 113,180 children crossed the jungle, with 15 born in the Panamanian territory. By September 2024, this figure had dropped to 57,115 children, with at least five births recorded in Panama’s Darien jungle. However, birth

data has not been updated since late August, suggesting the possibility of additional unreported cases.

Despite the overall decline, arrivals have started to rise again since late September and early October 2024, averaging around 900 people per day.

Refugees and migrants involved in mixed movements across the region continue to face dangerous conditions and significant protection risks, including theft, harassment, extortion, physical assault, human trafficking, and gender-based violence throughout their journeys. In the third quarter of 2024, 229 individuals were reported missing across North America, Central America, the Caribbean, and South America.

The persistence of mixed movements across Central America and Mexico continues to impact transit countries, particularly at the border and in other key areas where reception capacities and services remain under significant strain.

In **Costa Rica**, individuals traveling by bus from the Temporary Migratory Reception Stations in Panama typically arrive at the South Migration Station (EMISUR) on the Panama-Costa Rica border. From there, they continue their journey by bus to the Nicaraguan border. During the third quarter of 2024, a total of 65,793 people transited through the country. Regarding asylum applications, 7,334 new claims were lodged in the same period. The large majority of applicants were Nicaraguan (84%), followed by Venezuelan (6%) and Colombian (4%) nationals.

Honduras continues to report irregular entries during the third quarter of 2024, with 64,518 people entering, a 44%

decline compared to the previous quarter. The predominant nationalities were Venezuelan (58%), Cuban (12%), and both Colombian and Haitian (4%). Venezuela's share rose by 11% since the second quarter and increased significantly compared to the same period in 2023. In contrast, Cuba's share dropped by over 7%, slightly declining from the previous year. Ecuador also saw a decline from the previous quarter, falling from 4% to 3%, while China disappeared from the top five in the third quarter of 2024.

According to the Mixed Movements Monitoring initiative, in the third quarter of 2024, Venezuelan, Honduran, and now Colombian nationals were the main nationalities transiting through Guatemala. This marks a shift from previous trends, where Ecuadorians and Nicaraguans were more commonly identified among people involved in mixed movements.

In **Mexico**, 116,243 encounters were reported in July and 95,563 in August 2024³. The predominant nationalities were Venezuelan (27%), Ecuadorian (9%), and Colombian and Salvadoran (8% each). In August 2024, there were notable shifts compared to August 2023: Colombia, which had minimal entries last year, emerged as a significant nationality group, while Guatemala dropped out of the top rankings entirely. Similarly, entries from Honduras plunged by 71% from the previous year.

Additionally, in Mexico, the third quarter of 2024 saw 17,117 new asylum claims,⁴ a 54% decrease compared to the same period in 2023. This decline was likely influenced by policy and procedural changes introduced since October 2023 to preserve the integrity of the asylum system. These changes included screening individuals who declared their intention to continue to the United States, reintroducing a weekly signature requirement for asylum seekers, and revising procedures for issuing documentation to those awaiting a final decision on their cases. From the second to the third quarter of 2024, total asylum applications decreased moderately by 5%, with Honduras, Cuba, Haiti, and Venezuela remaining the top nationalities, all

experiencing slight declines. However, the year-on-year drop compared to the third quarter of 2023 was much sharper, reflecting a significant slowdown in asylum applications in Mexico during 2024.

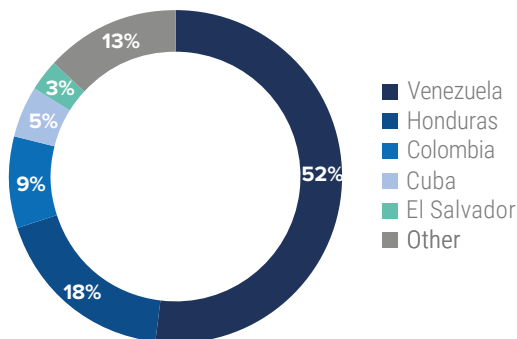
In the third quarter of 2024, there were 313,363 reported encounters at the U.S. Southwest land border, reflecting a decline compared to the second quarter of 2024, but still indicating a high level of activity. The primary nationalities in this period were Mexicans (33%), Venezuelans (13%), Cubans (10%), Guatemalans (7%), and Hondurans (7%). **Compared to the same period in 2023, when total encounters were significantly higher, the third quarter of 2024 saw a notable reduction in overall numbers, indicating a broader decline in movements.** While Mexicans remain the largest group, the share of Venezuelans and Cubans has increased compared to the previous year, with Colombians and Hondurans dropping in rank. The top nationalities remained mostly consistent between the second and third quarters of 2024, although overall encounters decreased by around 10%. Providing accurate information to people involved in mixed movements about the risks of irregular routes, access to essential services like safe shelter spaces, national asylum processes, and legal pathways, such as resettlement, is more important than ever. Without this information, individuals are more vulnerable to deception and exploitation, including extortion, robbery, and abuse.

Although **Chile** is primarily a destination country, the movement of people entering and exiting its borders reflects broader dynamics of mixed and onward movements in South America. These movements are often driven by factors such as the lack of pathways for legal status, the desire for family reunification, and the pursuit of better economic opportunities. While the majority of refugees and migrants are entering or re-entering Chile—many coming from third countries—some are leaving with the intention of returning to their countries of origin.

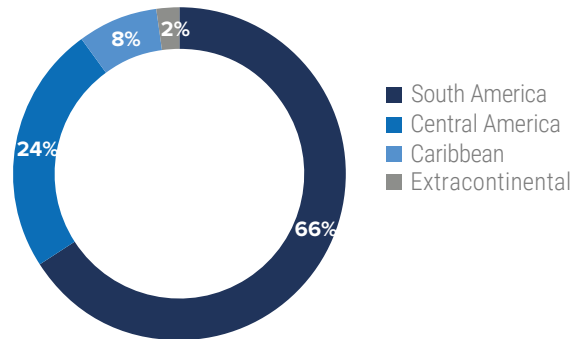
Demographics

GENERAL DEMOGRAPHICS

Countries of origin



Regions of origin of respondents (by geographic location)



³ September data was not available at the time of reporting.

⁴ Government of Mexico, October 2024. Available online at https://www.gob.mx/cms/uploads/attachment/file/947968/Cierre_Septiembre-2024_1-Oct_.pdf

During the third quarter of 2024, the Mixed Movements Monitoring initiative conducted interviews with individuals from 46 different nationalities. Mexico had the most diverse range of nationalities interviewed, with individuals from 30 different countries. Panama followed closely with 28 nationalities, marking a shift from the previous quarter, when Honduras was in second place. This quarter, Cubans and Salvadorians ranked among the top five nationalities interviewed, surpassing Haitians if compared to the previous quarter.

Two-thirds of the respondents came from South American countries, the highest proportion since data collection began. Except for Mexico, where most respondents were from Central America, the majority of interviewees in other

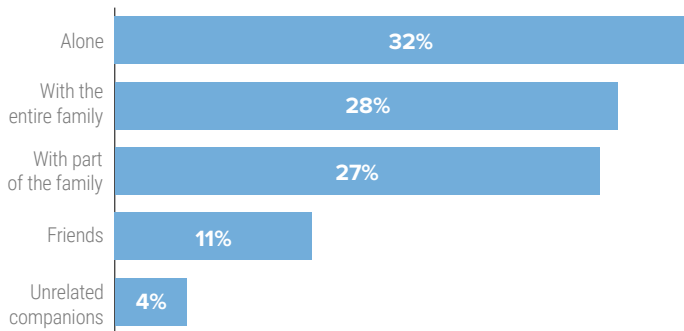
countries were from South America. Honduras had the largest share of Caribbean nationals interviewed among all countries.

Panama also had the highest proportion of extracontinental interviewees. In the Caribbean, Central America, and Mexico, the gender distribution among extracontinental respondents was almost equal. However, overall, more than two-thirds of extracontinental interviewees were men. Regarding age, Central America had the highest proportion of interviewees between 18 and 29 years of age (50%), followed closely by South Americans (47%).

98% of individuals interviewed in Chile were from South America, with Venezuelans accounting for 59%, followed by Bolivians (16%) and Colombians (14%).

Travel group composition

Who do you travel with?

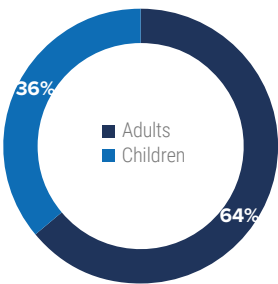


The proportion of respondents traveling alone reached the highest proportion at 32%, an increase from previous quarters. This increase was particularly notable among individuals from Central America and the Caribbean. Among solo travelers, 67% were men, a slight decrease compared to previous quarters, while the proportion of women increased. Venezuelan women made up the largest group of solo female travelers, while the share of Honduran women decreased.

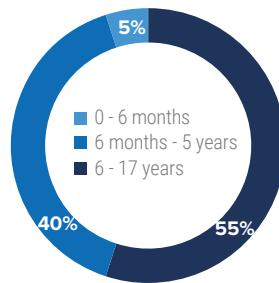
Regarding family travel, 56% of respondents are traveling with their families, while there has been a slight decline in the number of individuals traveling with only part of their family. South Americans are still more likely to travel with family, although this quarter saw a noticeable decrease in that trend. Data from the Darien crossing suggests that many individuals are making repeated journeys after being denied entry and subsequently returned to their countries of origin.

Family composition

Family age breakdown



Children in family age breakdown⁵



40%

of respondents indicated traveling with at least one child in their family, totaling 4,523 children.

As mentioned earlier, 56% of respondents reported traveling with their families, with an age distribution of 64% adults and 36% children. As observed in previous quarters, Central Americans traveled with their families less frequently than South Americans, though their families tended to include a higher proportion of children compared to South American families.

The average family consists of four members, typically including three adults and one child. Caribbean families tend

to have fewer children, with an average of 1.4 children per family, compared to families from other regions.

40% of respondents indicated traveling with at least one child in their family, totaling 4,523 children. Among these children, 45% are under the age of 5, while 55% are children aged 6 to 17 years.

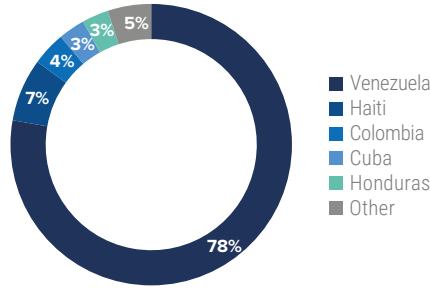
⁵ Due to differences in questions related to children between survey versions, we were able to map only 4,513 family children to the respective age group, while the total reported in the family composition graph is 4,523. This small difference do not affect the percentages.

Host countries⁶

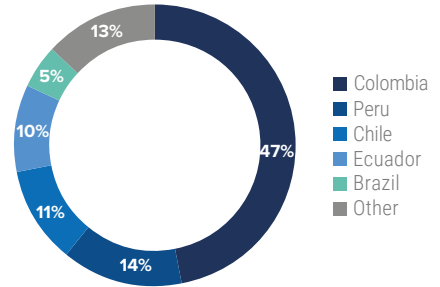
21%

of the respondents have lived in one or more countries other than their country of origin for at least six months.

Main nationalities of respondents who resided in host countries



Previous host countries



The highest rates of respondents previously living in a host country were found in Panama and Chile, largely due to the high number of Venezuelan interviewees, who are the main nationality of those who have lived in a host country before.

In Panama, Colombia (55%) and Ecuador (11%) were the primary host countries, while in Chile, they were Peru (33%) and Colombia (23%).

LEGAL STATUS

Legal status of respondents who have lived in a previous host country

Out of the 21% of respondents who have lived in other countries for more than 6 months:



51%

did not apply for a legal status



38%

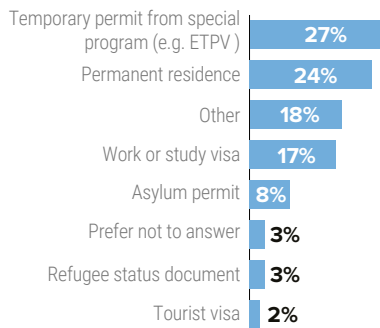
applied and obtained a legal status



10%

applied but did not obtain a legal status

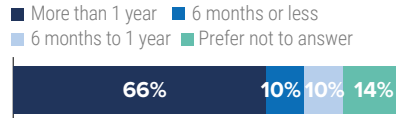
Type of legal status obtained



Have applied, obtained a legal status in host country and the document is still valid



Have applied, obtained a legal status in host country by document validity



In this quarter, a significant portion of respondents (51%) left their previous host countries without applying for legal status. This proportion, higher than in previous quarters, can be attributed to the general narrowing of legal pathways available to recently displaced individuals. This has led to a growing number of cases involving undocumented status, irregular stays, and onward movements across the region. Among those who did apply for legal status, 27% obtained temporary permits through special programs, such as Colombia's ETPV (*Estatuto Temporal de Protección para Migrantes Venezolanos*), while 24% secured permanent residency.

Legal status acquisition varied considerably by country of interview. For instance, in Honduras, many Haitians reported applying for work or study visas in Chile; while in Chile, most Venezuelans had sought permanent residency in Peru. The percentage of respondents applying for asylum increased, rising from 5% in the first quarter to 8% in the third quarter of 2024, particularly among Venezuelans in Peru and Colombia. This finding aligns with qualitative data from the Necocli Field Diary in Colombia, which also shows an increase in people who had applied for asylum in Chile and Peru, reflecting a growing need for international protection. Despite seeking asylum,

many face long wait times and uncertainty about their legal status, which exacerbates their vulnerability and often drives them to consider other options, such as crossing through the Darien.

In terms of nationalities, the proportion of Cubans with legal status in their host countries grew from 17% to 28% compared to the previous quarter, with Brazil and Nicaragua as the top host countries for this nationality (21% each).

Notably, data from Brazil indicates that Cubans have become the top nationality applying for asylum. In the first half of 2024, Cuban nationals remained the largest group awaiting refugee status decisions, extending the trend from 2023. Pending asylum applications from Cubans increased by 33%, rising from 19,633 in 2023 to 26,225 by mid-2024.

In general terms, the majority of respondents who had resided in a host country cited the lack of access to employment opportunities as their primary reason for leaving (67%), followed by fear of the generalized violence and security situation (29% in total).


⁶ Host country: The country in which a non-national stays or resides, whether legally or irregularly. The Mixed Movements Monitoring considers host country a country in which the person has resided for more than six months.

DOCUMENTATION

Reflecting previous trends, 84% of respondents carry national ID cards, while 27% have passports. The type of documentation varies significantly by region of origin: Caribbean (85%) and extracontinental (69%) respondents primarily use passports, whereas South Americans (93%) and Central Americans (76%) mainly possess ID cards. Additionally, 15% of passport holders

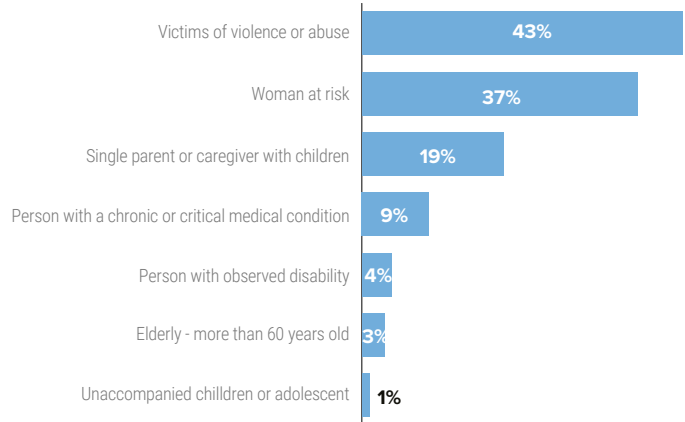
have expired passports, consistent with earlier data. The only significant change this quarter compared to the previous one is a 6% drop in Central Americans possessing ID cards, accompanied by a 7% increase in passport holders and a 3% rise in those using birth certificates.

SPECIFIC PROTECTION NEEDS

 **31%** of individuals/families with at least one specific protection need observed.⁷


This quarter, the number of respondents with specific needs increased slightly, rising to 31% compared to 26% in the previous quarter. Specifically, victims of violence or abuse (43%) and women at risk (37%)⁸ were the most commonly


Type of specific protection needs observed



observed profiles with specific needs among respondents. Notably, the number of respondents with specific needs was higher among those, reaching 45%.

Pregnant or breastfeeding women or girls⁹

 **5%** of pregnant women in travel group.

 **9%** of breastfeeding women in travel group.

Respondents were asked whether any women in their travel group were pregnant or breastfeeding. 5% reported at least one pregnant woman in their group, while 9% reported having at least one breastfeeding woman. The highest proportion of pregnant women was found among Hondurans and Colombians (6%), while Venezuelans had the highest proportion of breastfeeding women (11%).

⁷ Persons with specific needs are particularly exposed to protection risks and abuses as the difficult conditions of the journey heighten their vulnerability to abuse and exploitation and put them at risk of irreversible and lasting harm. Any person who experiences particular protection risks or barriers due to the intersection of their personal characteristics with the environments require specific targeted actions in order to enjoy the full range of their human rights. This is an internal query completed by enumerators at the end of the questionnaire and may not fully capture the range and extent of specific needs among all individuals.

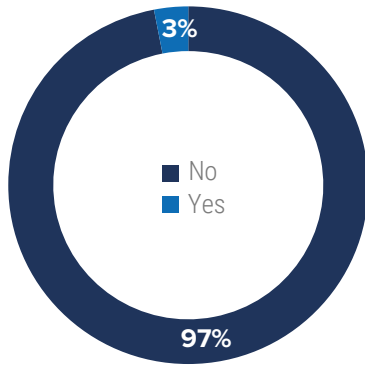
⁸ The category "women at risk" refer to women who are pregnant, breastfeeding or have faced other risks, threats, or violence during the route.

⁹ There was an improvement in the methodology to determine which respondents were asked about pregnant women or girls in their travel groups, applying the same criteria used for the question on breastfeeding women. Respondents were now asked this question if they were traveling with others or, if traveling alone, identified as women or another gender identity. In contrast, in the previous quarter this question was asked only to respondents not traveling alone, regardless of their gender.

Unaccompanied or separated children

Child or adolescent separated from their parent or legal guardian and is not currently with the respondent

(Data not collected in Chile)



Among the respondents, 3% have reported that at least one child or adolescent in their family has been **separated** from parents or legal guardians and is not currently with the family.¹⁰ This incidence is higher for respondents in Honduras (8%, i.e. 18 out of 237 interviews).

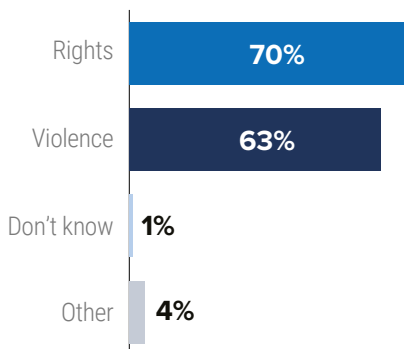
Qualitative data from the Necocli Field Diary in Colombia highlight a growing number of unaccompanied adolescents traveling alone along this stretch of the route, posing serious challenges for their care and protection. Organizations providing assistance face resource and staffing limitations, making it difficult to offer adequate support to these young people in critical situations.

UNICEF Panama has identified a total of 1,093 unaccompanied or separated children entering the country from the Darien jungle during this quarter, corresponding to 8% of children.

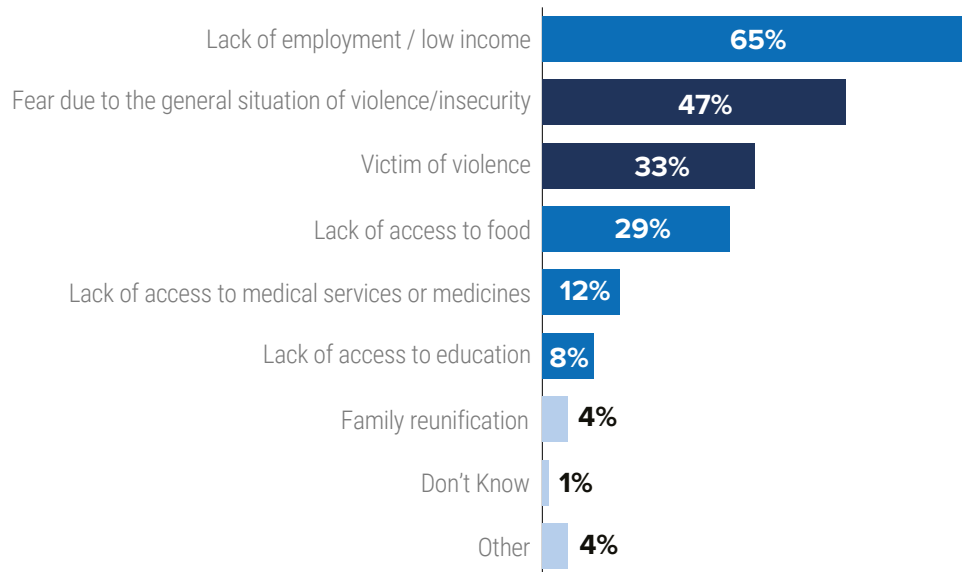
Displacement

REASONS TO LEAVE COUNTRY OF ORIGIN¹¹

Reasons to leave country of origin (groups)¹²



Reasons to leave country of origin (breakdown)¹³



¹⁰ Results do not include Chile in this quarter since the question was slightly different: "Since you began your travel journey, has any child or adolescent in your group been separated from their father, mother or legal guardian?"

¹¹ The monitoring exercise examines the motives for respondents leaving their respective countries of origin. The question posed to respondents allows for multiple answers, facilitating a comprehensive understanding of the multifaceted factors influencing their decision to leave. In the subsequent analysis, the various responses are classified into three overarching groups: reasons related to violence, reasons related to lack of/difficulties in accessing rights, goods, and services, and reasons related to other factors.

¹² **Rights-related:** This category encompasses factors associated with the lack of access to basic rights and services, including challenges related to employment, low income, food, medical services, or education. **Violence-related:** Within this category, responses are linked to concerns about the general situation of violence or insecurity, as well as instances of being a victim of violence, including threats and intimidation. **Other:** This category encompasses a range of reasons, including but not limited to family reunification, natural disasters, and other options that may not distinctly fall into the rights-related or violence-related categories.

¹³ In previous quarters, "victim of violence" and "threats/intimidation" were two separate answer options. After the third quarter of 2023, the answer options were revised and consolidated. "Victim of violence" now identifies "The person or someone close to them was a victim of violence, threats or intimidation (extortion, assault, GBV, kidnapping, discrimination / xenophobia, etc.)".

 **70%**

of respondents left their country of origin due to a lack of employment opportunities, barriers in accessing the labor market, and lack of rights and services, such as food, health, or education.

The most frequently cited reason behind human mobility continues to be the lack of access to employment (65%), showing a slight increase compared to previous quarters.

 **63%**

of respondents cited violence-related factors as motivation for their decision to leave their country of origin.


This includes fear due to the general situation of violence/insecurity (47%) or suffering violence or intimidation themselves (e.g., extortion, assault, kidnapping, discrimination, xenophobia, etc.) (33%). The percentage of people reporting violence as a reason for leaving their country of origin has steadily increased, rising from 53% in the first quarter of 2024 to 63% in the current quarter.

 **35%**

of respondents mentioned both violence and limited access to basic rights and services as reasons to leave their country of origin.


This underscores the interconnected and overlapping nature of the factors driving mixed movements.

Respondents in families with children reported a slightly higher incidence across all categories of reasons for leaving their countries of origin, both related to challenges in access to basic rights and services, as well as violence. This suggests an increased vulnerability of families and children within mixed movements.

 **1 in 3** of respondents cited lack of food as one reason for having left the country of origin, a consistent increase from the previous quarters.

Respondents traveling with children were more likely to leave their country of origin due to food shortages, with 34% citing this as a reason, compared to 25% of those traveling without children. When comparing regions of origin, 36% of people from South America cite lack of access to food as one of their top three reasons for leaving their country. In contrast, the percentages for Central America and the Caribbean were lower, at 16% and 14%, respectively. Food security remains a critical factor in the decision to leave one's country of origin, representing one of the main push factors behind mixed movements in the region.

JOURNEY¹⁴

 **COLOMBIA: 59%**
PANAMA: 48%
GUATEMALA: 48%
HONDURAS: 44%
NICARAGUA: 27%

Top 5 countries of transit

Human mobility patterns in the third quarter highlight the complex and diverse routes individuals from different regions take, shaped by factors such as their countries of origin, reasons for movement, financial resources, and intended destinations. Central America remains a crucial transit hub for many travelers. When analyzing the transited countries reported in the data collected during this exercise, most individuals, particularly from Venezuela and Colombia, follow well-established routes through Central American countries, with frequent transit through Colombia, Panama, Costa Rica, Nicaragua, Honduras, and Guatemala. These patterns suggest that travel is predominantly overland, although some individuals reported taking direct routes or did not disclose

their travel details, indicating the possibility of alternative means, such as flights. Venezuelans are particularly well-represented in this data, with many passing through multiple countries, reflecting the significant movement from this region. While overland routes are the most common, a small number of cases point to the use of alternative transportation methods.

The routes differ significantly among various groups, reflecting their diverse protection needs, risks, and barriers to accessing safety and territory. Panamanian government statistics for the third quarter of 2024 indicate a 32% reduction in the number of people crossing the Darien jungle compared to the previous quarter, a trend mirrored by an 8% decrease in crossings observed in this exercise's data. This drop is partly attributed to the stricter policies implemented by Panama's new government. While South Americans and extra-continental travelers still dominate crossings, 90% of Caribbean nationals interviewed avoided the Darien, suggesting the use of alternative routes.

Alternative routes, especially by sea, continue to grow. The Caribbean Sea route from San Andres Island, a Colombian territory, to Nicaragua continued to be used during the third quarter of 2024. UNHCR's remote monitoring suggests

¹⁴ Interviews conducted in Chile were excluded from the analysis of routes extending northward from Darien. This decision aims at ensuring data consistency across the various route-specific indicators.

that this route is increasingly used by individuals with more financial means who seek to avoid the dangerous overland journey through the Darien jungle.

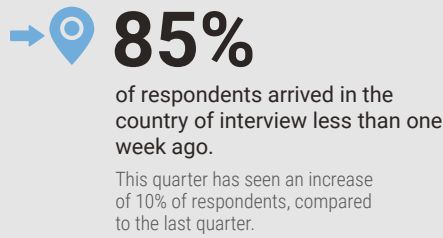
Nicaragua continues to allow visa-free entry for citizens from over two dozen African countries and Cuba. During this reporting period, there has been a marked increase in the number of Cuban nationals arriving in Nicaragua. Additionally, reports indicate that Venezuelans are traveling from Venezuela to Cuba and then onward to Nicaragua, with most continuing their journey towards Mexico and beyond.¹⁵

Focus group discussions with Venezuelan and Colombian participants in Honduras reveal individuals feel they could

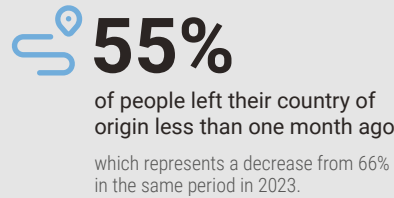
access humanitarian assistance throughout their transit in the country, including access to information, internet, accommodation, medical services, and support from host community members.

In Guatemala, there are a significant number of people in mixed movements from Ecuador and the Dominican Republic. The most common profiles are entire families with different compositions, including young couples, single adults, and older adults. Due to the visa requirement for these nationalities to access Guatemalan territory, many people cross into Honduras and join larger groups of people before entering Guatemala.

Arrival to country of interview



Length of journey



Intended length of stay



¹⁵ Bolivarian Government of Venezuela, Ministerio del Poder Popular para el Transporte, May 2024. Available online at <https://www.mppt.gob.ve/2024/conviase-reactiva-su-vuelo-directo-entre-caracas-y-managua/>



PROTECTION INCIDENTS



59%

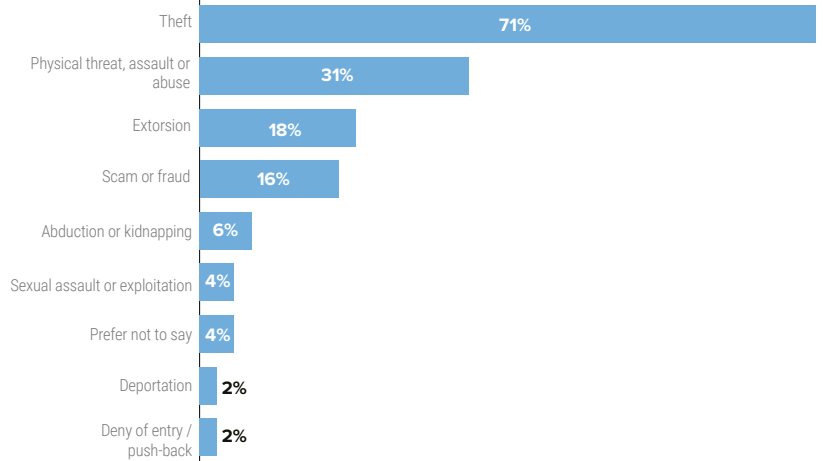
of the people interviewed experienced or witnessed a protection incident or threat along the route.



62%

of respondents travelling with children reported protection incidents or threats, a higher proportion compared to the 54% of respondents travelling without children who reported such incidents. This suggests an increased level of exposure to protection incidents among groups with children.

Type of protection incidents (breakdown)



In the third quarter of 2024, a significant 59% of respondents reported experiencing or witnessing a protection incident or threat along their route. This represents a notable decrease from the previous quarter when 72% of respondents reported such incidents. This decline corresponds to lower reporting of protection incidents and threats on the route among those interviewed in Panama. This decrease may be attributed to the Government's strategy of channeling individuals along a single route to enhance security presence, coupled with the detention of several individuals under investigation for attacks on refugees and migrants in transit.

Theft continues to be the most prevalent type of incident, representing 71% of reported cases and far surpassing other categories. While reports of fraud have decreased from 29% in the previous quarter to 16%, the incidence of abductions has shown a concerning rise, now accounting for 6% of reported cases. This rate is slightly higher for families with children, at 8%.

Female respondents report certain types of incidents at higher rates than male respondents, such as exploitation, deportation, and denial of entry into territories. Additionally, a heightened number of respondents (74%) reported facing protection threats on their route to Costa Rica, underscoring increased risks associated with this route following the crossing through Panama and the Darien jungle.

Qualitative data from El Salvador indicate that some individuals who are part of mixed movements may be held up and returned from Guatemala. In such cases, these individuals may be returned from El Salvador to their countries of origin. The majority of them are of Ecuadorian, Dominican Republic, and Brazilian nationalities. Throughout the process, protection issues have been identified, particularly with regard to international protection for women, children, and adolescents.

ACCESS TO FOOD

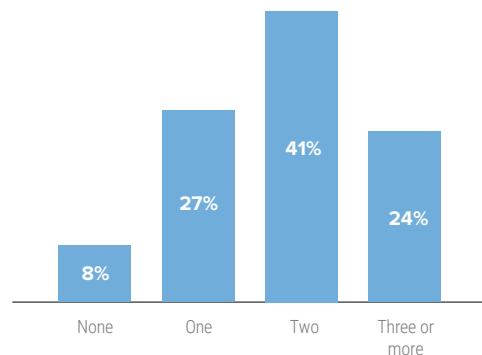


35%

of respondents reported having only one meal or none the day before the interview, which is relatively unchanged compared to the previous quarter (34%).

These figures were highest in Guatemala where 46% of interviewees reported having one meal or none the day prior, followed by respondents in Costa Rica (41%).

How many meals did you eat yesterday?



Food insecurity remains a critical issue throughout the journey. Over one-third of respondents (35%) only managed to consume a single meal (27%) or went without food entirely (8%) on the day before the interview. While the overall figure is consistent with the previous quarter, the number of people reporting going a whole day without food the day before the survey has doubled (4%).

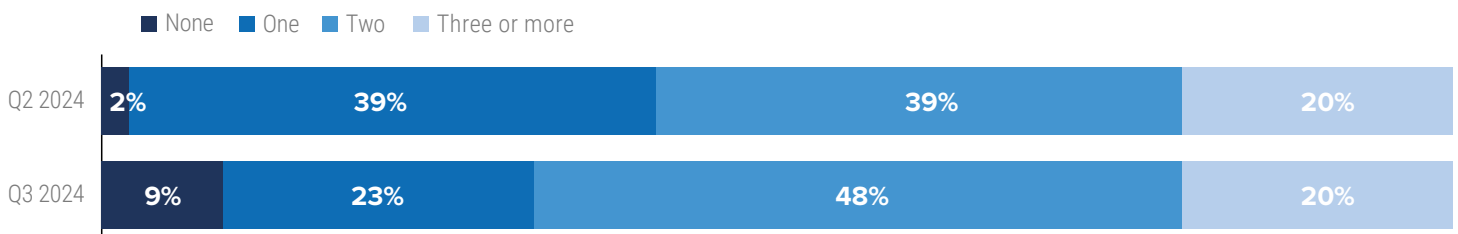
In Panama, there was an increase in food consumption, with 32% of respondents reporting one or no meals the day prior, a noticeable decrease from 50% in the last quarter. A similar trend is seen in Honduras, where the percentage of respondents reporting one or no meals has dropped from 30% in the previous quarter to 18%. However, in Costa Rica, a pattern of improvement related to food consumption from previous quarters was broken, with 41% of respondents reporting having one or no meals the day before the interview, which is up from 22% in the last quarter. This number was 44% in the first quarter of 2024. Costa Rica also reported the highest percentage of people eating no meals the day prior to the interview (19%), an increase from the previous quarter (10%). Chile was included in the data collection this quarter,

revealing that an astonishing 41% of respondents reported having eaten one or no meals the day before the interview, with 16% indicating they had not eaten at all.

The number of respondents reporting three meals the day before the interview shows steady improvement over time. This quarter, 24% of respondents reported three meals the day prior, the highest since data collection began. This could be due to either increased humanitarian assistance along the routes or changing transit routes.

Regarding nationalities, this quarter has seen a decrease in the number of Central American nationalities reporting low meal consumption (one or no meals the day before the interview), with 32% this quarter, down from 41% in the last quarter. However, 26% of nationals from El Salvador reported one or no meals the prior day, a slight increase from the last quarter (22%). One exception is that Hondurans have seen a steady decrease in this indicator, with 33% reporting one or no meals the day prior, a steady drop from 46% and 60% in the last two quarters, respectively.

How many meals did you eat yesterday? (Central American countries of origin, comparison between Q2 2024 and Q3 2024)



Meanwhile, among the other nationalities interviewed, Venezuelans and Colombians had the worst food consumption (40% and 39%, respectively), representing a deterioration since last quarter (33% and 32% respectively). The highest meal consumption was among Cubans, with 56% reporting having three meals the day before the interview, a trend consistent with the previous quarter.

Following UNICEF's involvement in the monitoring exercise, questions and crosstabs regarding food consumption and

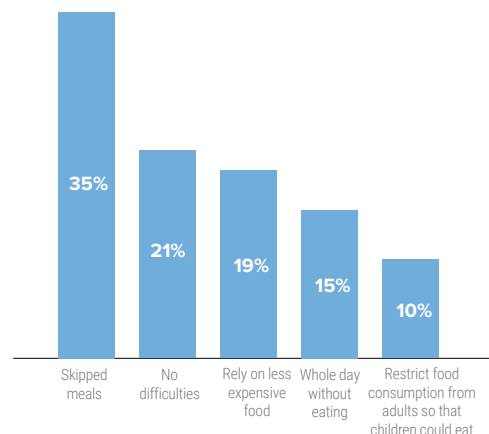
travel group composition have been included in the past few quarters. As a result, data reveals that 42% of respondents traveling with children under 6 months of age report eating one or no meals (with 11% skipping meals entirely), lower than the 35% among those without young children. This difference may be partly attributed to smaller travel groups, but it raises concerns, particularly since breastfeeding women, who should not skip meals to ensure proper nutrition for their babies, are often included in these groups.

79%

of respondents faced difficulties covering their food needs and had to resort to various negative coping strategies due to lack of food or insufficient funds to purchase it.

This quarter, the number of people reporting that they chose to restrict their meal consumption so that children in their family or traveling group could eat increased twofold, from 5% to 10%.

Percentage reporting different consumption coping strategies



When asked about their food situation over the previous week, 21% of respondents reported having no difficulties, a slight increase from the last quarter (18%). Still, most people adopted coping mechanisms to face food shortages and the lack of financial means to access food (79%). These strategies range from skipping meals (35%) to eating cheaper and less preferred foods (19%), as well as regularly spending entire days without eating (15%). Women were more likely than men to restrict their consumption so children or dependents could eat (12% and 7%, respectively), a pattern consistent with previous quarters. Remarkably, the choice to restrict food so children can eat doubled this quarter, from 5% to 10%. In the previous quarter, a new question was introduced to understand the relationship between group composition and food coping strategies. 71% of respondents who traveled with children under 5 years of age reported employing severe coping mechanisms related to food security, such as skipping meals or going an entire day without eating, representing an increase from the previous quarter (64%).

Skipping meals was reported most in Panama (57%) and Costa Rica (55%), a contrast to last quarter where Guatemala (39%) and Mexico (37%) were the two highest. The figures improved slightly in Guatemala and Mexico this quarter, with 31% and 27% respectively. 17% of respondents in Panama reported going a whole day without eating this quarter, a noticeable improvement since the last quarter (41%). This quarter, Guatemala reported 21% of respondents going a whole day without food, the highest among all countries. In Honduras, 39% of respondents reported not having difficulties accessing food, a pattern consistent with the last two quarters.

This quarter several food security indicators in Costa Rica have shown a deterioration. 19% of respondents in the country

report having no meals a day, and 87% of respondents cite food for the family as the number one need, the highest in all countries of interview for both indicators. The number of people reporting to skip meals increased by 25 percent points since last quarter, from 30% to 55%.

Regarding severe food coping strategies, which include skipping meals, going a whole day without eating, and restricting food consumption from adults so that children can eat, there was an increase from the previous quarter from 55% to 60% this quarter. In Costa Rica, there was a noticeable increase, with 85% of respondents choosing severe coping strategies, the highest of all countries of interview and a 12 percent increase from last quarter (73%). Meanwhile, most respondents in Honduras reported the opposite, with 33% of respondents resorting to severe food coping strategies, consistent with the previous quarter. This could highlight the difference between the institutional and humanitarian support offered at different points along the route, changing mixed movement routes, and the location of the data collection sites along the journey. It is notable that data collection in Chile began this quarter, revealing that 56% of respondents are resorting to severe food coping strategies, such as skipping meals (23%) or restricting adults' food consumption so that children can eat (19%).

In focus groups conducted in Honduras this quarter, female participants reported that they and their families had to rely on water from rivers and other contaminated sources, leading to skin diseases among their children. They also noted that in several locations along their route, including in Honduras, they were charged significantly higher prices for food and drinks than the host community. Additionally, they highlighted that this issue disproportionately affects non-Spanish speakers.

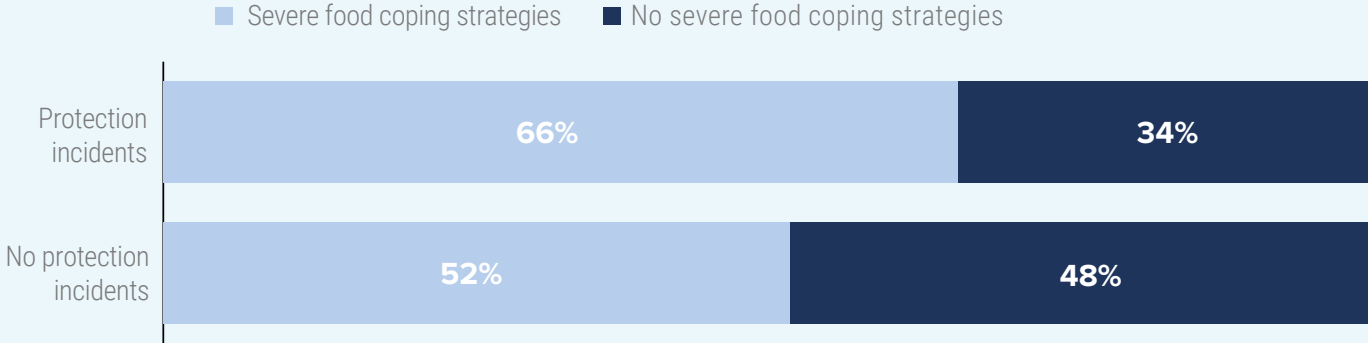
Food security and protection



This quarter, 66% of the respondents who reported at least one protection incident on the route also engaged in severe coping mechanisms related to food security, including skipping meals and going

a whole day without eating, a slight increase since last quarter (61%). In contrast, 52% of respondents who did not report protection incidents engaged in severe coping mechanisms.

Severe food coping strategies by victim/witness of protection incident




This quarter, Venezuelans and Colombians fared worse than other nationalities for adopting severe food coping mechanisms and being victims of protection incidents (71% and 70%, respectively). Both nationalities reported the highest indicators for skipping meals (38%) and restricting food so children could eat (14%).

72% of individuals who experienced or witnessed theft, the most prevalent protection incident reported this quarter, also

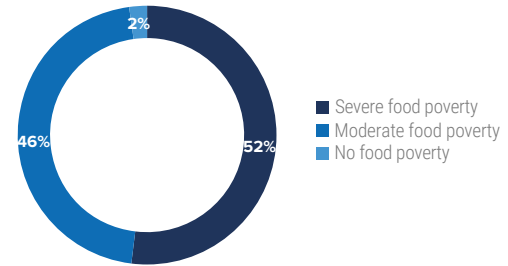
resorted to severe food coping strategies. Though only 9% of people reported physical assault along the journey, of those that did, 60% reported severe food coping mechanisms. 38% of those who witnessed physical assault skipped meals, the highest rate of a food coping strategy across all protection incidents reported. For victims and witnesses of extortion, the most likely coping mechanism was choosing less expensive meals (32%).

Infant and young child feeding indicators¹⁶

 **44%**
of infants under 6 months of age are exclusively breastfed (N=128)

More than half of the children aged between 6 months and 5 years live in severe food poverty (N=952).

Food poverty: children aged 6 months to 5 years



This section covers the results of nutrition in early childhood, specifically children under 5 years of age¹⁷. Questions about children are only asked to their caregivers, namely respondents travelling with children that are part of their family in the travel group.¹⁸

For infants under 6 months of age, the only recommended food is breastmilk.¹⁹ Exclusive breastfeeding is then adopted as the child nutrition indicator for this age group.

44% of caregivers (56 out of 128) reported exclusive breastfeeding for infants under 6 months of age the day before the interview.

For children between 6 months and 5 years of age, the nutrition indicator used in this report is called “child food poverty” which quantifies the dietary diversity of food eaten the day before.²⁰

According to their caregivers, 52% and 46% of children²¹ live in severe and moderate child food poverty respectively.

Notably, only 2% of caregivers reported that children were not in food poverty, thus meeting the minimum dietary diversity standards.²²

According to the latest figures from UNICEF,²³ in the Latin American and the Caribbean region 9% of children under 5 years live in severe child food poverty and 28% in moderate child food poverty.²⁴ Girls and boys are equally affected by severe child food poverty in regions and countries with available data. The high levels of child food poverty in this report are compatible with food being one of the primary needs of people in transit, including children and adolescents.

This quarter, severe child food poverty is highest in Costa Rica (67% — 112 out of 166) and Panama (64% — 187 out of 290), while comparatively lower in Honduras (40% — 40 out of 101) and Guatemala (34% — 119 out of 345).

¹⁶ Data was not collected in Mexico.

¹⁷ The exclusive breastfeeding and dietary diversity indicators are defined in accordance with WHO-UNICEF guidelines to evaluate feeding practices of children under five years of age. See “Indicators for assessing infant and young child feeding practices: definitions and measurement methods”. Geneva: World Health Organization and the United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF), 2021. Available online at <https://data.unicef.org/resources/indicators-for-assessing-infant-and-young-child-feeding-practices/>

¹⁸ In such case, if travelling with more than one child from the family in the specific age group, a child is randomly selected based on the latest birthday. Responses are gathered only for such children.

¹⁹ Infants who are not exclusively breastfed are highly vulnerable to diseases and infections, including diarrhea, at that age. Thus, they can easily become dehydrated and malnourished, implying a real risk of death.

²⁰ The child food poverty indicator uses the number of food items belonging to different food groups eat by a child the previous day to assess if dietary diversity is sufficient. Children in this age group need to consume food from at least 5 out of the 8 identified food groups for a “minimum dietary diversity”. Children who consume food from less food groups are considered in child food poverty of two levels: moderate if they consume food from 3 or 4 food groups, or severe if they consume foods from 2 or less food groups. Child food poverty harms all children, but it is particularly damaging in early childhood when insufficient dietary intake of essential nutrients can cause the greatest harm to child survival, physical growth, and cognitive development, trapping children and their families in a cycle of poverty and deprivation.

²¹ 495 in severe food poverty and 434 in moderate food poverty, out of 952.

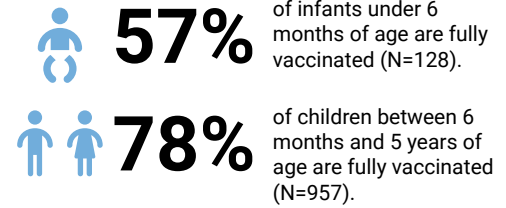
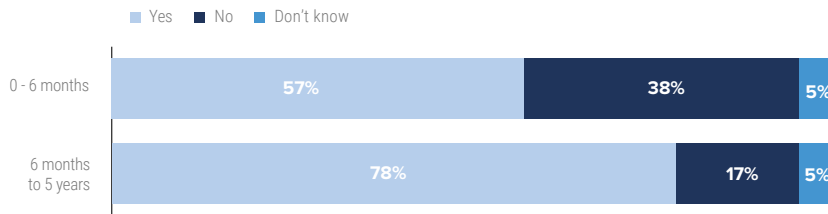
²² 23 out of 952 (2%).

²³ “Child Food Poverty. Nutrition Deprivation in Early Childhood”, UNICEF, New York, June 2024. Available online at <https://data.unicef.org/resources/child-food-poverty-report-2024/>

²⁴ The child food poverty estimations are from countries with available data.

Child vaccination²⁵

Vaccination schedule completed for children



According to caregivers, 57% (73 out of 128) reported that infants under 6 months of age have been fully vaccinated according to the schedule²⁶. 78% (744 out of 957) of children between 6 months and 5 years of age have been fully vaccinated

according to the schedule. The lower rate for infants under 6 months of age may be due to difficulty accessing vaccination services along the route.

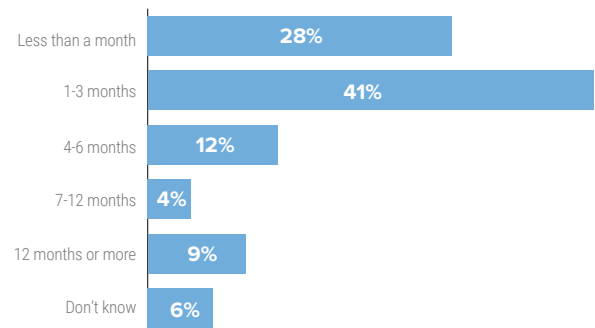
Child education²⁷



20%

of children and adolescents between 6 and 17 years of age were not receiving education in the country where they lived before starting the journey (N=1,007).

Percentage of families with children aged 6-17 years by last attendance of education



According to caregivers, 20% of children (205 out of 1,007) couldn't receive an education²⁸ in the country where they lived before starting the journey.

twice as much as those who last attended between 7 months and 1 year before.

69% of caregivers (696 out of 1,007) reported children had last attended school within 3 months or less of the interview date. In contrast, 9% of caregivers (87 out of 1,007) reported that their children did not attend education for more than 1 year,

79% of caregivers (795 out of 1,007) reported that they do not carry any document that certifies the last educational level approved by their children. 79% of caregivers (799 out of 1,007) do not know the requirements to access educational systems of different countries.

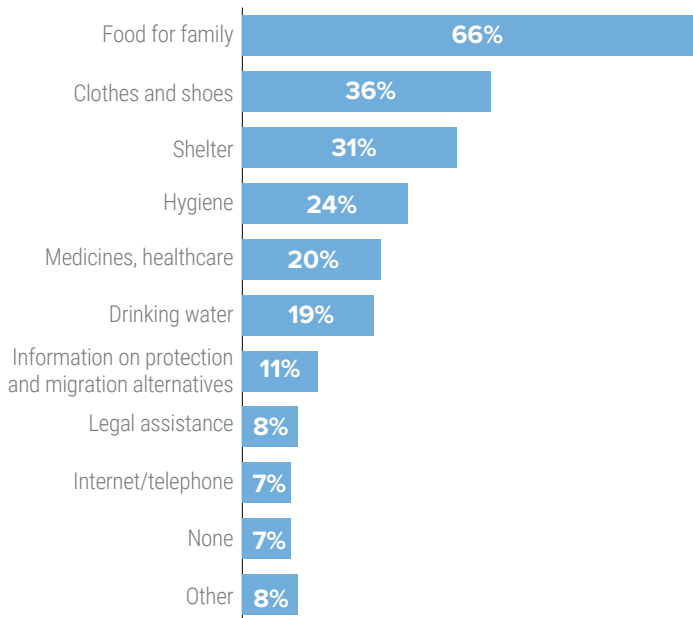
²⁵ Data was not collected in Mexico.

²⁶ Information about the vaccination status is gathered through a direct question, without checking the vaccination card.

²⁷ Data was not collected in Mexico. Indicators related to education included here refer to children and adolescents between 6 and 17 years of age because that is the age range where they are expected to receive education.

²⁸ Either institutional or remote learning education.

MAIN NEEDS



Since monitoring began in January 2024, food has consistently been the top priority, with 7 out of 10 respondents listing it as their most urgent need. This quarter, food insecurity is particularly acute among respondents in Costa Rica (87%) and Guatemala (72%), followed by Panama (61%) and Mexico (60%).

The need for clothing and footwear is also pressing, especially in Panama, where 69% of respondents report a shortage, significantly above the regional average of 56%. This heightened demand is likely linked to the challenging conditions faced during the Darien jungle crossing. Additionally, access to information and legal assistance has emerged as an increasing concern in Panama, particularly in light of the implementation and expansion of deportations. Field observations highlight that individuals had their passports confiscated, often without clear information regarding their return or the potential for deportation, contributing to higher uncertainty and stress at the temporary reception stations.



66%

of people interviewed reported access to food for their families as their main need.

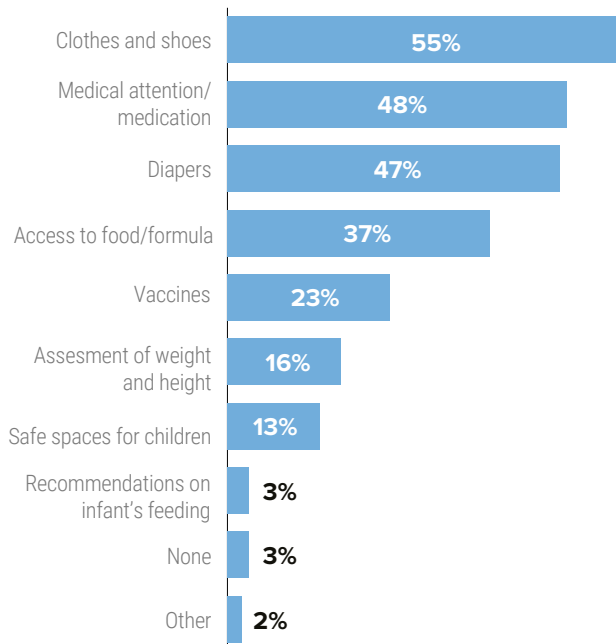
This was followed by the need of clothing and shoes (36%), a need which has increasingly grown since the first quarter of 2024 (23%), particularly in the context of the increase of the number of interviews in Panama.

In Chile, 28% of respondents emphasize the need for information on protection and migration alternatives, ranking it as their second most critical need. Meanwhile, half of the respondents in Guatemala highlighted hygiene items as a priority, while clean drinking water remains an urgent need for respondents in Guatemala (34%) and Honduras (27%). Participants in focus group discussions in Honduras emphasized their need for financial resources for transportation to continue their journey. They also highlighted the importance of increased information about available humanitarian services and human mobility policies across different countries to combat misinformation received from smugglers and police. Furthermore, they underscored the necessity of access to the justice system for reporting human rights abuses they have encountered.



Main needs of children²⁹

Main needs of infants under 6 months

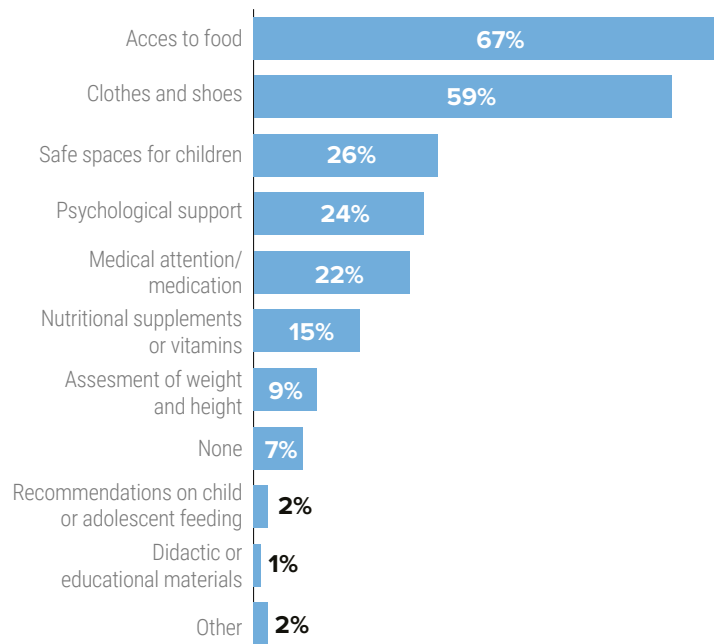


For infants under 6 months of age, the main need reported by caregivers was clothes and shoes at 55% (70 out of 128), followed closely by medical attention and diapers at 48% (62 and 60 out of 128 respectively).

For children and adolescents between 6 months and 17 years of age, 67% of caregivers reported access to food as the primary need, consistent with the results of the previous quarter. Similarly, 59% of caregivers reported clothes and shoes as a need, in contrast to 36% of adult respondents. Both access to food and clothing/footwear remain the top two needs in this quarter, aligning with the previous quarter's findings. The need for dedicated educational and safe spaces for children was reported by 26% of caregivers, with a notable gap with respect from the top two needs.

Breaking down the needs by nationalities, Colombians reported in high numbers the need for dedicated educational

Main needs of children aged 6 months to 17 years



and safe spaces for children (32%, 40 respondents), while the majority of Cubans reported having no unmet needs (62%, 8 respondents). Hondurans reported food supplements or vitamins (40%, 38 respondents) as the third main need, in contrast to the overall trends.

Across the countries of interviews, the primary needs of children aged 6 months to 17 years, and their rank of importance varied. In Guatemala, 53% (274 respondents) cited psychological support as a main need and 52% (271 respondents) cited clothes and shoes, ranking as the second and third need respectively. In Costa Rica, dedicated educational and safe spaces for children ranked third by 62% (178 respondents), after access to food, and clothes and shoes. In Panama, the top need was clothes and shoes (67%, 309 respondents), followed by access to food (47%, 216 respondents) and medical attention (26%, 120 respondents).

Humanitarian assistance received by children³⁰



54%

of infants under 6 months of age have received humanitarian assistance along the route (N=128).

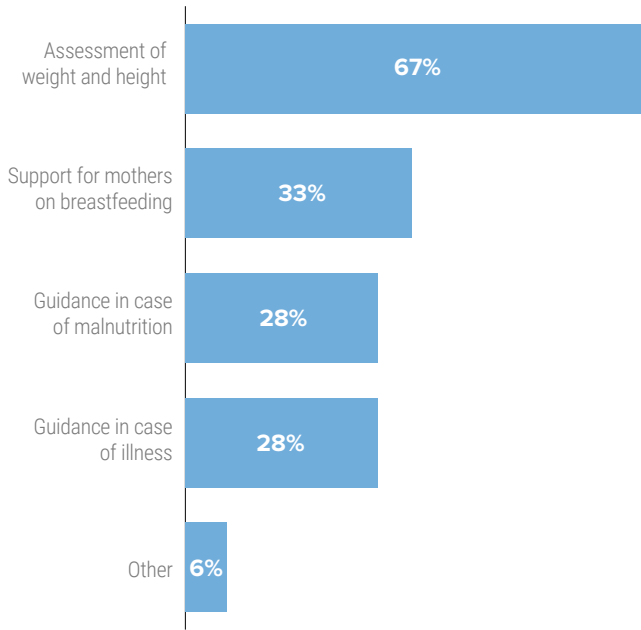


73%

of children between 6 months and 5 years of age received humanitarian assistance along the route (N=957).

³⁰ Data was not collected in Mexico.

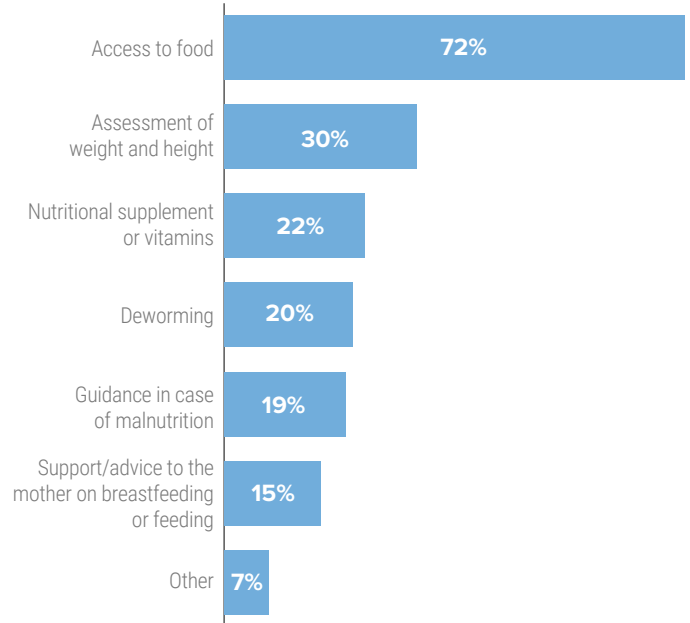
Type of assistance received by infants under 6 months



According to 54% (69 out of 128) of caregivers, infants under 6 months of age have received assistance. For this age group, the most common types of assistance were infant weight and height assessment (67%, 46 out of 69) and breastfeeding counseling for mothers (33%, 23 out of 69), similar to the previous quarter, while 22% (15 out of 69) received both. However, a significant portion of respondents (46%) reported not having received any assistance.

For children aged 6 months to 5 years, according to caregivers, they most frequently received food assistance (72%, 502 out

Type of assistance received by children aged 6 months to 5 years

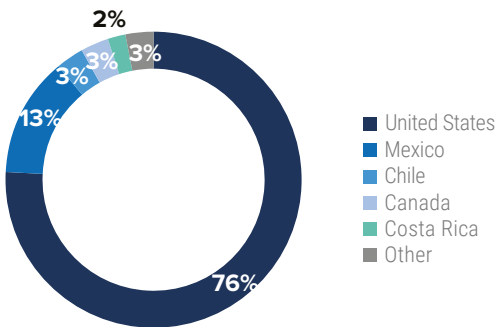


of 694), followed by weight and height assessment (30%, 210 out of 694). Consistent with stated needs, food was the top form of support provided.

In Honduras, the top service received was deworming (65%, 57 respondents), followed by weight and height assessments and delivery of vitamin or nutritional supplements ready for consumption (around 58%). In Chile, access to water, sanitation and hygiene services was reported by 58% of respondents (18) but was listed among possible options only for that country.

INTENTIONS

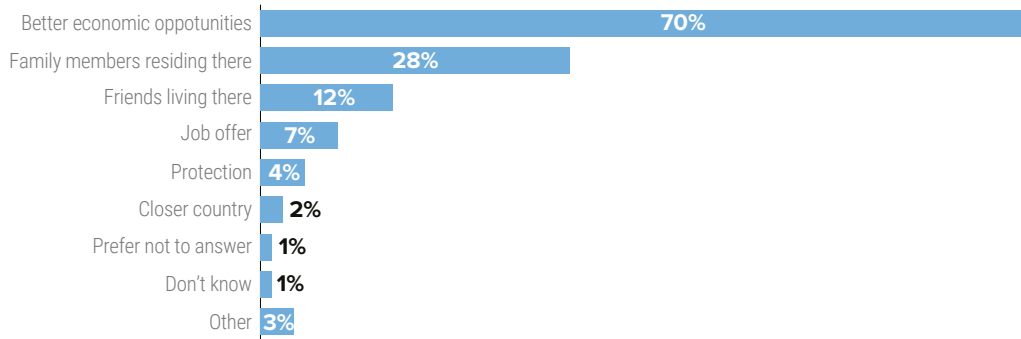
Intended country of destination



76%

of respondents intend to go to the United States.

Main reasons for intended destination



The United States remains the leading intended destination, with 76% of respondents selecting it, followed by Mexico at 13%. Among the top five nationalities, 86% of Venezuelans and 73% of Colombians expressed the strongest intention to reach the U.S. In contrast, the highest intention to settle in Mexico was found among Cubans and Salvadorians. Since the first quarter of 2024, there has been a slow but steady decline in choosing the U.S. as the intended destination, with a 12% decrease compared to the third quarter of 2023. Mexico, previously seen more as a transit country, has increasingly become a preferred destination.

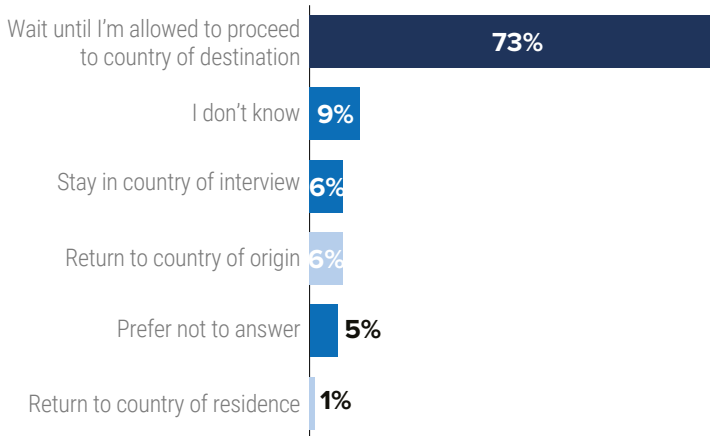
This quarter highlights the perception of Chile as primarily a destination country, while also reflecting a dynamic of people on the move between Chile, Peru, and Bolivia. While

a significant majority of respondents in Chile (92%) expressed their intention to stay, results displayed some cross-border movement. A smaller fraction of respondents were entering Chile for the first time or re-entering, while others are leaving for third countries or returning to their country of origin. These results underscore the fluid nature of human mobility within the region.

70% of respondents cited the availability of better economic opportunities as the primary motivation for choosing an intended destination. Additionally, 28% mentioned the presence of family members and the need for family reunification, with Colombians and Venezuelans showing the strongest family ties in their chosen destinations.

Scenarios of alternative intentions

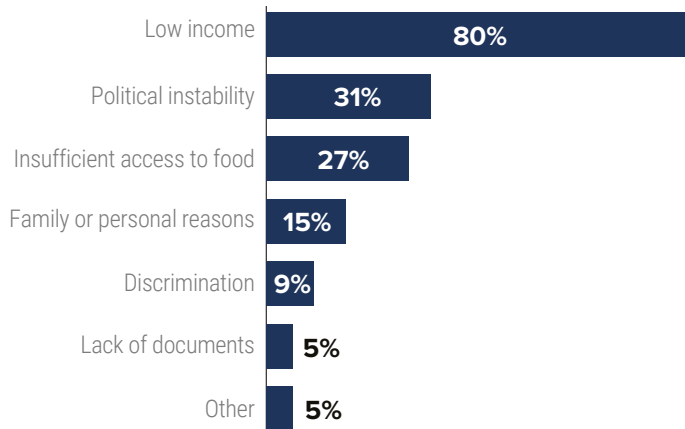
In case not possible to reach intended country of destination, what would yo do?



Notably, **73% of respondents expressed a willingness to wait until they are permitted to proceed to their intended destination**, a slight increase compared to last quarter.

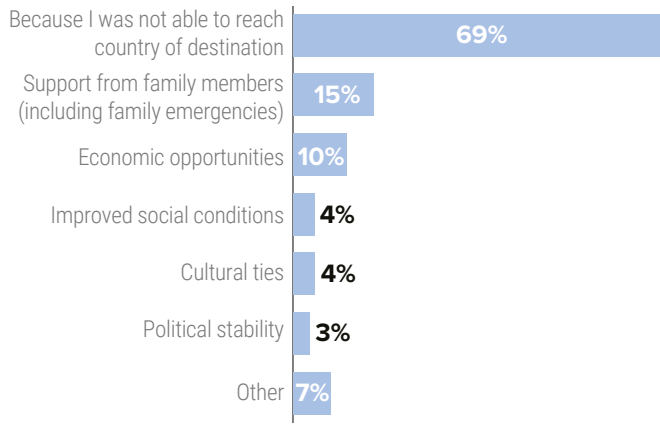
Among this group, the highest rates of intention to wait are found among Venezuelans, Colombians, and Cubans. Conversely, those most likely to consider returning to their country of origin or host country are predominantly Hondurans and Salvadorians.

What would be the reason(s) for not considering to return to country of origin or host country?



Consistent with previous quarters, the main reason deterring individuals from considering a return to their country of origin remains predominantly economic, cited by 80% of respondents. Political instability is also a notable factor, affecting 31% of those surveyed.

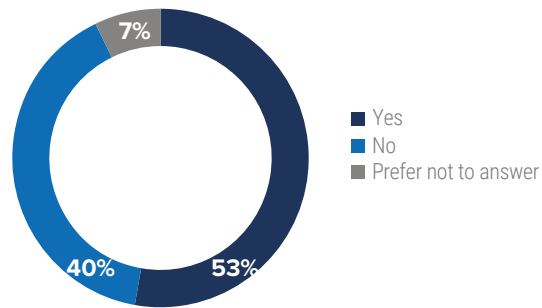
What would be the reason(s) to return?



Among those contemplating a return to their country of origin or host country (totaling 7% of respondents), 69% indicated they would only consider this option if unable to reach their intended destination. The reasons are consistent with the previous quarter.

Risks upon return

Risk upon return for self or family



53%
of people responded that they would face some kind of risk upon return.

Respondents were asked whether they would face any risk if they had to return to their country of origin or host country. Consistent with previous quarters, more than half of the respondents reported that they would face some form of risk upon return. The main nationalities expressing concerns about risks were Salvadorians and Colombians.

By region, the highest proportion of respondents who reported they would face risks upon return was found amongst Central Americans (54%).

Some countries of interview include a follow-up question where respondents can list the associated risks upon returning to their countries of origin or host country. 68% of respondents in Mexico and 24% in Honduras expressed concerns about returning due to violence-related risks, including personal and generalized violence. Personal violence includes direct threats, such as persecution or attacks targeting individual safety, while generalized violence reflects broader insecurity from widespread crime and violence affecting entire communities. These concerns have remained consistent across the first and second quarters of 2024, highlighting persistent fears around safety and security upon return.

Broadly, protection concerns upon return are related to security and reintegration challenges, particularly in countries or situations where the conditions for specific individuals and groups (such as unaccompanied or separated children, victims of human trafficking, survivors of gender-based violence, and LGBTIQ+ individuals) remain fragile.

In Chile, respondents associated lack of income (71%), political instability (64%), and lack of access to food (21%) as the main reasons for not returning, which are compelling reasons for refugees and migrants to choose Chile as their final destination. Likewise, 13% of respondents cited other reasons for their decision, including generalized violence and insecurity, as well as the lack of access to adequate medical services and education.

In collaboration with:

