

# PROTECTION MONITORING REPORT

Venezuelan  
asylum-seekers  
and refugees in  
Trinidad and Tobago

September - November 2018

**An evidence-based narrative**

of the lives of Venezuelans asylum-seekers and refugees in  
Trinidad and Tobago.

## Acknowledgements

We would like to thank first and foremost the hundreds of our persons of concern who agreed to take the survey and contributed invaluable information.

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#### **COVER PHOTOGRAPH:**

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# Methodology

UNHCR, the UN Refugee Agency, undertook a survey to understand the protection needs of Venezuelan persons of concern (asylum-seekers and refugees) in Trinidad and Tobago by taking a sample of those who registered with UNHCR from September to November 2018.



This survey was conducted in Trinidad and Tobago through the Protection Monitoring Tool (PMT), taking place during a three-week period for four hours each day, five days a week.

Although this report highlights the responses of Venezuelans only, the survey was open to persons of concern of all nationalities who were in the UNHCR Registration Centre during the times the survey enumerator was present.

The survey was voluntary and each respondent's consent was obtained before posing questions. The responses are not a representative sampling of the Venezuelan population in Trinidad and Tobago, but rather those who registered with UNHCR, and who consented to the survey.

The survey was extensive, providing answers to over 100 questions. It covered general profiles, household composition,

alternatives to detention, travel routes, length of time in Trinidad and Tobago and education and employment.

Disaggregated data was collected on the basis of sex, age and other specific need indicators.<sup>1</sup>

The information was collected using KoBo Toolkit, the corporate tool of UNHCR.

<sup>1</sup> Indicators: a term used to identify those with factors that may increase vulnerability.



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# Summary Figures

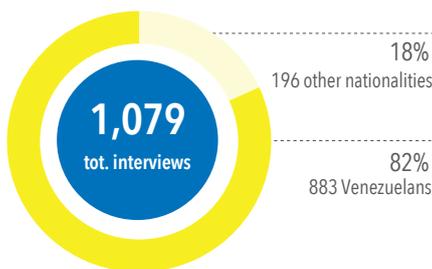
The exercise is part of the protection monitoring UNHCR carries out in Trinidad and Tobago to identify protection risks for populations of concern, for the purpose of informing effective responses.

During the survey period, 1,079 interviews were conducted. 82 per cent (883 interviews) were conducted with Venezuelan nationals. 70 per cent of these nationals arrived within the last three months of taking part in the survey.

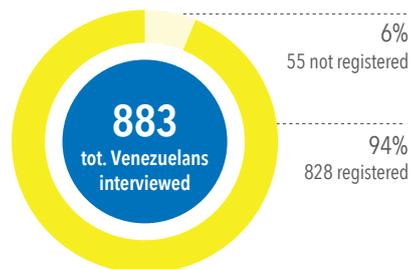
This data provides a unique perspective on the Venezuelan population and actionable data regarding their profiles, level of education, access to services and community perception.



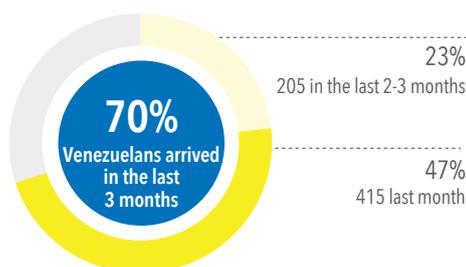
Total interviews (Venezuelans & other nationalities)



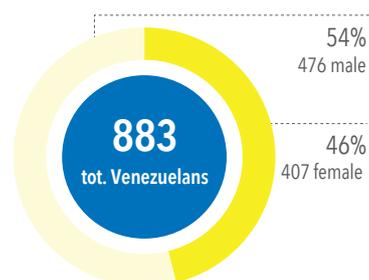
Registration Status (Venezuelans)



Total Venezuelans arrived in Trinidad and Tobago in the past 3 months



Total Venezuelans by sex



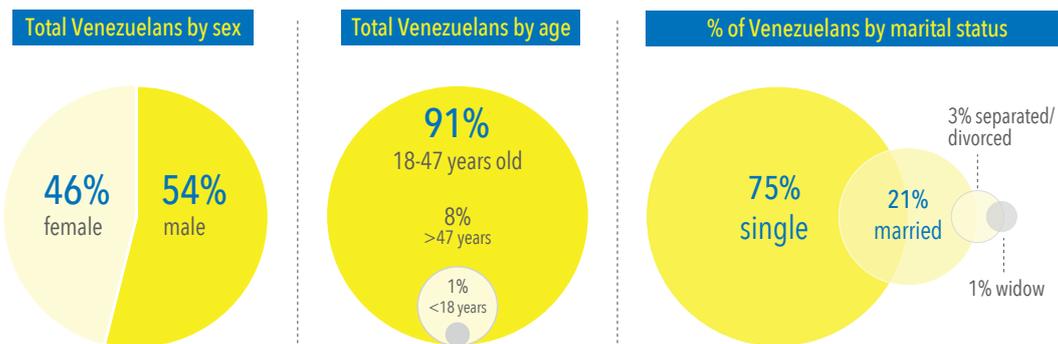
# Profiles

Considering the protection risks that any group of people moving voluntarily or forcibly might face, this report put into practice UNHCR age, gender and diversity mainstreaming principles to determine the vulnerability of this population that ultimately will serve to better respond to their needs.

This part of the report looks into age and gender disaggregation (SADD), marital status, whether these persons are registered or not with UNHCR, its household composition, place of origin in Venezuela, access to documentation by the government of Trinidad and Tobago, and their level of education and previous employment.

## Sex and Age Disaggregation

Respondents of the survey were 54 per cent were male and 46 per cent were female, and were predominately of 18 and 47 years old, which represents 91 per cent of the interviewed population.

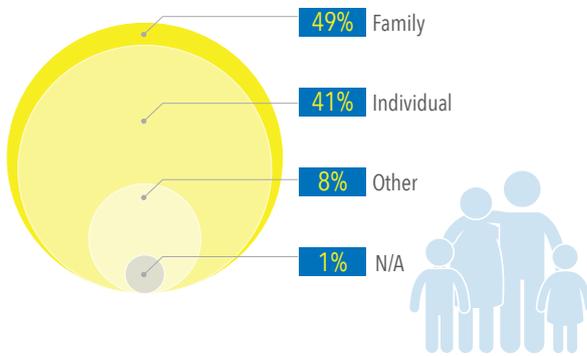


## Marital Status and Household Composition

In terms of marital status, 75 per cent of Venezuelans are single and 21 per cent are married, with the remainder either divorced (3 per cent), or widowed (1 per cent).

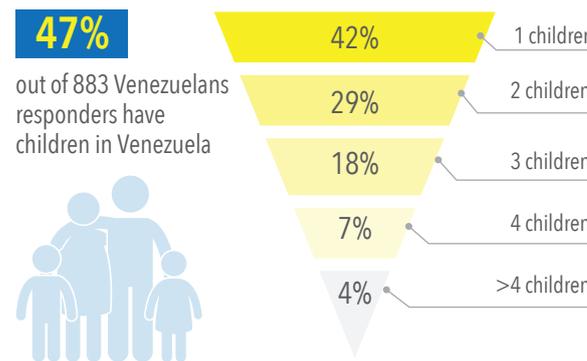


**Household composition in Trinidad & Tobago**



The majority of respondents (49 per cent) considered themselves to be in a family unit in Trinidad and Tobago, defined as having “some family in Trinidad and Tobago with them”. Conversely, 41 per cent identified as single (without family in Trinidad and Tobago).

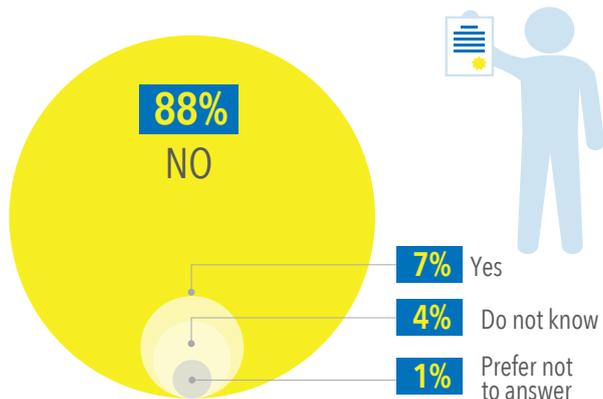
**% of responders by No. of children left in Venezuela**



Among the Venezuelans interviewed, 47 per cent have children who remained in Venezuela. In 42 percent of these cases, the respondents left one child in the country; in 29 per cent of those cases, two children were left; and in 18 per cent of those cases, three children were left behind in Venezuela.

**Alternatives to Detention: Order of Supervision**

**% of Venezuelans holding an Order of Supervision in Trinidad and Tobago**



At the time of survey collection, the Order of Supervision is the only form of documentation any refugee or asylum-seeker may receive from the Government, and served as an alternative to detention. Only a fraction of the Venezuelan population received documentation from the government in the form of

an Order of Supervision, which does not give them legal status but allows them to move freely without fear of arrest, and which constitutes an alternative to detention.

## Routes out of Venezuela

Most of respondents are from the following states: Delta Amacuro, Sucre, Monagas, Anzoategui and Bolivar. These five states alone account for 69 per cent of the respondents.

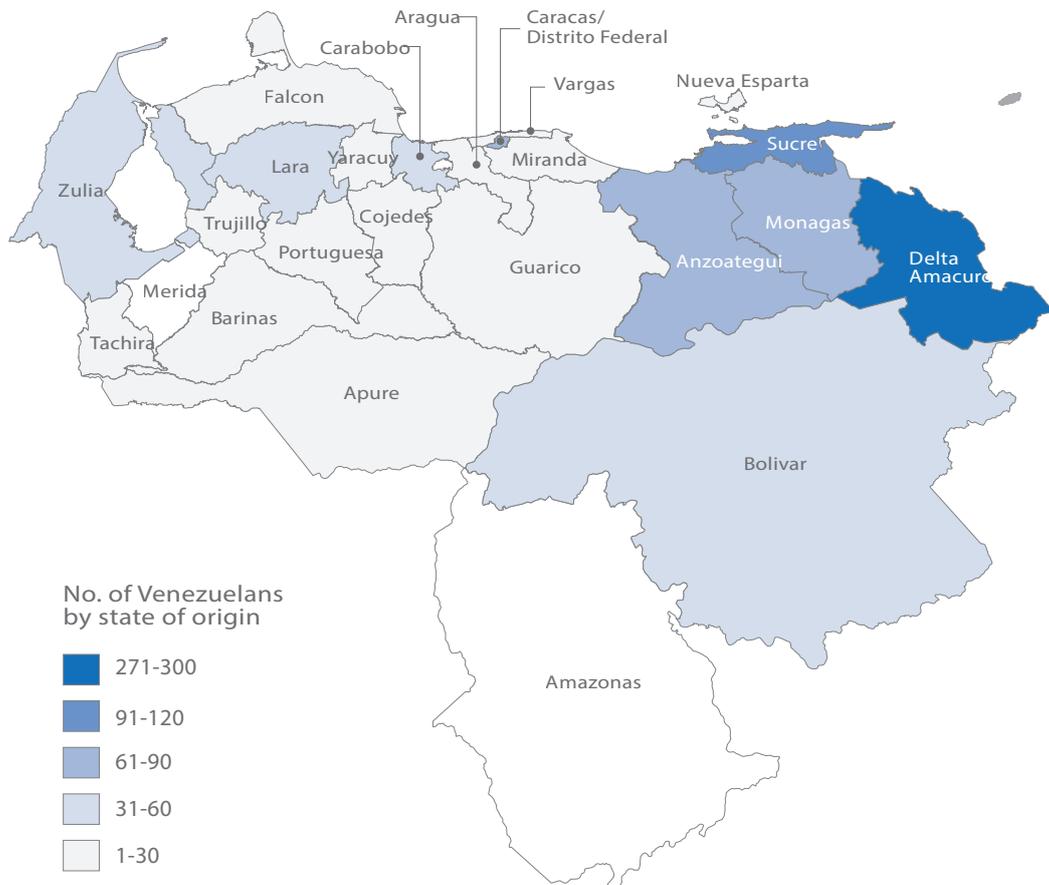
- A high percentage (69%) of Venezuelans originate from the eastern coast of Venezuela, which is nearest the island of Trinidad and Tobago, correlating to the rising number of arrivals by boat.
- Venezuelan respondents arrived directly from Venezuela, with 416 persons arriving within a month of completing the survey

No. of Venezuelans by state of origin



69%

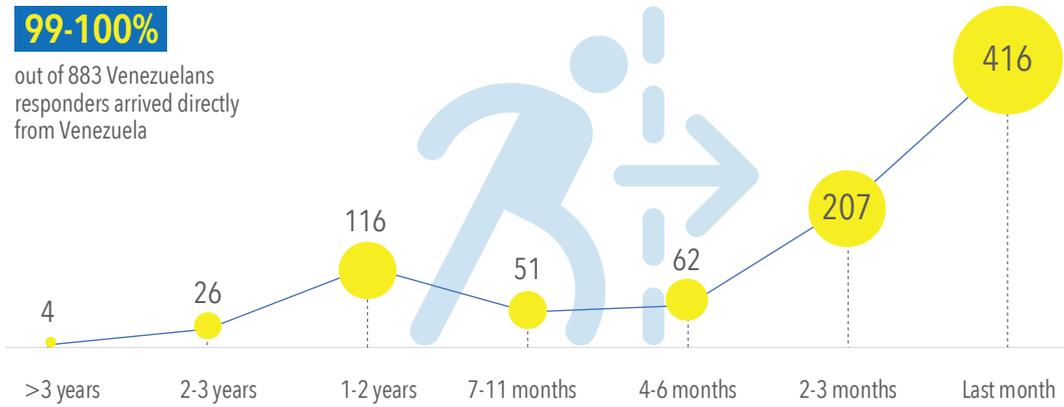
Out of 883 Venezuelans responder: have left from 5 states



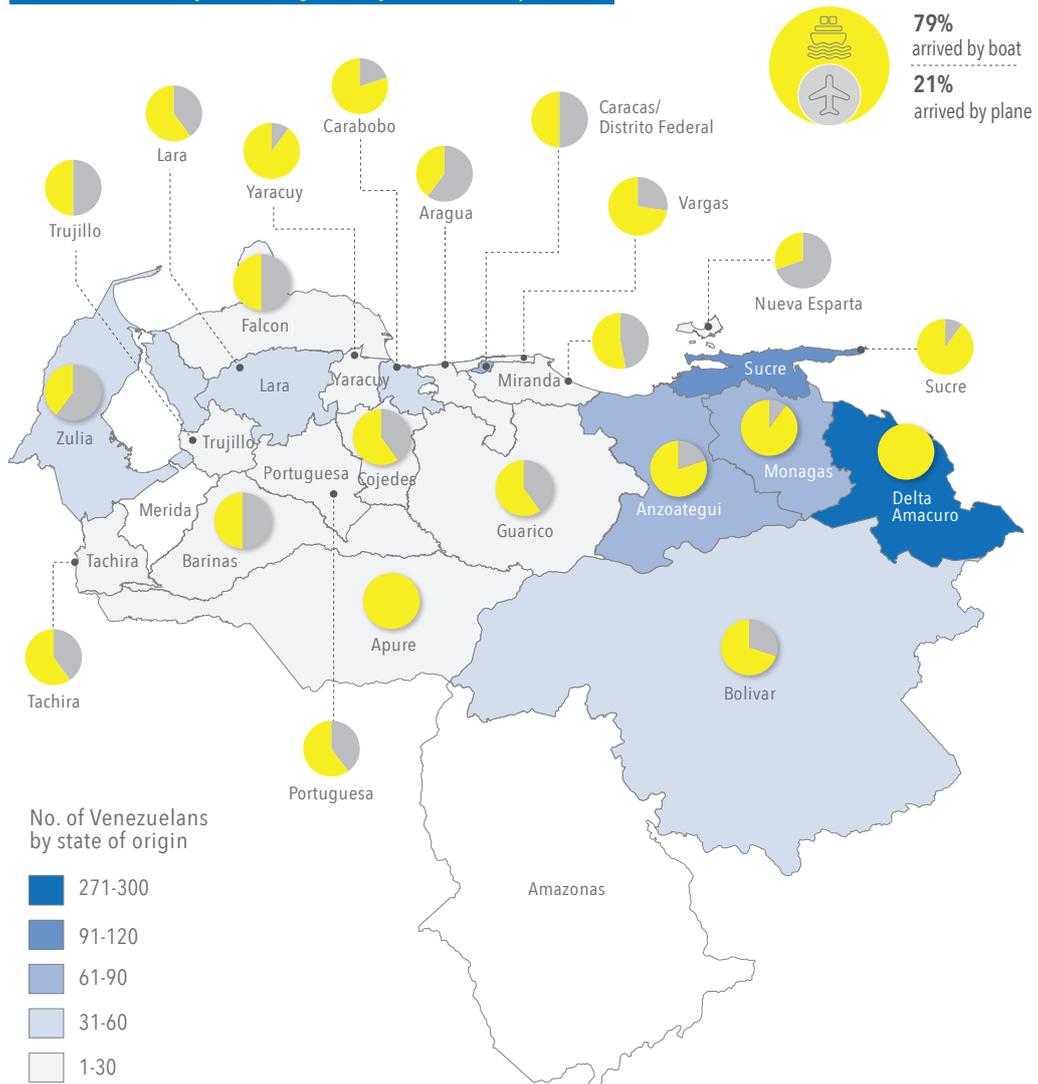
No. of Venezuelans who left their country (by time)

**99-100%**

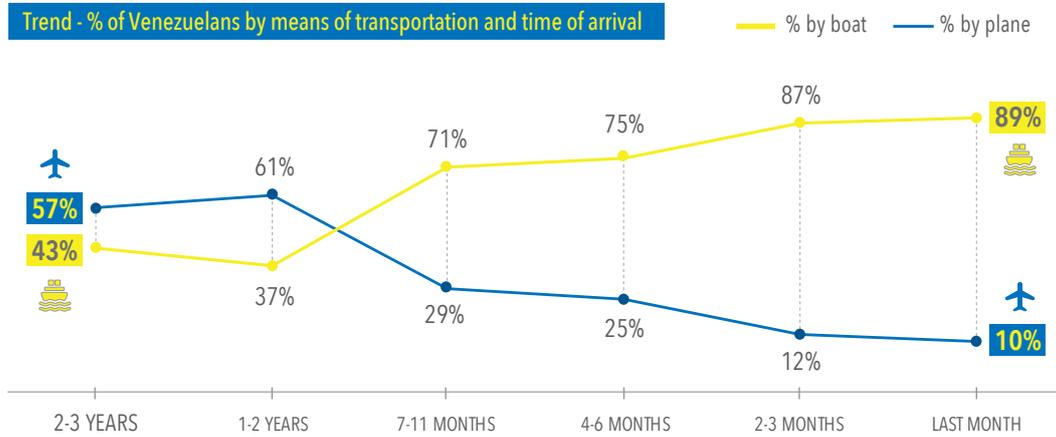
out of 883 Venezuelans responders arrived directly from Venezuela



No. of Venezuelans by state of origin and by means of transportation



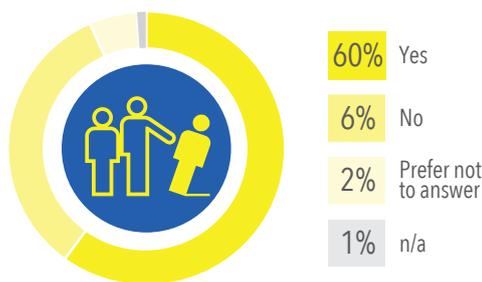
Based on the responses received, respondents who arrived two to three years ago mainly arrived via plane (57 per cent) with the remainder coming by boat.



The graph above illustrates that there was a small increase in use of plane by respondents who arrived one to two years ago to 61 per cent. However, after this,

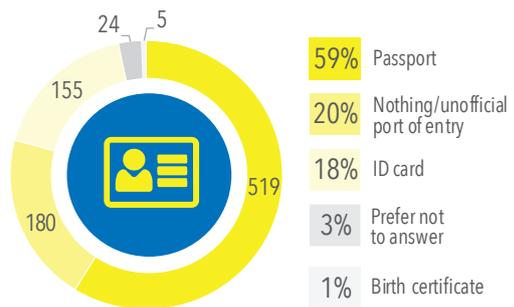
there was an escalation in the number of arrivals by boat which steadily increased over time. In the last month of the survey, 89 per cent of respondents arrived by boat.

**% of Venezuelans who have experienced persecution or discrimination in Venezuela, particularly in the receipt of food rations or access to medical or basic services**



Among respondents, 60 per cent of respondents experienced discrimination while trying to access food rations or medical services in Venezuela. The majority of respondents indicated that they presented an identification document upon

**% of Venezuelans by type of identification presented upon entry**

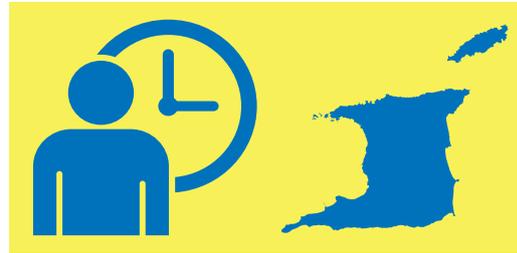


entering Trinidad and Tobago (59 per cent their passport and 18 their identification card) with a large number (20 per cent) not presenting any document or entering Trinidad and Tobago at an unofficial port of entry.

## Time spent in Trinidad and Tobago

The survey responses indicated that there are Venezuelans in all fourteen regional corporations of Trinidad and Tobago. The three regional corporations which hosted the largest number of respondents in descending order were: Chaguanas (129), San Fernando (111) and Tunapuna-Piarco (73).

Most respondents arrived in the country, within one to three months of taking the survey. Almost half of respondents arrived within one month of completing the survey

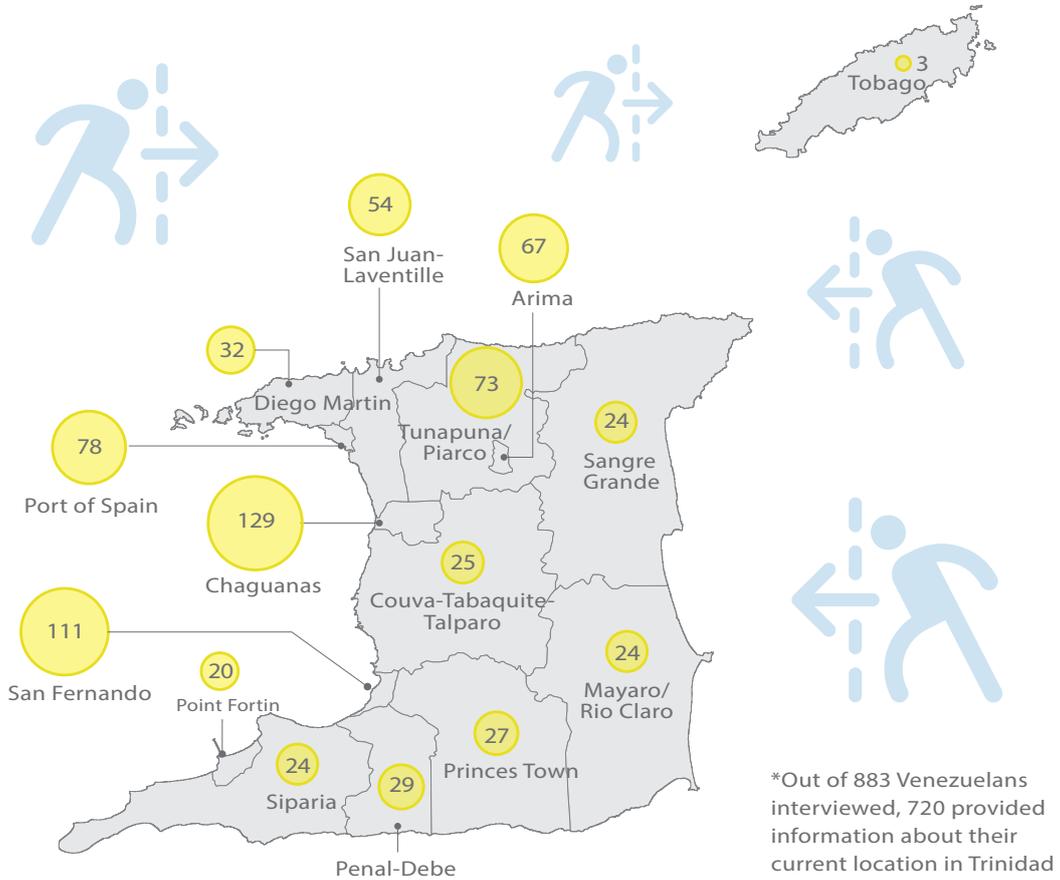


and a quarter of respondents arrived within two to three months. The remainder of respondents had been in Trinidad and Tobago for a longer period than three months.

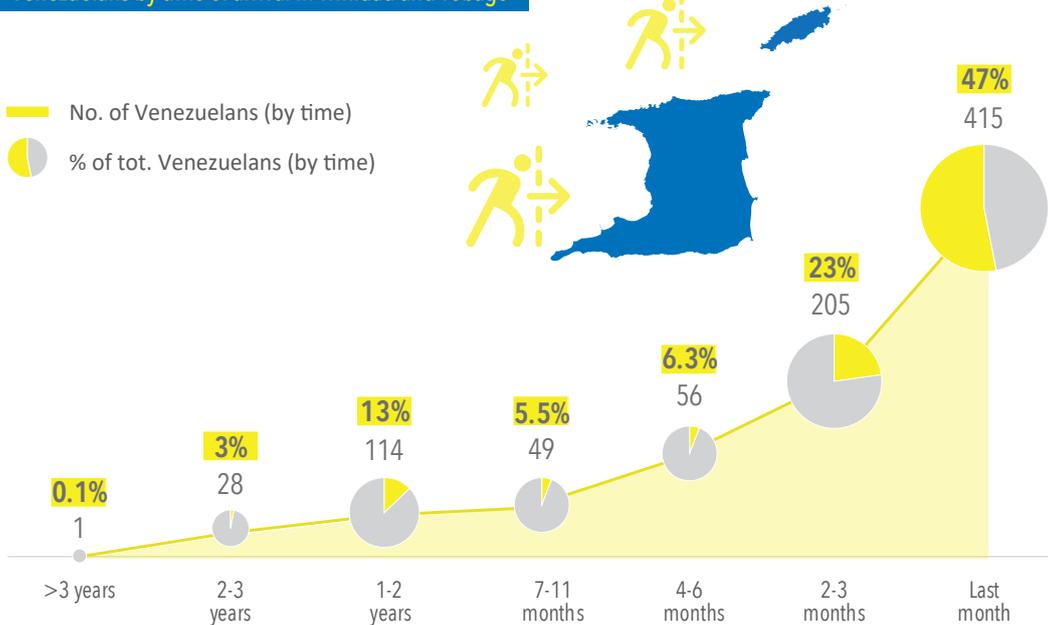


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**No. of Respondants by location in Trinidad and Tobago\***



**Venezuelans by time of arrival in Trinidad and Tobago**

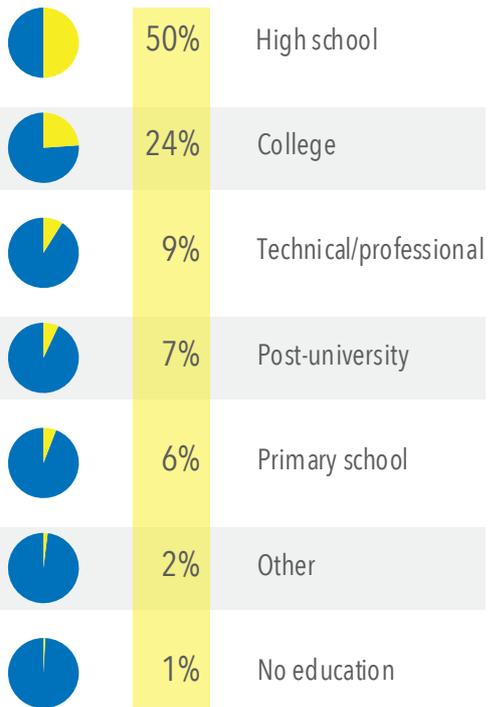


## Education and Employment

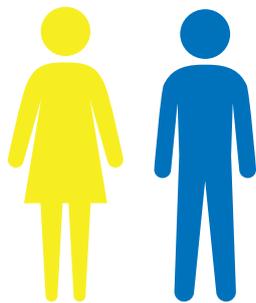
Of the respondents, half obtained a high school education and additional 24 per cent attained a tertiary education.



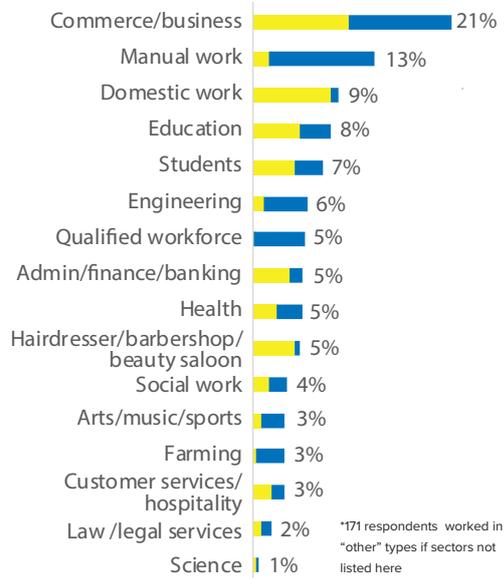
### Venezuelans by level of education



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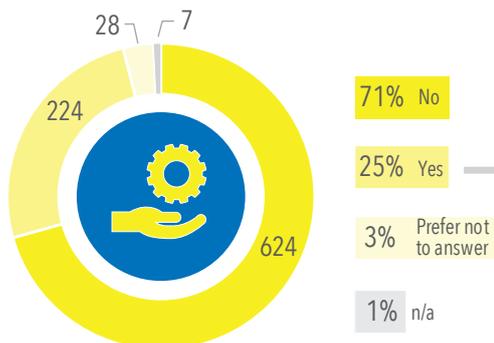


**Venezuelans by employment in their country of origin and by sex\***

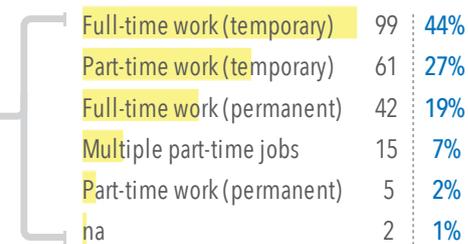


Regarding work status in Trinidad and Tobago, almost three quarters (71 per cent) of respondents shared that they were not working at the time of completing the survey. Of those who responded that they were working (25 per cent), only 19 per cent were in full-time work (permanent), while 71 per cent were either in full-time work (temporary) or in part-time work (temporary).

**No. of Venezuelans by work status in Trinidad and Tobago**



**No. of Venezuelans by type of work in Trinidad and Tobago**



Percentage of Venezuelans by sector of work in Trinidad and Tobago\*



Manual work	27%
Other	19%
Commerce and business	13%
Farming	10%
Domestic work	9%
Customer services/hospitality	8%
Qualified workforce	7%
Hairdresser/barbershop/beauty salon	3%
Engineering	1%
Arts/music/sports	1%

Percentage of Venezuelans by sector of work in Venezuela\*



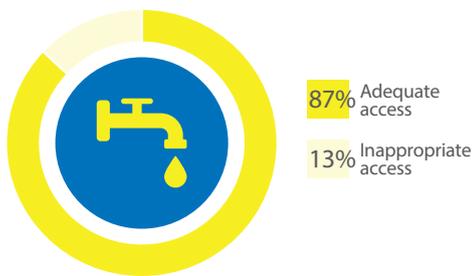
Commerce and business	21%
Manual work	13%
Domestic work	9%
Education	8%
Students	7%
Engineering	6%
Qualified workforce	5%
Administration/finance/banking services	5%
Health	5%
Hairdresser/barbershop/beauty salon	5%
Social work	4%
Arts/music/sports	3%
Customer services/hospitality	3%
Farming	3%
Law and legal services	2%
Science	1%

\*UNHCR found that a high percent did not identify with the sectors proposed.

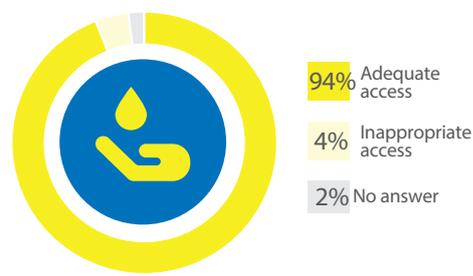
# Access to Services

Access to services which considers access to water, medical services and food have been on-going concerns of the UNHCR Trinidad and Tobago operation. These indicators are reliable indicators of a persons' standard of living.

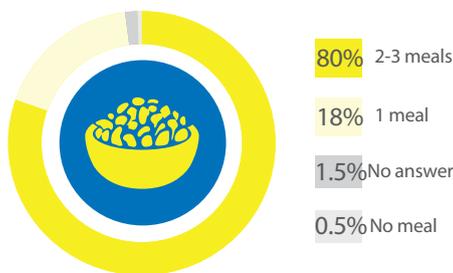
Access to water in Trinidad and Tobago



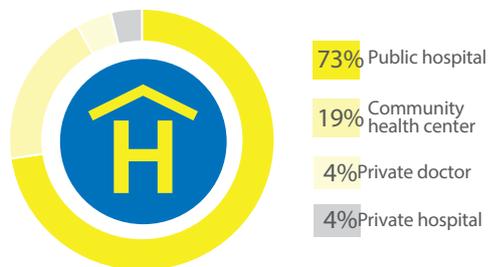
Access to in-house sanitation in Trinidad and Tobago



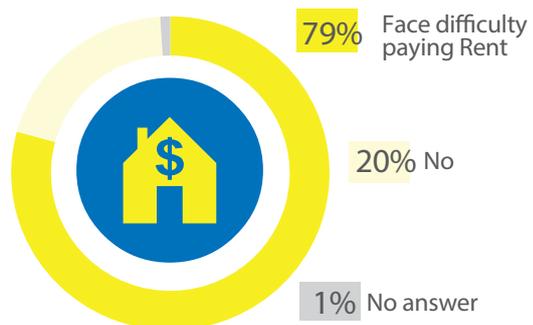
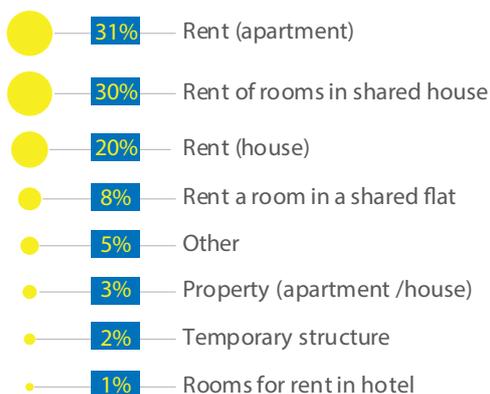
Access to meals per day



Access to medical services by type of health facilities\*



Access to accommodation (by type) in Trinidad & Tobago and ability to pay the rent

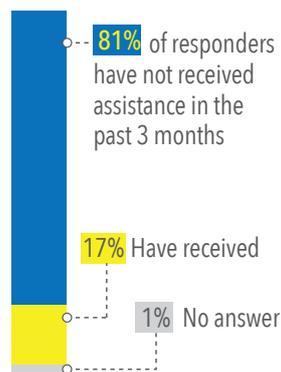


Although almost everyone was living in a permanent structure such as a house or apartment, only 22 per cent stated that they were able to afford the rent. However the majority faced difficulties in paying rent.

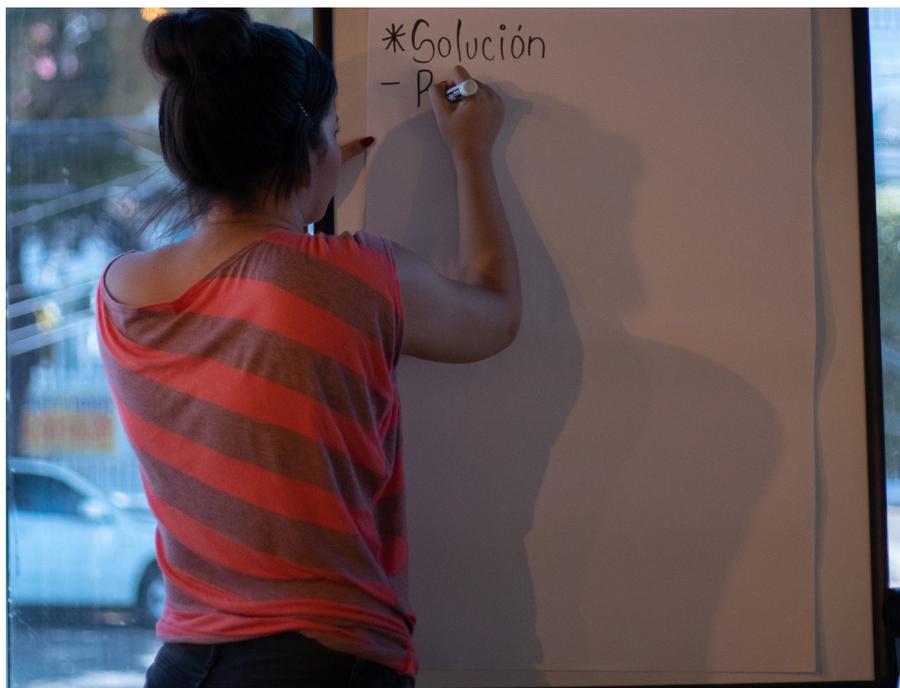
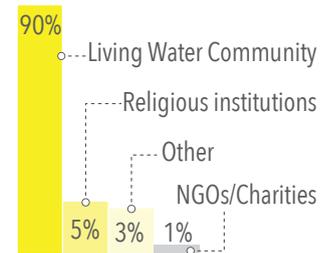
# Assistance Received

UNHCR provides different forms of assistance working through partner organizations in Trinidad and Tobago, such as Living Water Community. Venezuelan persons of concern also have successfully identified their own assistance while in Trinidad and Tobago through other religions institutions and NGOs/charities.

## Assistance received in the past three months



Out of 883 responders, only **153** have received assistance by the following organizations/institutions:



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# Community Perception

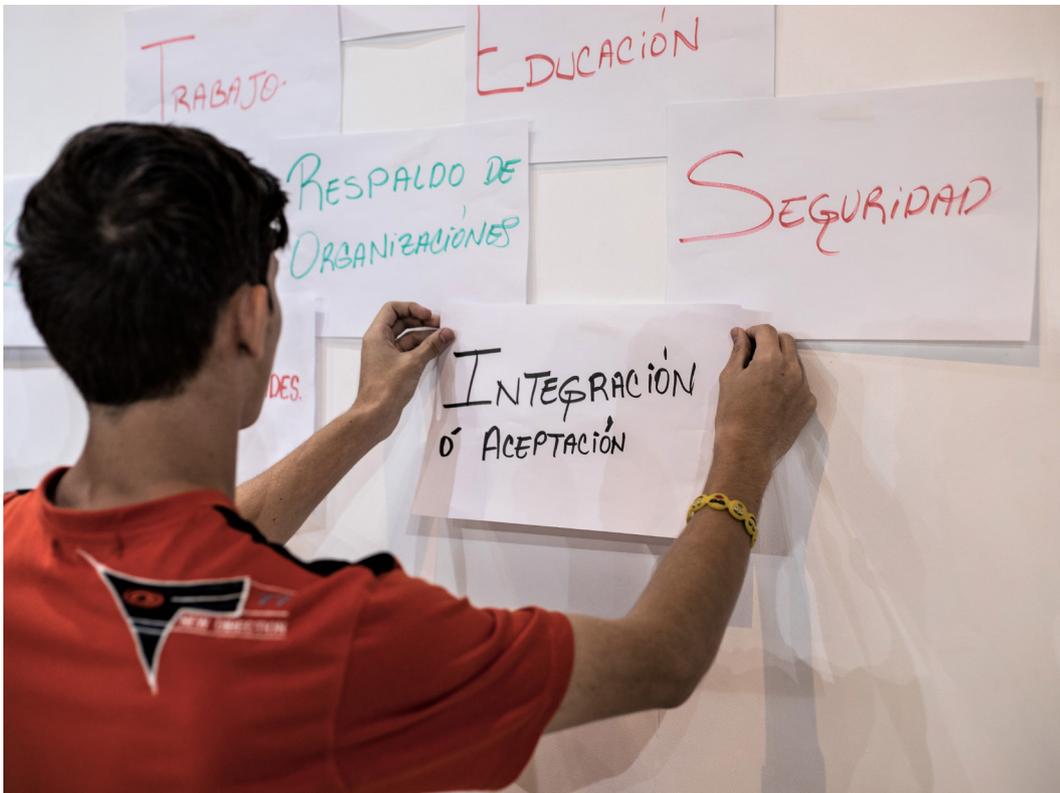
## Priority Needs

A key to designing programmes for the community is understanding their needs and having the community prioritize their needs.

Of the Venezuelan respondents, they identified food assistance, rental subsidy and employment as the top three perceived needs of their community.

### Perception of needs among Venezuelans Households

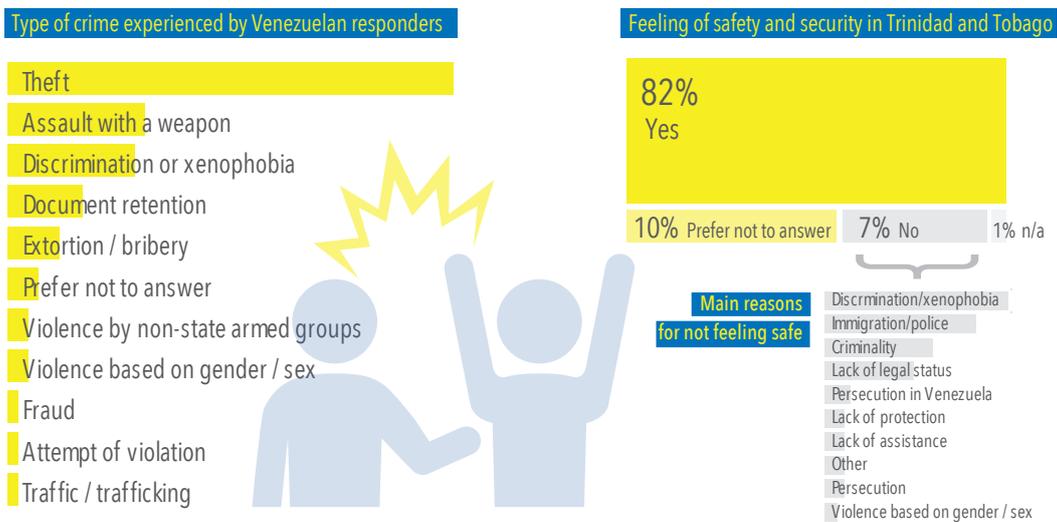
- Food assistance
- Rental subsidy
- Employment
- Cash assistance
- Learning/training
- Health care
- Education for children
- Legal assistance
- Counseling/psychosocial support
- No need for help



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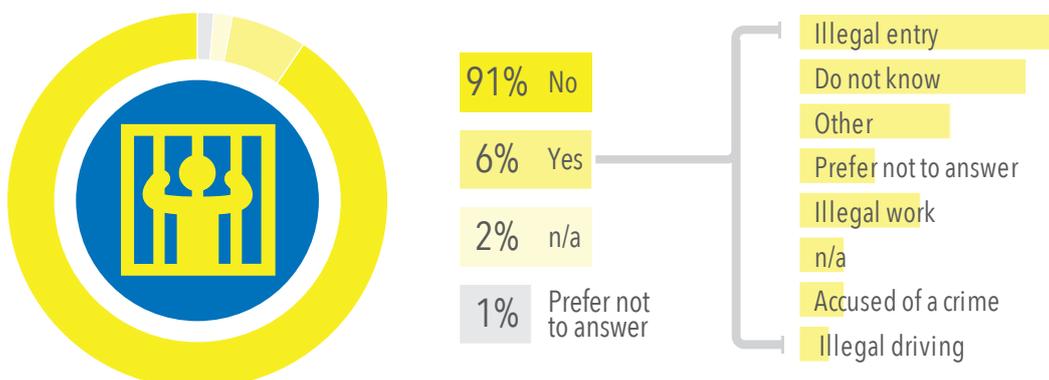
## Safety and Security

When asked if they felt safe in Trinidad and Tobago 82 per cent of respondents responded in the negative. The respondents shared the origin of these feelings was related to discrimination/xenophobia, immigration/police and criminality.



Of respondents to experience crime, the incidents they experience were mainly theft, assault with a weapon, and discrimination or xenophobia. While immigration/police is the second highest reason for persons feeling unsafe only, 6 per cent of persons had been arrested or detained in Trinidad and Tobago.

### Have you or a member of your family been arrested, raided, detained in Trinidad and Tobago? If yes, why?



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