Protection Monitoring 2025

Aruba

UNHCR conducted a protection monitoring exercise in Aruba with refugees and asylum-seekers to better understand their profiles and protection needs. **Data collection was conducted from May to July 2025, assessing 257 people through 104 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 Aruba. The findings of this survey, although indicative of the population of refugees, asylum-seekers, and undocumented migrants in Aruba, **are not statistically representative of the entire refugees and migrant population in Aruba.**

Respondent profiles

*Total people assessed**

257

Average household size

2 people

48% Male

52% Female

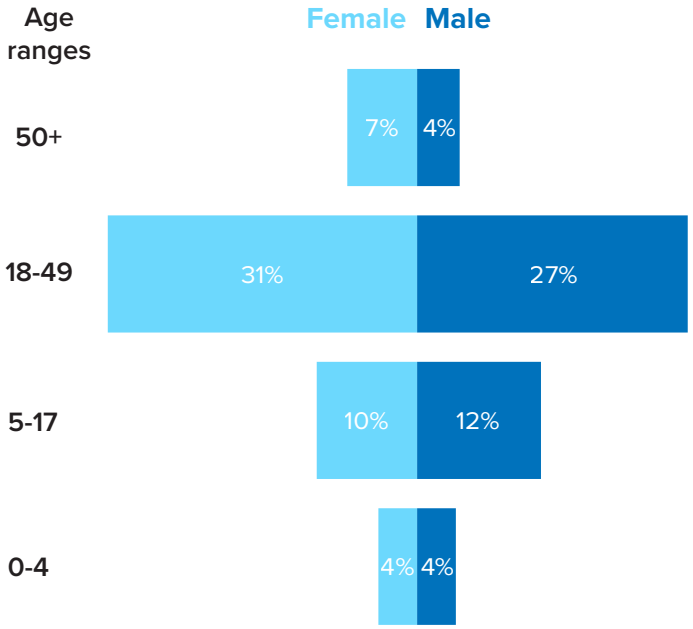
Average age of assessed individuals

30 Years

28 Years

31 Years

Sex and age of assessed individuals



Country of nationality of assessed individuals

67% Venezuela

21% Colombia

7% Ecuador

3% Dominican Republic

Other countries include: Aruba, Cuba, Panama, Peru, and other countries in the Kingdom of the Netherlands.

Main languages spoken by assessed households

Spanish **100%**
English **22%**
Papiamento **54%**
Dutch **7%**

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

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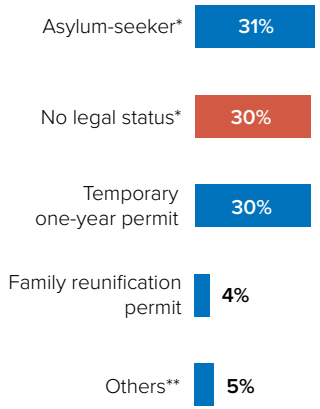
Legal status and Documentation

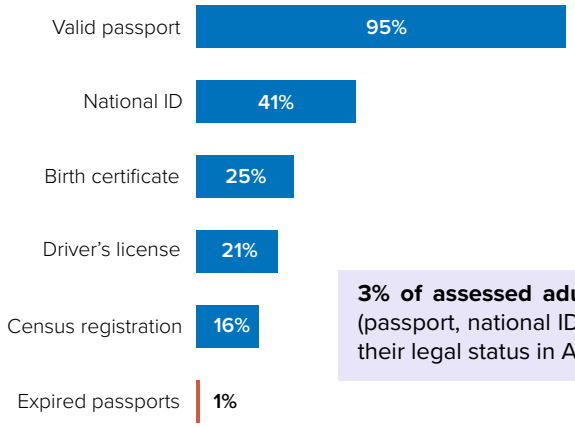
Adults

Legal status in the country



*Includes those who reported not receiving confirmation that their applications were registered by the *Department of Integration and Management of Foreigners*, DIMAS.
*Includes individuals who reported expired permits/visas, or who entered irregularly.
**Includes persons who reported having permanent residency, family reunification permits, or applying for one-year permits.

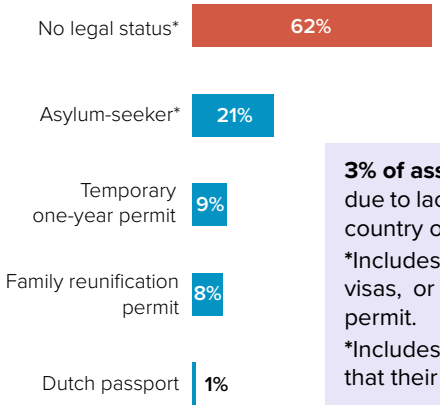
Documents



3% of assessed adults had **no valid documentation** (passport, national ID, or birth certificate), regardless of their legal status in Aruba.

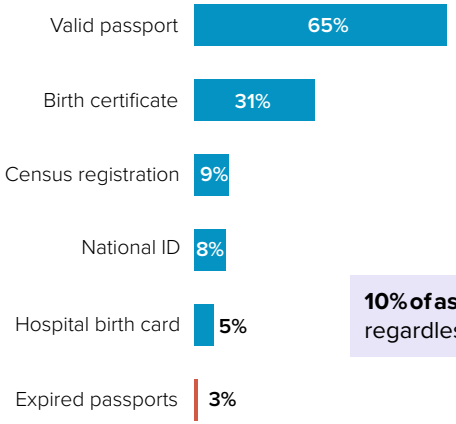
Children

Legal status in the country



3% 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 born in Aruba who have never obtained a permit.
*Includes those who reported not receiving confirmation that their applications were registered.

Documents



10% of assessed children had **no valid documentation,** regardless of their legal status in Aruba.

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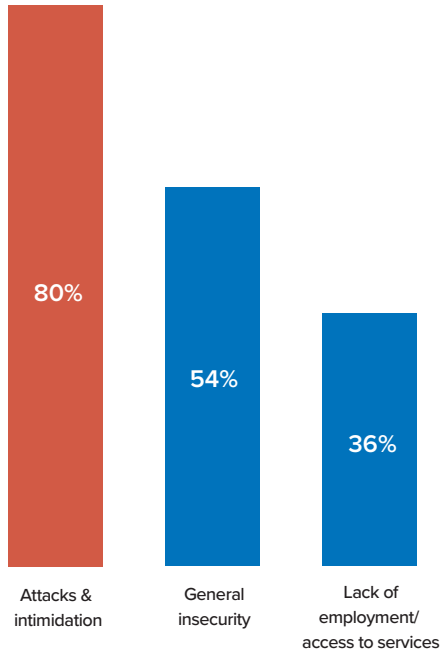
Push factors

Main reasons for leaving country of origin

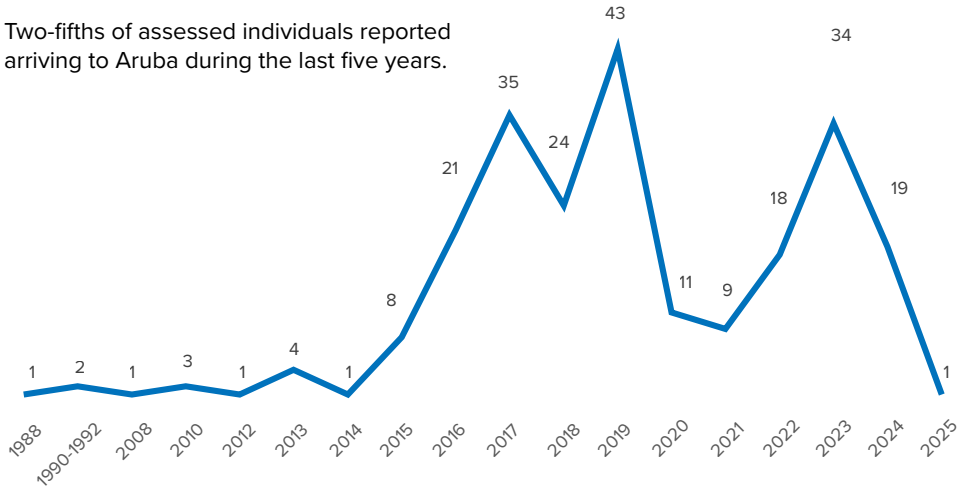


Most assessed individuals (95%) reported leaving their country of origin due to general insecurity and/or direct threats or attacks.

Access to territory and asylum

Year of arrival in Aruba

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



Arrival date only available for 235 individuals.

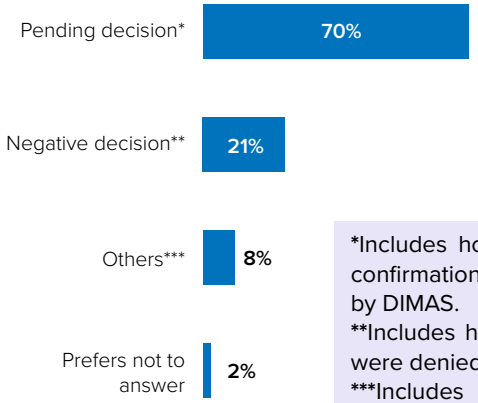
95% of respondents reported entering the country regularly.

75% of those that entered irregularly reported paying someone, incurring debts of up to 800 USD.

4% of respondents reported coming to Aruba with a marriage proposal.

88% of assessed households reported having dependants in their country of origin.

Status of asylum applications



68% of assessed households reported that at least one family member had applied for asylum in Aruba.

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

32% reported seeking a processor or private attorney for help with asylum or immigration processes.

*Includes households that reported not receiving confirmation that their application was registered by DIMAS.
**Includes households that reported their appeals were denied.
***Includes asylum seekers awaiting their first interview with DIMAS, and asylum seekers that withdrew their claim.

The main reasons given for not applying for asylum were a lack of understanding of what asylum is and how to access the process, and a lack of information from DIMAS.

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Livelihoods

80% of assessed adults reported working during the previous 30 days.

82% Men

78% Women

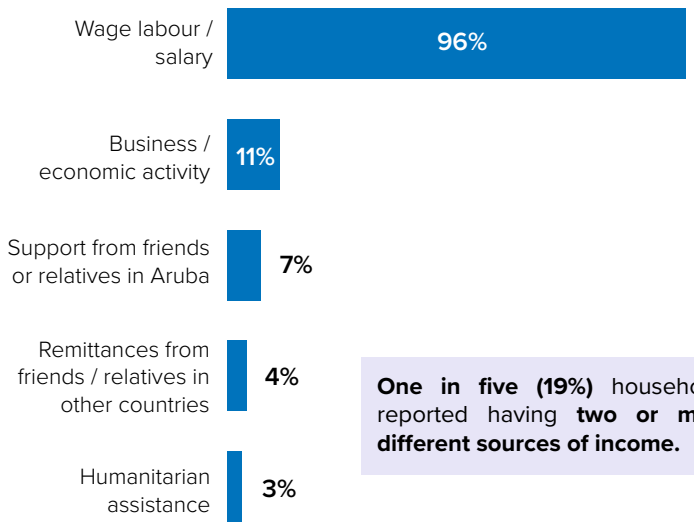
However, most of this work was informal. **At least 68% of adults surveyed reported working informally** without a contract.
The main reported areas of work were domestic service, construction, and hospitality services (excluding hotels).
The most common reasons cited for not working were **lack of documentation (26%), studies (23%), and childcare (22%).**

One in ten (10%) respondents reported coming to Aruba **with a job offer.**
60% stated the offer **did not fulfill their expectations.**

Two in five (38%) considered the pay they received **inadequate for the hours and conditions of work. Nearly half (48%) had taken no action** to address this situation, citing fear of losing their job, lack of information about their rights, or lack of time.

69% considered they were **not working under the same conditions as local people.**

Main reported sources of income during the last 30 days

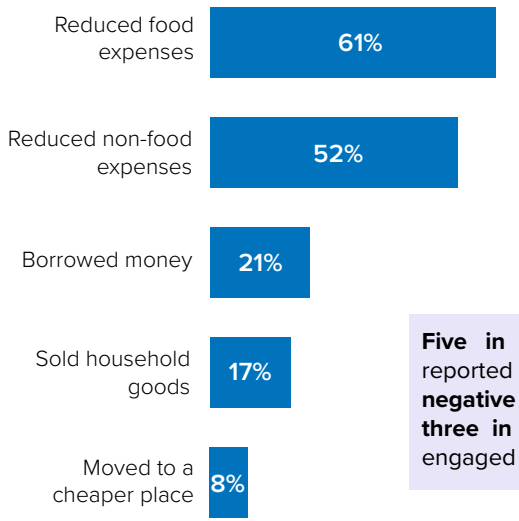


One in five (19%) households reported having **two or more different sources of income.**

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

The most common reasons reported for not working were lack of documentation (26%), studying (23%), and childcare (22%).

Negative coping strategies reported in the previous 30 days



Five in six (83%) households reported engaging in at least **one negative coping strategy**, while **three in five (57%)** 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 productive assets (6%), resorting to risky or exploitative work (2%), sending household members to work elsewhere (1%), and involving children in income-generating activities (1%).

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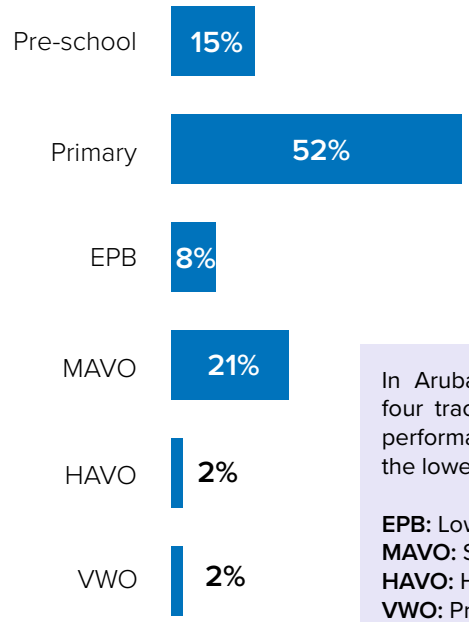
Education

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

Education level of assessed enrolled children



In Aruba, secondary education is divided into four tracks. Access is determined by academic performance. They are shown in the graph from the lowest to the highest level of requirements.

EPB: Lower Vocational Education
MAVO: Secondary General Secondary Education
HAVO: Higher General Secondary Education
VWO: Pre-university education

Housing

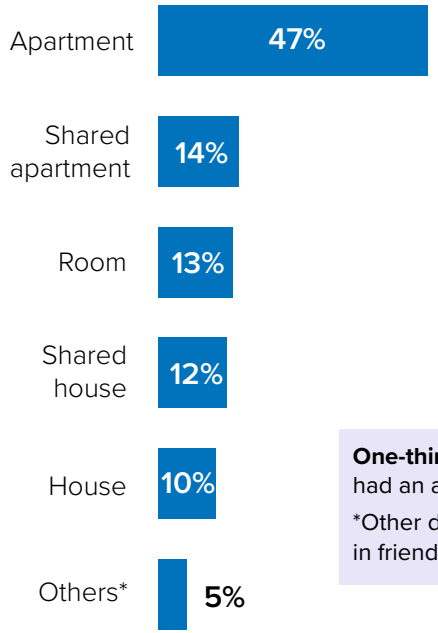
56%

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**.

*Other dwelling types include trailers, and people staying in friends' living rooms.

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Security and Social Cohesion

16%

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

Reported causes for discrimination included nationality (36%), legal status (26%), and race/ethnicity (16%).

Most respondents (86%) did not report discrimination incidents to the authorities, mainly due to fear of being detained/deported (23%), considering the incident was not serious enough (19%), and a lack of confidence in authorities (13%).

13% of households reported knowing of vulnerable population in their community, with humanitarian needs that were **not receiving assistance** from organizations or the government.

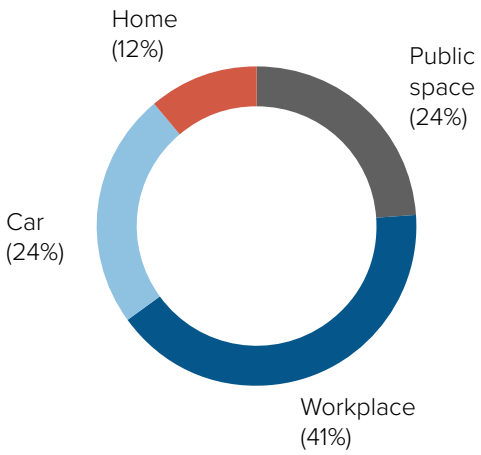
16%

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

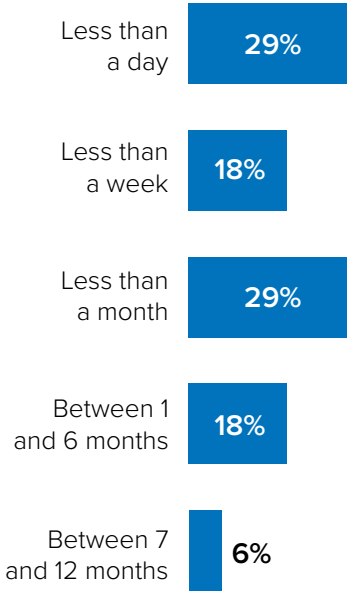
1 in 4

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

Location at the time of detention



Reported detention length



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