

Mixed Movements Monitoring

Panama | November 2024



Darien is Panama's largest and poorest province. Bordering Colombia, the province hosts a 60-mile-deep jungle, the only breaking point of the Pan-American highway, linking the continent from south to north.

In the vicinity of the jungle are the *Emberá-Wounaan* and *Guna Yala* indigenous *Comarcas*, the territories that provide the first response to thousands of refugees and migrants, mainly from Venezuela, Ecuador, Colombia, Haiti, and African and South Asian nations.

Panama's mixed movement crisis has been ongoing for over two years. According to National Migration Service (SNM) statistics, over one million one hundred and fifty thousand people crossed through this area from 2021 to date.



Official data

297,354
Total entries in 2024

11,144
Total entries in November 2024

62% Male
38% Female

79% Adults
21% Children

Source: Panama National Migration Service

Methodology

UNHCR, the UN Refugee Agency, and UNICEF, the United Nations Children's Fund, collect monthly information on the characteristics, vulnerabilities and protection needs of refugees and migrants who enter Panama through Darien. The data is compiled through individual interviews conducted in Panama's Darien and Chiriqui provinces. Preliminary results are indicative and should not be interpreted as representative of the total refugee and migrant population crossing the border through the Darien jungle.

Respondent profile

442
people were interviewed in November 2024.
1,321
family members assessed

37% Male
63% Female

31 years
Average age

87%
dejó su país de origen/residencia hace menos de cuatro semanas.

0%
tenía la intención de permanecer en Panamá.

56%*
había solicitado estatus legal en otro país, previo a su arribo a Panamá.
*De las 143 personas que habían residido en otro país.

17%
viajaba con un sobreviviente de violencia en su grupo (sexual, física o psicológica).
La cifra representa una subestimación de estos incidentes.

9%
viajaba con mujeres embarazadas o lactantes.

1%
viajaba con alguien con una condición médica crítica o crónica.

Travel group composition
47% Entire family
24% Part of the family
4% Friends
0% Unrelated companions
26% Alone

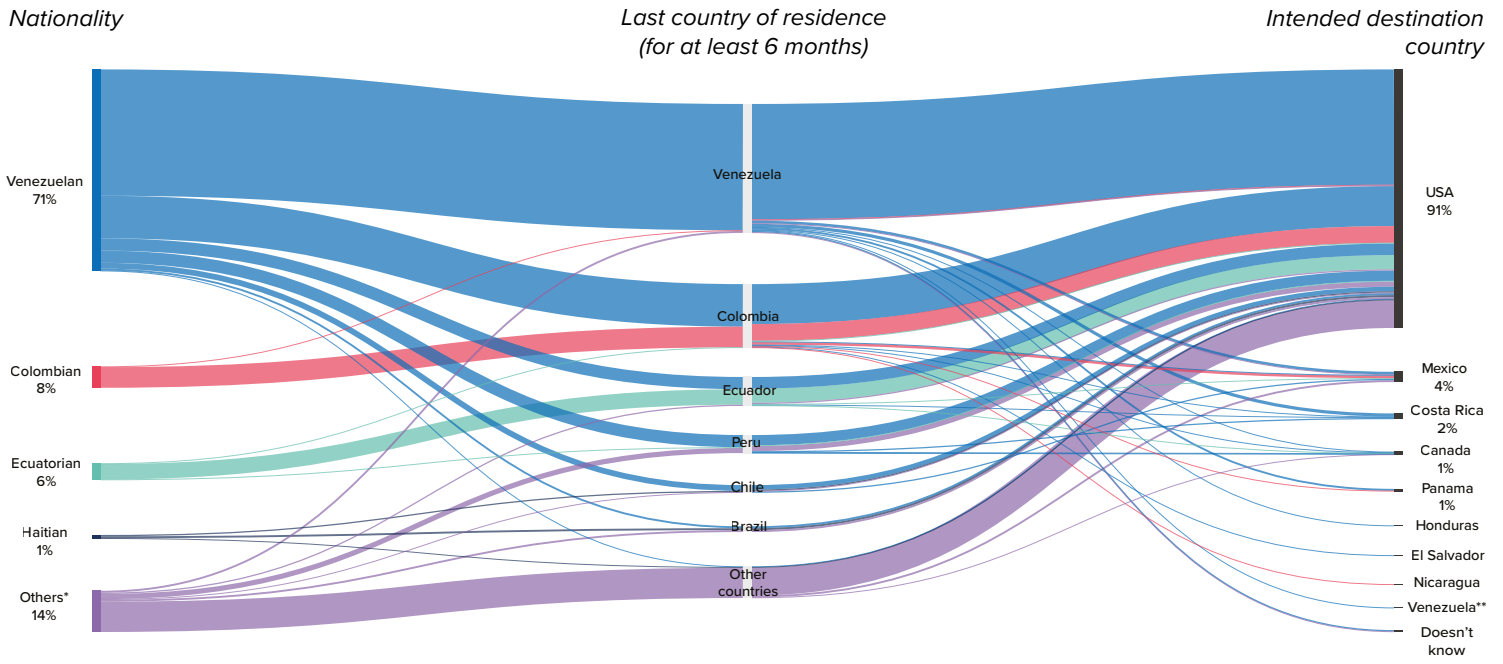
Documents carried by the family
90% National ID
17% Valid passport
5% Expired passport
24% Birth certificate
1% Others
2% None

1%
viajaba con una persona con discapacidad física o mental en su grupo.

5%
viajaba con niños, niñas o adolescentes, y no tenía el apoyo de otro cuidador.

1%
viajaba con una persona mayor de 60 años en su grupo.

Interviewed individuals by country of origin, last country of residence, and intended country of destination



*Other nationalities include: Afghanistan, Angola, Bangladesh, Cameroon, Cuba, Dominican Republic, Equatorial Guinea, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Iraq, Lebanon, Nepal, Pakistan, Peru, Somalia, Sudan, Syria, Togo, Yemen, and Zimbabwe.
 **Selected by people who wish to return to Venezuela.

Push and pull factors



stated that if they were unable to reach their country of destination, they would wait until allowed to proceed to said country.



received information about the journey and made decisions based on the information received from friends and relatives who had already made it.
 Also received information through social media, mainly Tiktok (21%), and Facebook (8%).

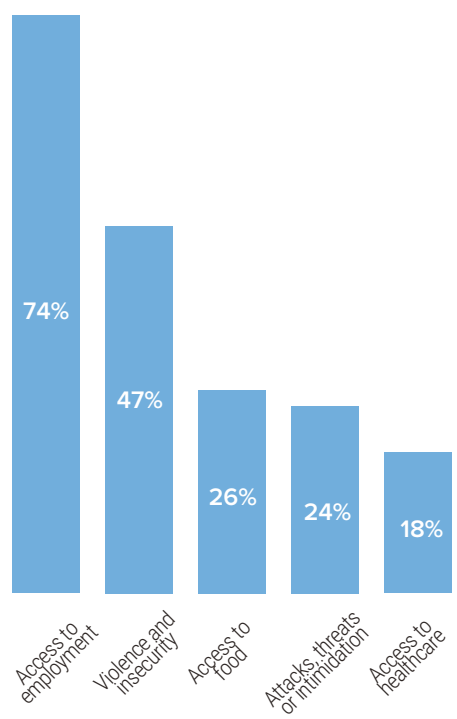


had applied for legal status in their previous country of residence, and **did not obtain it**, mainly in Chile and Colombia.
 *Out of 143 people that had lived in a country other than their country of origin for at least 6 months.

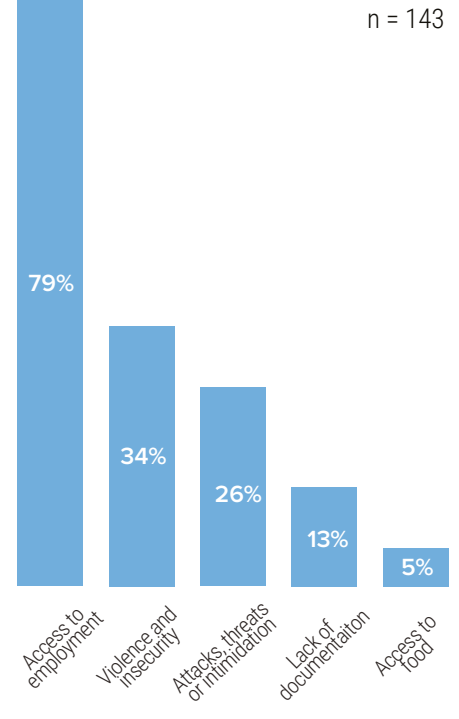


consider they would face risks if they had to return to their country of origin/residence.

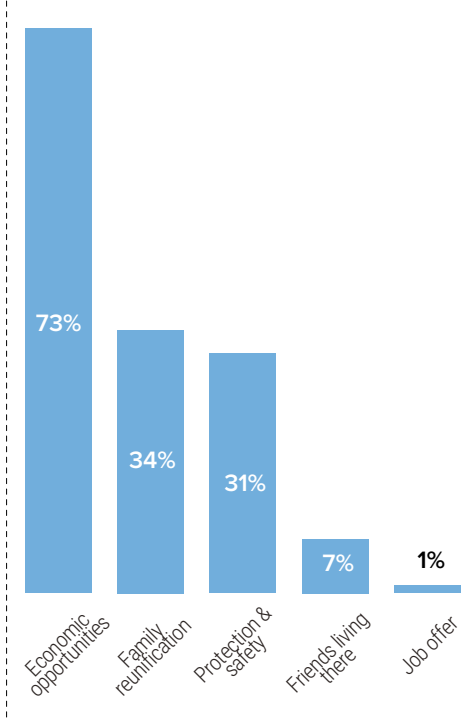
Main reasons for leaving country of origin



Main reasons for leaving country of residence



Reasons for choosing destination country



Children and adolescents

Children and adolescents in travel groups, by sex and age

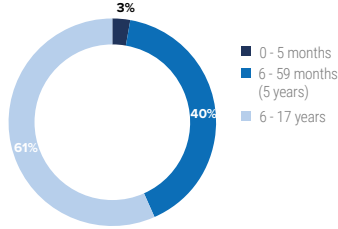


57%

were travelling with children and adolescents from their family.

49% Girls

51% Boys



53%

of adults have observed behavioral changes or emotional difficulties in their children and adolescents after the jungle crossing.

0%

travelled with unaccompanied children or adolescents.

0%

travelled with children or adolescents that were separated from their parents or legal guardian during the trip and **are no longer with the group.**



clothing, food, and medical services, including psychosocial support, are the three main needs reported for children and adolescents.

Education



21%

had not attended school for 4 months or more



Last educational level approved

48% Preschool

33% Primary

17% Secondary

0% Technical

2% Doesn't know



83%

do not carry documents that certify the last educational level approved

Vaccination



93%

0 - 5 months

80%

6 - 59 months (5 years)

have a complete vaccination schedule

Challenges during the journey



4 days

is the average time spent crossing the Darien jungle.

(Min.: 2 days, Max.: 16 days)



2 in 5

experienced mistreatment or abuse during their journey through the jungle.



36%

were victims of theft, scams or fraud during their journey through the jungle.

Additionally, 20% were victims of threats, intimidation, and attacks.



62%

paid a person to guide them through the jungle.

Access all our border protection monitoring publications [here](#)

Feedback: panpaim@unhcr.org

In collaboration with:



Note: The World Food Programme (WFP) does not have field operations in Panama. All data and information collected in this country is managed by the WFP Regional Office for Latin America and the Caribbean, based in Panama City, and are part of the regional initiative for Mixed Movements Monitoring in the Americas.