Protection Monitoring 2025

Curaçao

UNHCR conducted a protection monitoring exercise in Curaçao with refugees, asylum-seekers, and undocumented migrants to better understand their profiles and protection needs. **Data collection was conducted from June to August 2025 and assessed 144 people through 50 phone surveys.** Surveys were administered at the household level, with a household member answering on behalf of the entire household. Assessed households had at least one person without permanent residency in Curaçao. The findings of this survey, although indicative of the population of refugees, asylum-seekers, and undocumented migrants in Curaçao, **are not statistically representative of the entire refugee and migrant population in Curaçao.**

Respondent profiles

*Total people assessed**

144

Average household size

3 people

51% Male

49% Female

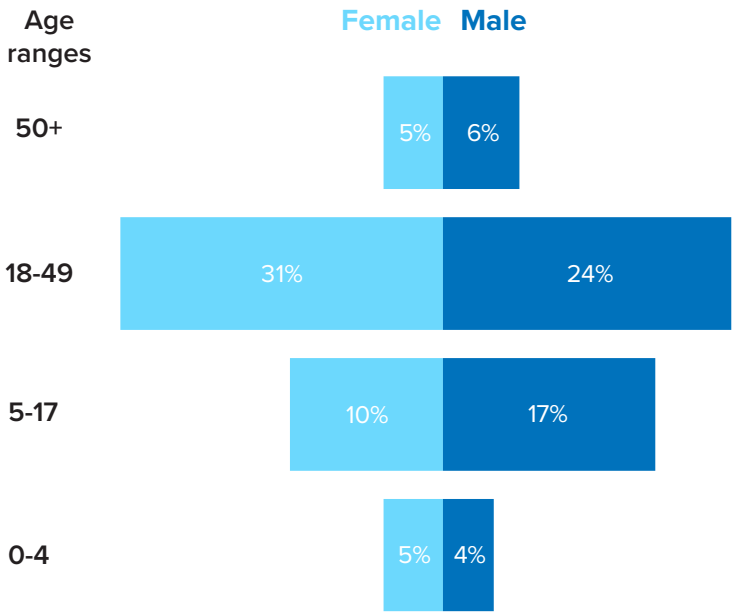
Average age of assessed individuals

27 Years

25 Years

29 Years

Sex and age of assessed individuals



Country of nationality of assessed individuals

44% Colombia

41% Venezuela

3% Jamaica

2% Cuba

Individuals from Curaçao were also assessed.

Main languages spoken by assessed households

Spanish **92%**
Papiamento **56%**
English **26%**
Dutch **14%**

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

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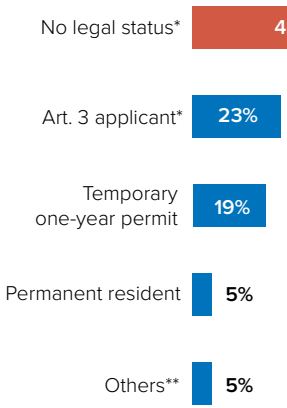
Protection Monitoring 2025

Curaçao

Legal status and Documentation

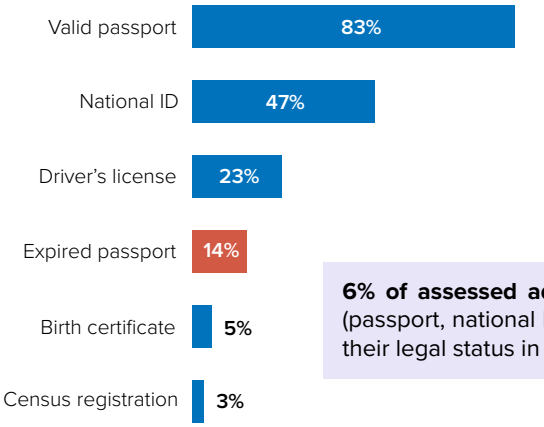
Adults

Legal status in the country



*Includes individuals who reported expired permits/visas, or who entered irregularly.
*Includes those who reported not receiving confirmation that their applications were registered.
**Includes persons with family reunification permits, and those with UNHCR certificates. Until June 2017, UNHCR conducted refugee status determination (RSD) under mandate, and issued certificates to persons in need of international protection.

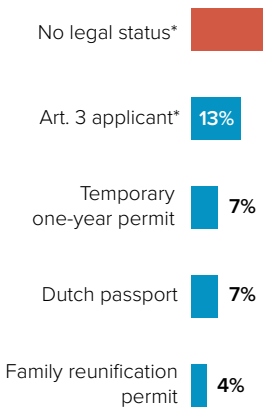
Documents



6% of assessed adults had **no valid documentation** (passport, national ID, or birth certificate), regardless of their legal status in Curaçao.

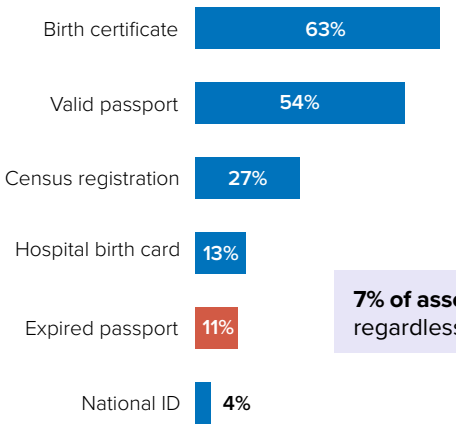
Children

Legal status in the country



40% of assessed children were at risk of statelessness due to lack of access to documentation in their parents' country of origin.
*Includes children with reportedly expired permits/visas, or at risk of statelessness.
*Includes those who reported not receiving confirmation that their applications were registered.

Documents



7% of assessed children had **no valid documentation,** regardless of their legal status in Curaçao.

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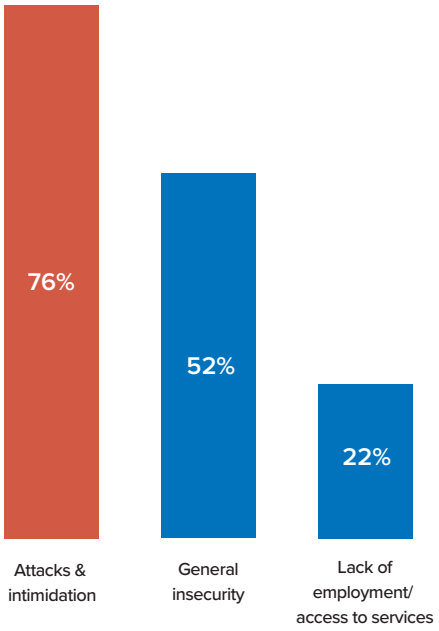
Push factors

Main reasons for leaving country of origin

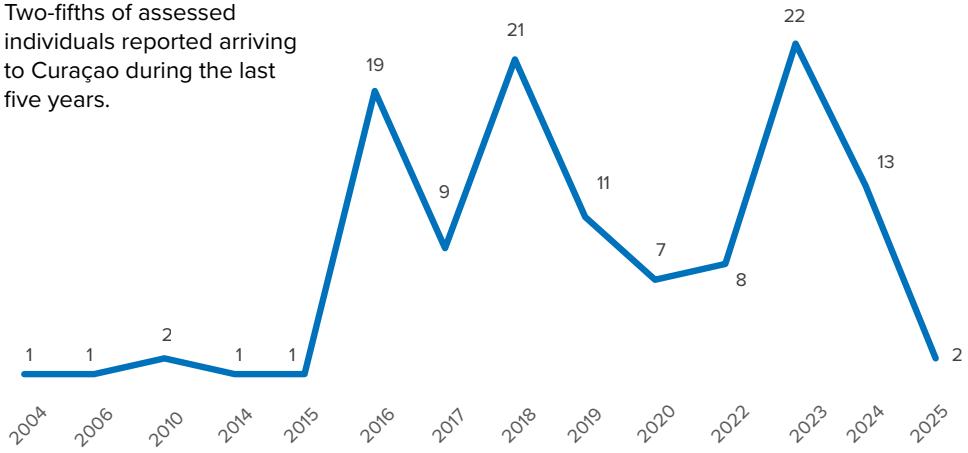


Most assessed individuals (95%) reported leaving their country of origin due to general insecurity and/or direct threats or attacks.

Access to territory and asylum

Year of arrival in Curaçao

Two-fifths of assessed individuals reported arriving to Curaçao during the last five years.



Arrival date only available for 118 individuals.

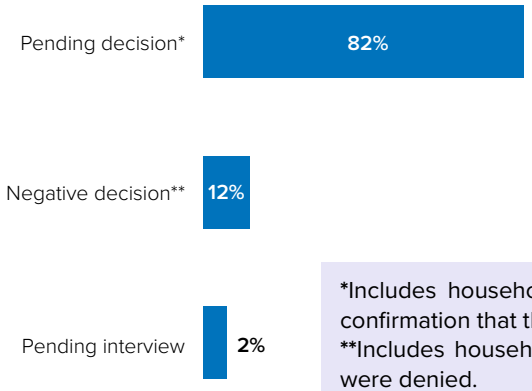
95%
of respondents reported entering the country regularly.

100%
of those that entered irregularly reported paying someone, incurring debts of up to 1,500 USD.

2%
of respondents reported coming to Curaçao with a marriage proposal.

76%
of assessed households reported having dependants in their country of origin.

Status of International Protection applications



*Includes households that reported not receiving confirmation that their application was registered.
**Includes households that reported their appeals were denied.

34%
of assessed households reported that at least one family member had applied for International Protection (Article 3) in Curaçao.

11%
reported they did not receive confirmation that their application was registered.

59%
reported seeking a processor or private attorney for help with Article 3 or immigration processes.

The main reasons reported for not seeking International Protection were a lack of understanding about what it is, how to access the process, and not receiving information from the Admissions Office.

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Curaçao

Livelihoods

81% of assessed adults reported working during the previous 30 days.

84% Men

78% Women

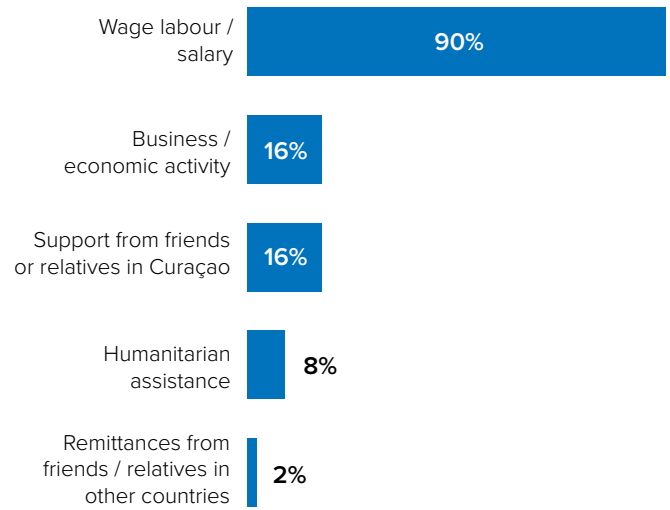
However, most of this work was informal. **At least 82% of assessed adults reported working informally,** without a contract.
The main reported areas of work were domestic service, construction, and hospitality services (excluding hotels).
The most common reasons reported for not working were **lack of documentation (47%)**, **and fear of being detained/deported (18%).**

One in seven respondents (14%) reported coming to Curaçao **with a job offer.** 43% of them stated the offer **did not meet their expectations.**

Four in five (78%) considered the pay they received **inadequate for the hours and conditions of work. Over half of them (55%) had taken no action** to address this situation, for fear of losing their job, lack of information about their rights, or lack of time.

76% considered they were **not working under the same conditions as local people.**

Main reported sources of income during the last 30 days



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

Two in seven (28%) households reported having two or more different sources of income.

Negative coping strategies reported in the previous 30 days

Six in seven (88%) households reported engaging in at least **one negative coping strategy**, while **two in five (38%)** 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 selling household goods (6%), sending household members to work elsewhere (4%), selling productive assets (2%), and buying food/ goods on credit (2%).

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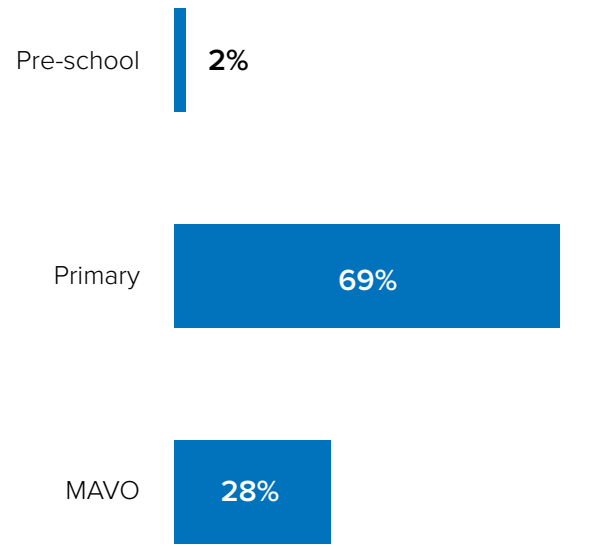
Curaçao

Education

All school-aged children (4-17) were currently enrolled in school.

Education level of assessed enrolled children



MAVO: Secondary General Secondary Education

Housing

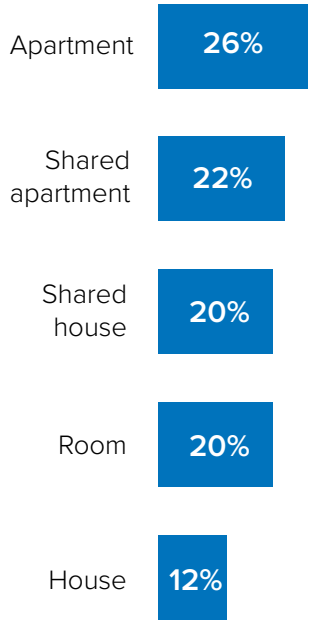
64%

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

9 in 10

assessed households reported experiencing difficulties affording their rent.

Type of dwelling the household lives in



One-third of assessed households living in apartments had an average of **three or more people per room**.

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Curaçao

Security and Social Cohesion

78%

of assessed adults reported they or a household member had experienced discrimination in Curaçao.

Reported causes for discrimination included nationality (78%), legal status (35%), and race/ethnicity (25%).

Most respondents (90%) did not report discrimination incidents to the authorities, mainly due to fear of detention or deportation (69%), lack of confidence in the authorities (28%), or considering the incident was not serious enough (11%).

8% of households reported knowing about vulnerable populations in their community, with humanitarian needs that were not being met by organizations or the government.

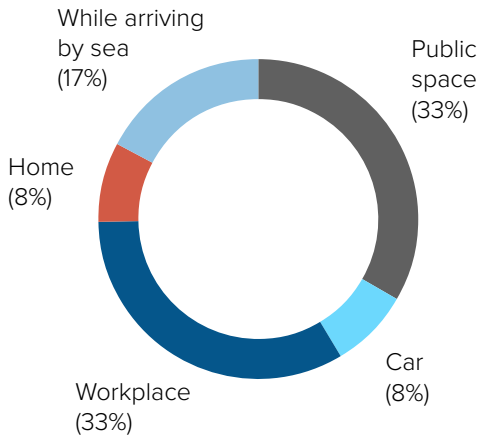
24%

of assessed adults reported they or a household member were detained because of their legal status in Curaçao.

4 in 5

of those detained reported experiencing abuse or mistreatment while in detention.

Location at the time of detention



Reported detention length

UNHCR Multi-Country Office for Panama, Nicaragua, Belize, Cuba, Haiti, Dominican Republic, and Eastern & Southern Caribbean
Feedback: panpaim@unhcr.org
Access other publications here