BASELINE ASSESSMENT OF IRREGULAR MIGRATION FLOWS AND MOBILITY MONITORING IN BORDER CROSSING POINTS WITHIN THE CONTEXT OF COVID-19

El SALVADOR: ROUND 4 - MARCH 2021

DTM
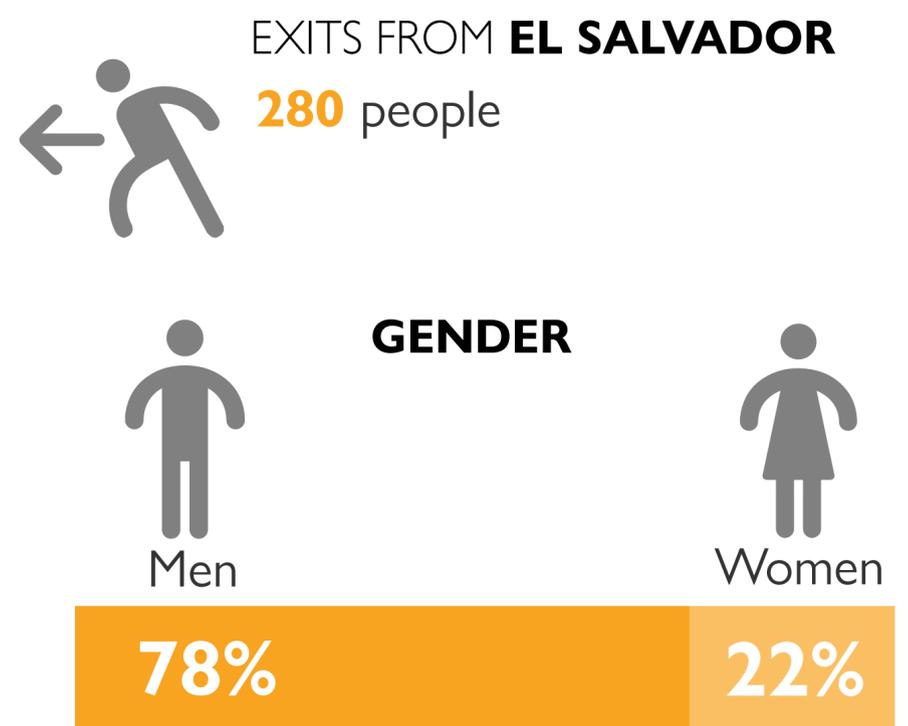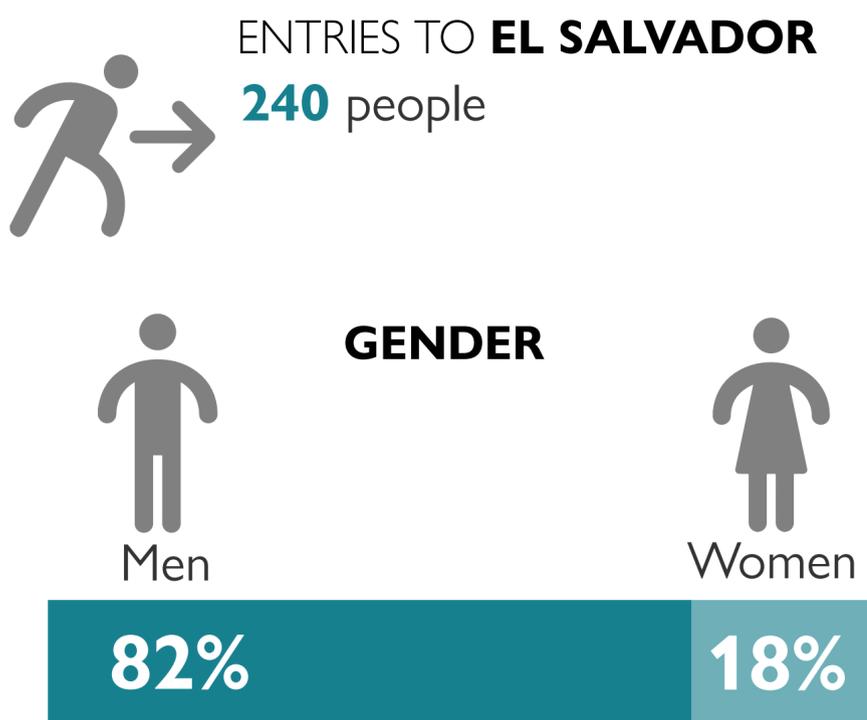IOM • OIM
UN MIGRATION

HIGHLIGHTS

IRREGULAR MIGRATION FLOWS

An irregular migration flow is understood to be the number of international migrants who arrive (enter) or depart (exit) a country during a period established irregularly through unofficial crossing points. These data are a dynamic measure for counting the number of people who cross a border and include those migrants who cross one or more times in a set period.

The data collected show the perception of key informants, so the data is interpreted as averages and general estimates of the situation.

ENTRIES TO **EL SALVADOR**
240 people

EXITS FROM **EL SALVADOR**
280 people

GENERE

GENDER

Men	Women
82%	**18%**

GENDER

Men	Women
78%	**22%**

NATIONALITIES

17%	50%	17%
El Salvador	Honduras	Guatemala

9%	7%
Nicaragua	Others: Ecuador, Colombia and Cuba

NATIONALITIES

71%	20%
El Salvador	Guatemala

8%	<1%
Honduras	Others: Nicaragua and Colombia

Source: Key informants

STRANDED POPULATION

The key informants identifed two migrants from Honduras and Nicaragua stranded at Las Chinamas border crossing in March.

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Sources: 17 Key Informants Interviewed

The DTM (Displacement Tracking Matrix), through the sub-components flow monitoring and mobility tracking, is a methodology whose purpose is to quantify and analyse trends in migration flows and the presence of migrants in specific localities during a specific period. Data were collected through interviews conducted remotely with strategically selected key informants. Information provided by the General Directorate of Migration and Foreigners (DGME), the National Civil Police (PNC), and the International Health Office (OSI) was used for each border crossing location. For the El Amatillo Border Crossing, information was also obtained from the Municipality of Pasaquina. The interviews were held in April 2021.

The data gathered are the result of systematic records of field observations or migratory control operations, or reflect the perception of the key informants consulted. In both cases, the estimates may be biased due to the difficulty of estimating irregular migration flows not recorded by the authorities. In addition, significant discrepancies exist between the population flows estimated by the different key informants, in both quantitative and qualitative terms, and the information available does not allow the quality of same to be determined. Therefore, the results presented in this Report are general approximations of the situation.

LOCATION

El SALVADOR

Basemap source: ESRI and UN World Map

This map is for illustration purposes only. The boundaries and names shown and the designations used on this map do not imply official endorsement or acceptance by the International Organization for Migration.

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Street sales of face masks. Northern Central American countries (Guatemala, Honduras and El Salvador) © IOM 2020

In order to enter El Salvador, travelers must present proof of COVID-19 vaccination (either single- or double-dose, depending on the vaccine). Persons who have not been vaccinated must present a PCR, NAAT, or LAMP Test with negative results.
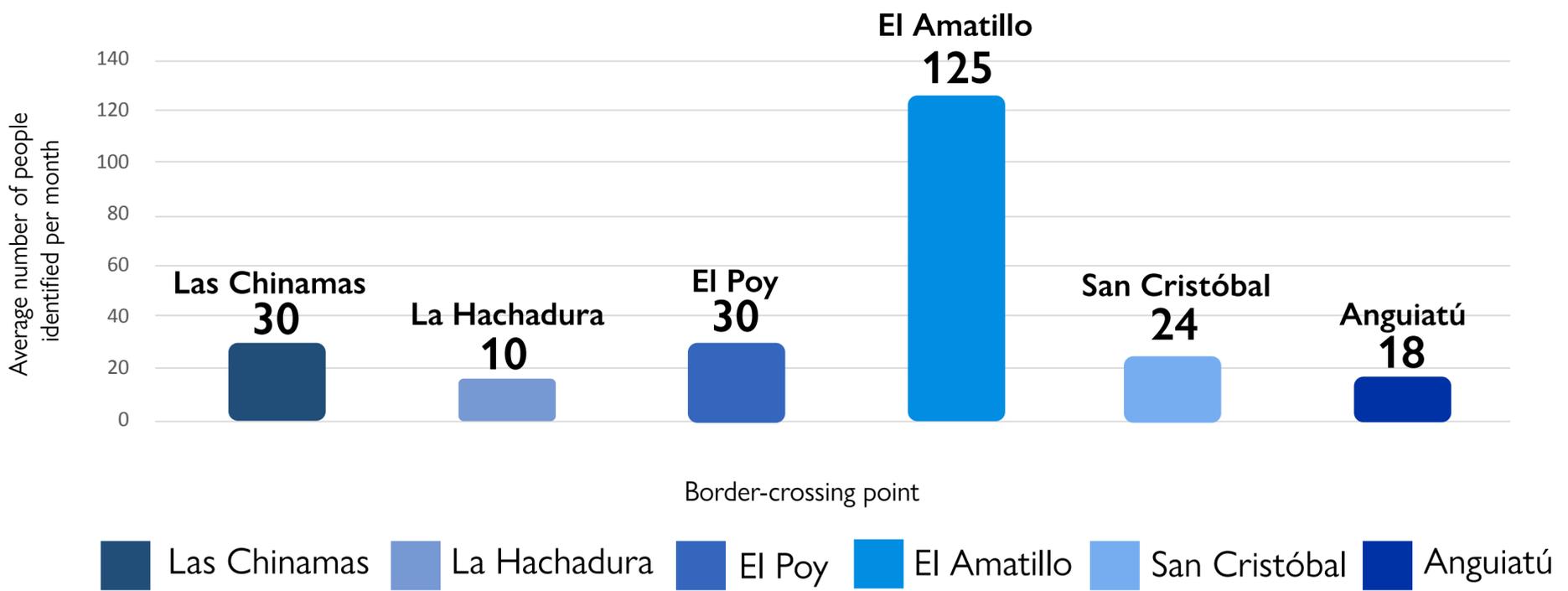
In March 2021 the Legislative Assembly passed the Special Act against Smuggling of Persons, which establishes the rights of nationals or foreigners who have been victims of smuggling, including the right: to receive protection in accordance with the Special Victim and Witness Protection Act; to receive assistance from diplomatic and consular representatives; and to return to their country of origin or residence in a timely manner. During the same month, however, President Nayib Bukele stated via Twitter that he would veto the Special Act against Smuggling of Persons, as he deemed it to be a tool to criminalize migration.
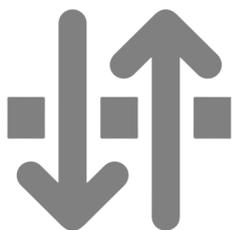
It was determined that the greatest incidence of irregular migration occurs during the evening and pre-dawn hours, times when people perceive less border monitoring. The key informants identified 82 cases of migrant smuggling between December and March, while one case was identified at El Amatillo location by way of secondary monitoring. The border crossing locations with the highest incidences of migrant smuggling were: La Hachadura, with 28 cases; Chinamas, with 20 cases; and San Cristóbal, with 19 cases.

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Monthly approximation of persons entering irregularly per border crossing location (March 2021)

Average number of people identified per month

El Amatillo
125

Las Chinamas
30

La Hachadura
10

El Poy
30

San Cristóbal
24

Anguiatú
18

Border-crossing point

Las Chinamas   La Hachadura   El Poy   El Amatillo   San Cristóbal   Anguiatú

Source: Key informants.

With respect to the incoming migration flow, the data provided by the key informants show that, during March, El Amatillo was the main crossing point of entry with 125 entries. Between 15 and 30 persons entered through each of the other five border crossing locations.

82 percent of the persons entering were men, with the proportion remaining similar at the various border crossings.

With respect to persons in vulnerable conditions, the limitations of the field personnel for identifying differentiated profiles persist, which results in quantitative approximations according to the capacities of each key informant.

Underage persons represent the category with the greatest number of persons identified as being in vulnerable condition, with 16 persons. Underage persons represent at least 7% of the migration flow.
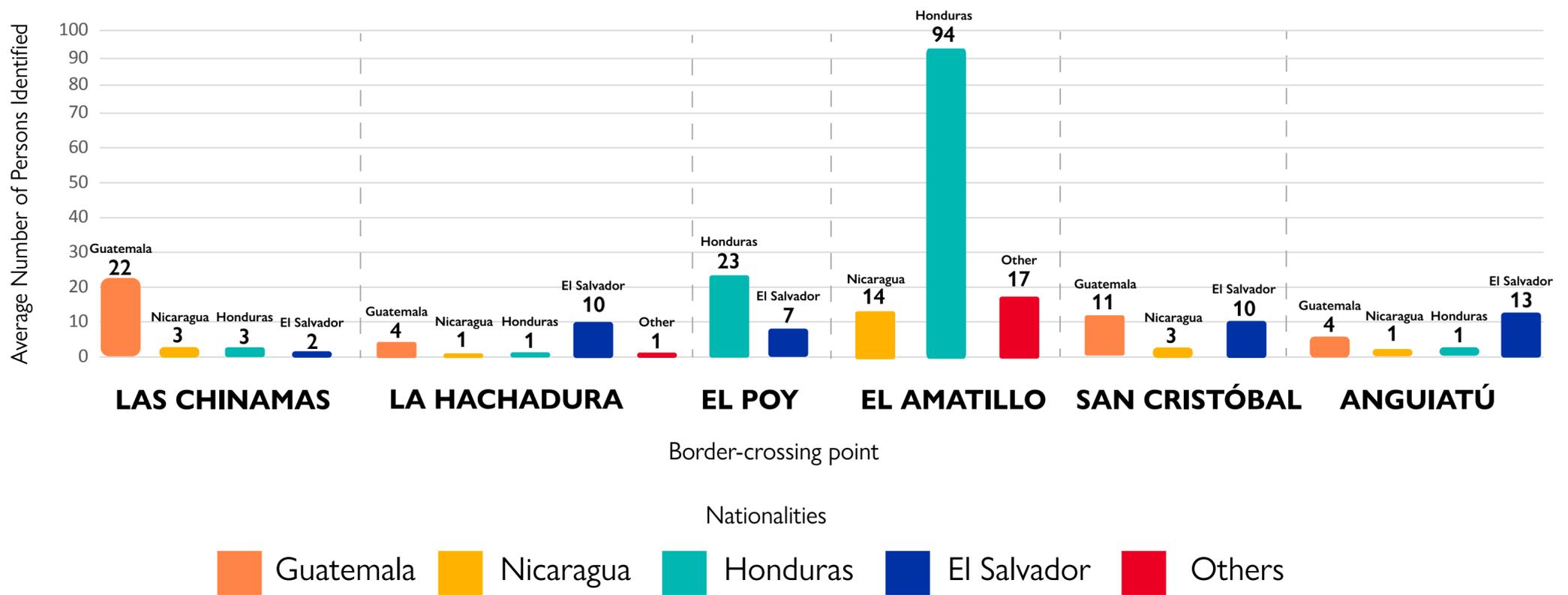
Monthly approximation of persons entering irregularly , by Gender and Border Crossing (marzo 2021)

	Las Chinamas	La Hachadura	El Poy	El Amatillo	San Cristóbal	Anguiatú
Men	83% / 25	67% / 10	80% / 24	86% / 107	75% / 18	78% / 14
Women	17% / 5	33% / 5	20% / 6	14% / 108	25% / 6	22% / 4

Average Number of Persons Identified

Source: Key informants.

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Monthly approximation of persons entering irregularly by Nationality and Border Crossing (March 2021)
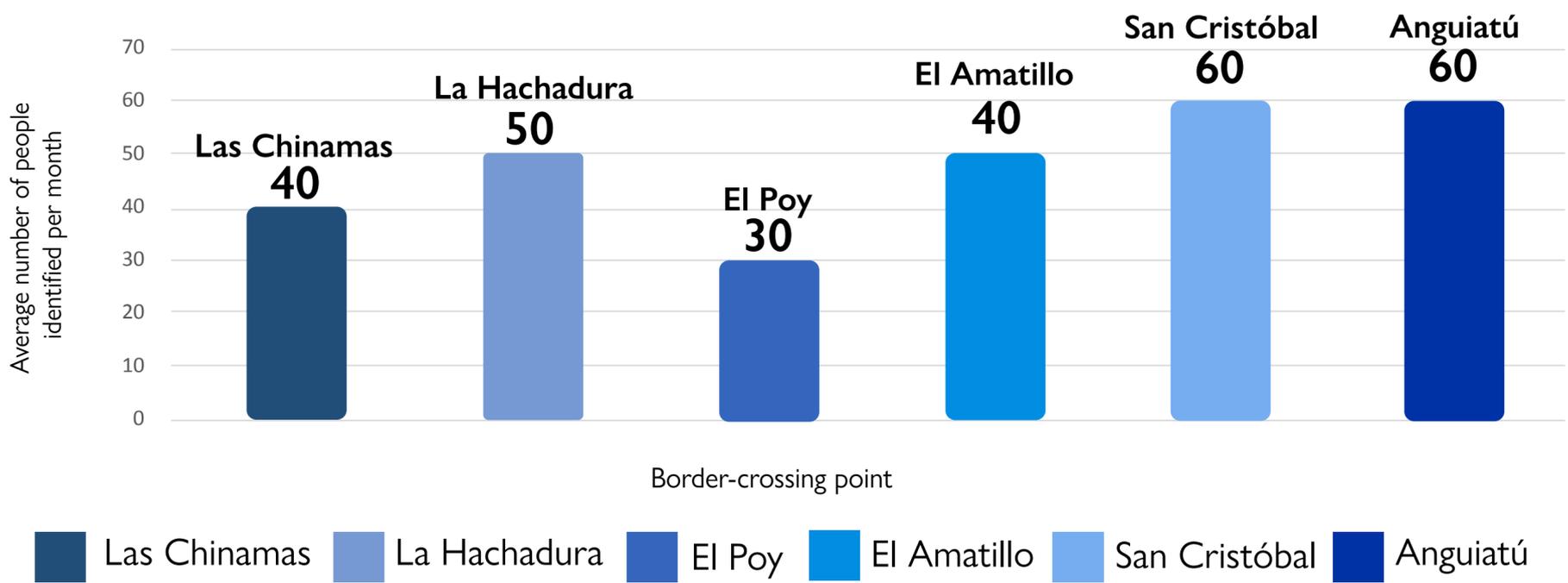

Source: Key informants.

50 percent of the persons comprising the incoming flow in March were Hondurans. The other three nationalities most represented among the incoming flow were Salvadoran, Honduran, and Guatemalan.

Most of the Hondurans entered through El Amatillo crossing, with El Poy also being used. The Guatemalan nationals mainly enter through Las Chinamas, and to a lesser extent through San Cristóbal and Anguiatú.

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Monthly approximation of persons leaving irregularly per border crossing location (March 2021)

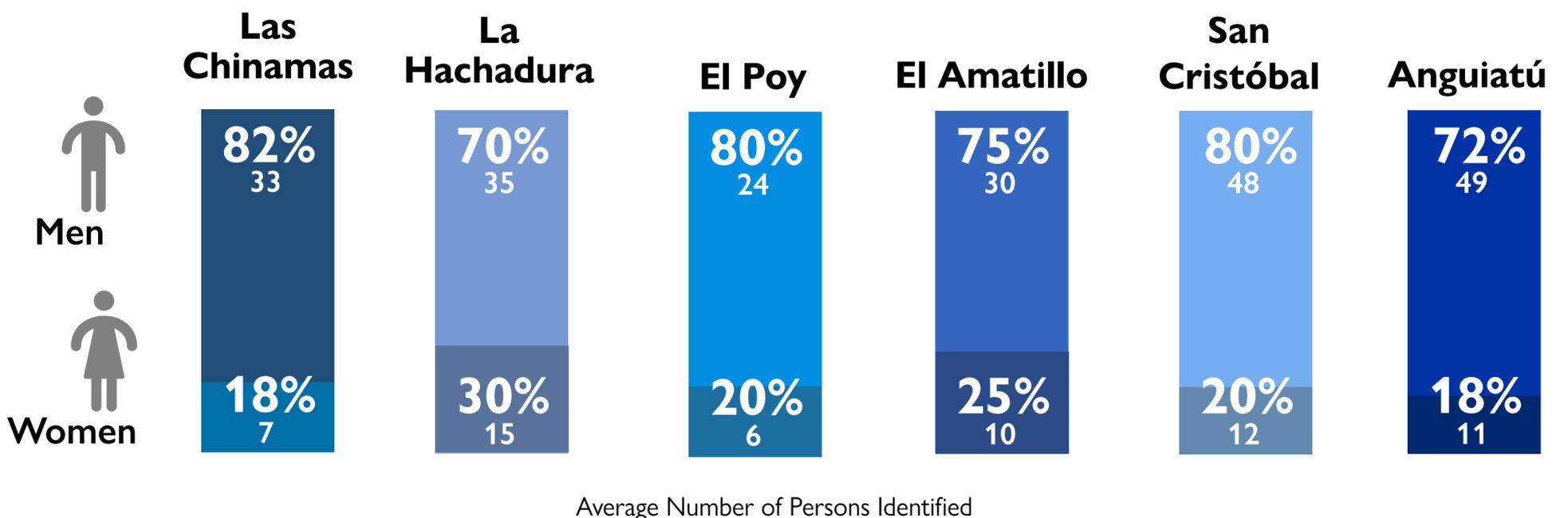*Source:* Key informants and Secondary Sources Consulted.

The data provided by the key informants for the different border crossings indicate flows of 30 to 60 persons per month at each crossing, with the highest numbers of persons leaving seen at the San Cristóbal and Aguiatú crossings.

Regarding the composition of the migratory flow by gender, 78 percent of the persons exiting El Salvador were men, with a similar proportion seen at all the border crossing locations.

With respect to persons in vulnerable conditions, the limitations of the field personnel for identifying differentiated profiles persist, which results in quantitative approximations according to the capacities of each key informant.

Underage persons represent the category with the greatest number of persons identified as being in vulnerable condition, with 46 persons. Underage persons represent at least 16 percent of the migration flow.

Monthly approximation of persons leaving irregularly, by Gender and Border Crossing (March 2021)

Average Number of Persons Identified

Source: Key informants.

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Monthly approximation of persons leaving irregularly by Nationality and Border Crossing (March 2021)
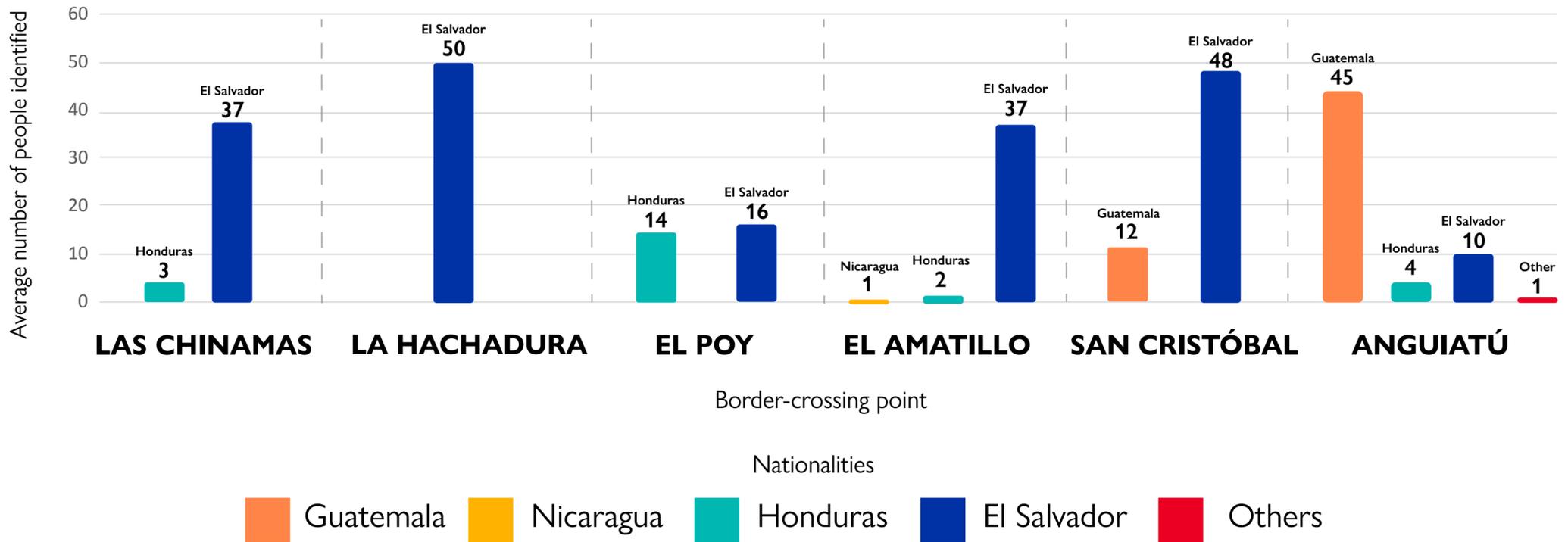
Source: Key informants and Secondary Sources Consulted.

71 percent of the persons exiting El Salvador irregularly are Salvadoran nationals. These migrants use all six border crossings, with San Cristóbal and La Hachadura showing the largest flows. At Anguiatú and, to a lesser extent, San Cristóbal, the key informants identified outbound Guatemalan nationalities. Most of the Honduran nationals leaving El Salvador cross the border at El Poy.

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El Amatillo border location was the main point of entry in March, with 125 persons. Incoming flows of less than 100 persons were identified at the other five border crossing locations. Half of the incoming migrants were Hondurans, with the rest of the flow being comprised mainly of Salvadorans, Guatemalans, and Nicaraguans.

Outgoing flows of 30 to 60 persons per months were detected at each border crossing location, with the highest numbers of persons exiting at San Cristóbal and Aguiatú.

With respect to persons in vulnerable conditions, the limi-tations of the field personnel for identifying differentiated profiles persist, which results in quantitative approximations according to the capacities of each key informant. Despite this fact, the key informants mentioned cases of migrant smuggling.

According to the key informants, the requirement to present a negative PCR-RT Test and the high cost of the test increased the incidence of irregular migration.

There are discrepancies among the estimates of the different key informants regarding the nationality of the migrants, which could mean that the figures presented in this report are underestimated.

The key informants identified only two stranded migrants, specifically at Las Chinamas border point.

Field work by IOM officers. Northern Central American countries (Guatemala, Honduras and El Salvador) © IOM 2020