

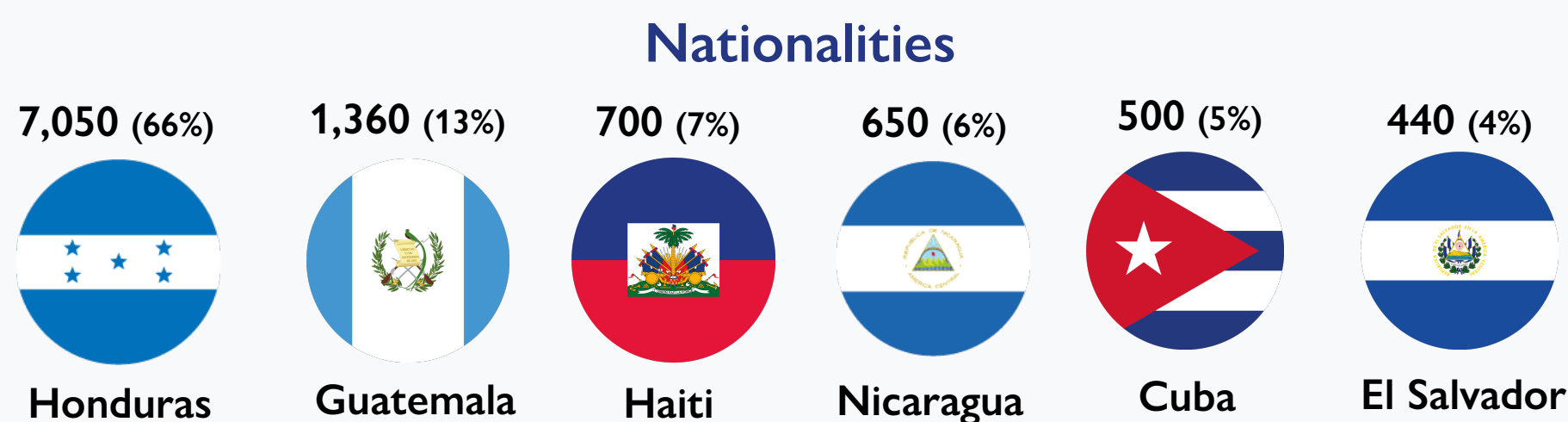
▶ Highlights

i **IRRREGULAR MIGRATION FLOWS**

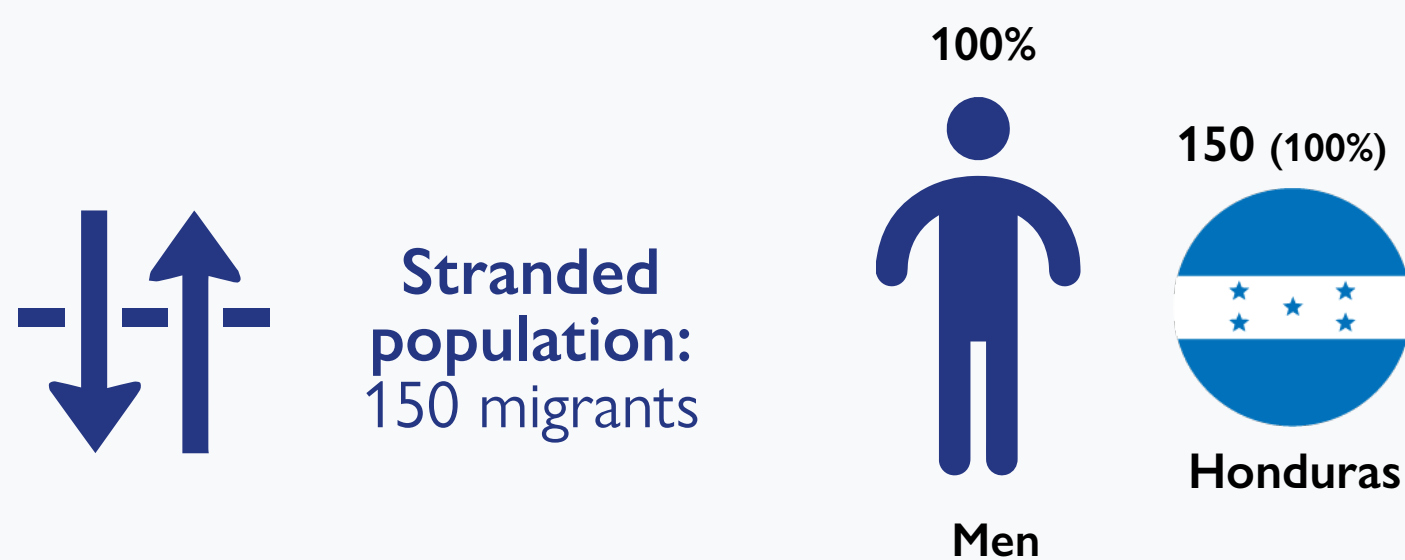
An irregular migration flow is understood to be the number of international migrants who arrive (enter) or depart (exit) a country during a period established irregularly through unofficial crossing points. These data are a dynamic measure for counting the number of people who cross a border and include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

The border locations in which entry reports were made by key informants were Ciudad Hidalgo, El Ceibo, and Frontera Corozal.



Exits from Mexico:
No exits from Mexican territory were identified under an irregular transit migration flow.



Approximately 150 migrants in transit have been identified, mostly men of Honduran nationality, who are on the outskirts of the shelter waiting to apply for refugee status before the Mexican Commission for Refugee Assistance (COMAR) or waiting for a means of transportation or for money to be sent so they can continue their journey. Sometimes they wait an average of three weeks for the money to arrive to continue on their way north. However, key informants did not identify stranded people¹.

¹ According to IOM Glossary on Migration (2019) stranded population refers to migrants who are not in a position to return to their country of origin, to regularize their situation in the country in which they reside or to access regular migration routes that allow them to move to another country. The term can also refer to migrants who are stranded in the country of destination, of transit or of origin, for humanitarian or security reasons, and who, consequently, cannot return home or continue the journey to another place.

METHODOLOGY

Sources: 10 Key informants

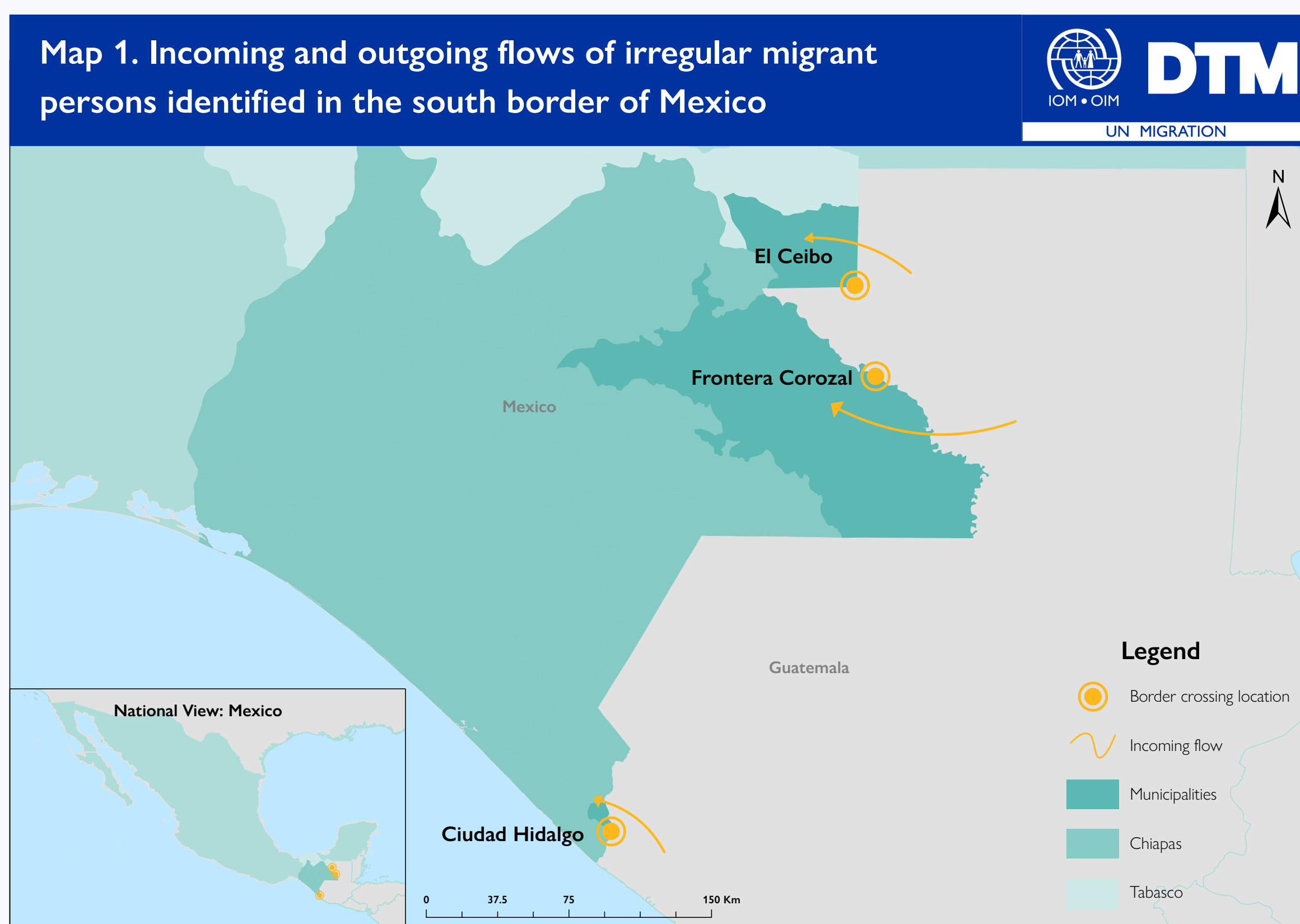
The DTM (Displacement Tracking Matrix), through the sub-components flow monitoring and mobility tracking, is a methodology whose purpose is to quantify and analyze trends in migration flows and the presence of migrants in specific locations during a specific period. Data were collected from interviews with strategically selected key informant, which were carried out remotely. Information was used from the National Institute of Migration, the Directorate of Attention to Migrants and Refugees of the Suchiate City Council, the National Human Rights Commission, the El Ceibo Migrant House, the State Human Rights Commission, and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) in Palenque, the Traveller's House (Casa del Caminante) Jtatic Samuel Ruiz García, and people from the local civil society of Ciudad Hidalgo and Tenosique.

The data collected are the result of systematic records of field observations, migration control operations, or the perception of the key informants consulted. For the calculation and quantification of the nationalities

identified while entering and leaving Mexico, all migration flows reported, by location and key informant, are considered for the calculation of the maximum value per nationality, location, and current exercise. Data are presented as a percentage due to limitations in the specification of amounts in absolute numbers for each nationality reported.

Estimates may be biased due to the difficulty of quantifying irregular flows not recorded by key informants. Furthermore, there are important discrepancies between the population flow estimates of key informants, in both quantitative and qualitative terms. Therefore, the results of this report are general approximations of the situation.

LOCATION



SITUATIONAL CONTEXT



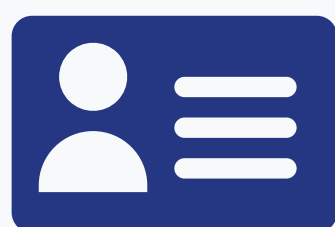
On June 8, the Vice President of the United States Government, Kamala Harris, visited Mexico City to meet with the Mexican President, Manuel López Obrador, in order to discuss several issues, among them the consolidation of a specialized operations group to fight migrant smuggling, as well as forensic expansion with the collaboration and training of the United States Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) to search for missing persons in Mexico². Prior to the arrival of Vice President Harris in Mexico, some civil society organizations³ exposed the different problems migrants go through during their transit through Mexico toward the United States. One of these problems is that people are exposed to a series of human rights violations and felonies, such as extortion and kidnapping, due to the criminalization of migration.



The Federal Government installed the “State Interinstitutional Roundtable to Assist Asylum Seekers” in the state of Chiapas, pointing out that it is about the implementation and follow-up of the agreements of the Global Compact on Refugees. It is recognized that 70 percent of refugee and international protection applications are presented in Chiapas, and the forecast for the end of 2021 is that there will be more than 100,000 seekers.



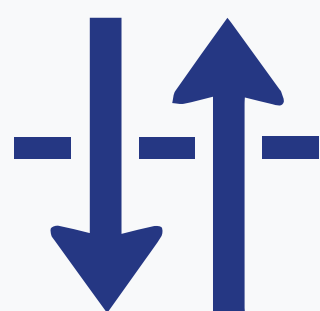
Vaccination days against COVID-19 were carried out in Chiapas, specifically in Tapachula, Unión Hidalgo and Frontera Hidalgo, where people over 40 years old were invited to participate, regardless of their nationality. Key informants estimate the participation of at least 500 Guatemalan nationals, the majority during the first week of vaccination⁴.



There were reports that at the Rodolfo Robles border bridge in Ciudad Hidalgo, as well as at the Talismán border, Guatemalans made up to 100 daily requests for the Regional Visitor Card (TVR). Moreover, it was estimated that approximately 1,000 migrants crossed the Suchiate River every day, a flow represented mostly by cross-border migration of Guatemalan people in irregular condition.



According to the Statistical Bulletin of the Migration Policy Unit, in June 2021 Chiapas saw 2,681 events where foreigners were returned by the immigration authority: 1,960 men and 370 women of Central American nationalities. Returns are currently carried out by land, and key informants indicated that up to ten buses depart every day from the Siglo XXI Migration Station to Tecún Umán, Guatemala. In the border crossing point of “El Ceibo”, in Tenosique, in June there were 765 events recorded of foreigners returned by the migration authorities.



On the other hand, there is an increased perception of migration flows from Central American and Caribbean nationals to North America, according to key informants from Ciudad Hidalgo and Tapachula. Particularly in Ciudad Hidalgo, key informants indicated that, previously, the town was just a crossing point; however, since last year and within the context of the COVID-19 pandemic, there are people who wait for several days in the city, mostly Central Americans who ask for money, arguing that they want to continue on their way, while some others want to return to their countries of origin.



Key informants from the city of Palenque (Chiapas) estimate that between 4,000 and 6,000 migrants arrive to the city every month. 95 percent of the people enter through Frontera Corozal. This means there is a change in mobility patterns in the presence of the National Migration Institute (INM) and the National Guard in other border locations such as Ciudad Hidalgo and El Ceibo.

² Presidency of México. (Mexico City, 2021).

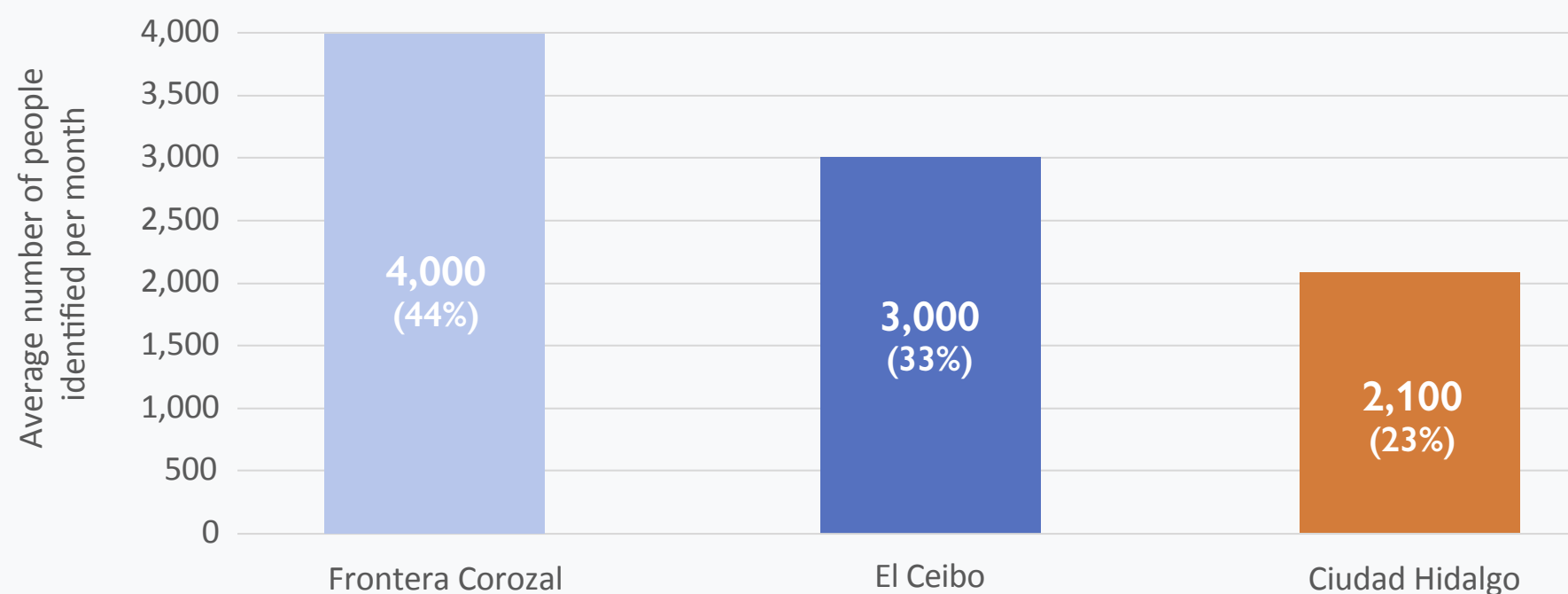
³ Chiapas Paralelo. 7 recommendations to Kamala Harris to address the immigration issue prior to her visit to Mexico in June 2021 (Chiapas, 2021) Available at: <https://www.chiapasparalelo.com/noticias/chiapas/2021/06/recomiendan-a-kamala-harris-atender-agenda-migratoria-desde-siete-puntos/>

⁴ El Heraldo Chiapas (June 2021); La Red-Guatemala (June, 2021) and Plaza Pública-Guatemala (June, 2021)



INCOMING MIGRATION FLOWS

Monthly estimate of migrants entering in irregular condition by border location (June 2021)



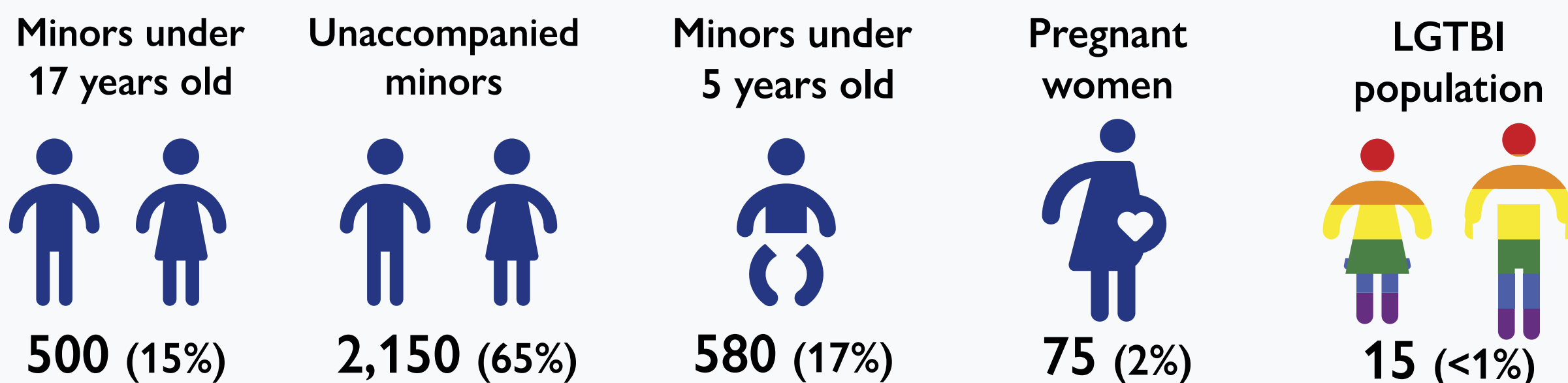
Regarding the incoming migration flows, the data provided by key informants showed that, in June, Frontera Corozal was the main border entry point, with 4,000 entries, followed by El Ceibo with 3,000; the lowest traffic was reported in Ciudad Hidalgo with 2,100 people entering. According to testimonies collected from key informants, people who attempt to enter Mexico irregularly mainly do so at night (night or early morning hours).

Key informants in Ciudad Hidalgo indicate that migrants are mobilizing in groups of five to eight people, with an estimated of 30 to 70 people entering daily. Regarding Frontera Corozal, key informants have reported that more than 200 people enter through this point every day.

Irregular migration flows through the Suchiate River (Ciudad Hidalgo) are increasing; the El Armadillo crossing point was identified as a transit option for migrants who enter irregularly. It is a part of the river that is characterized by having little surveillance by the INM and the National Guard, as well as being an area controlled by organized crime.

Likewise, the migration route used between El Ceibo and Tenosique is controlled by networks of migrant smuggling and related felonies.

Migrants identified as being in vulnerable situation (June 2021)

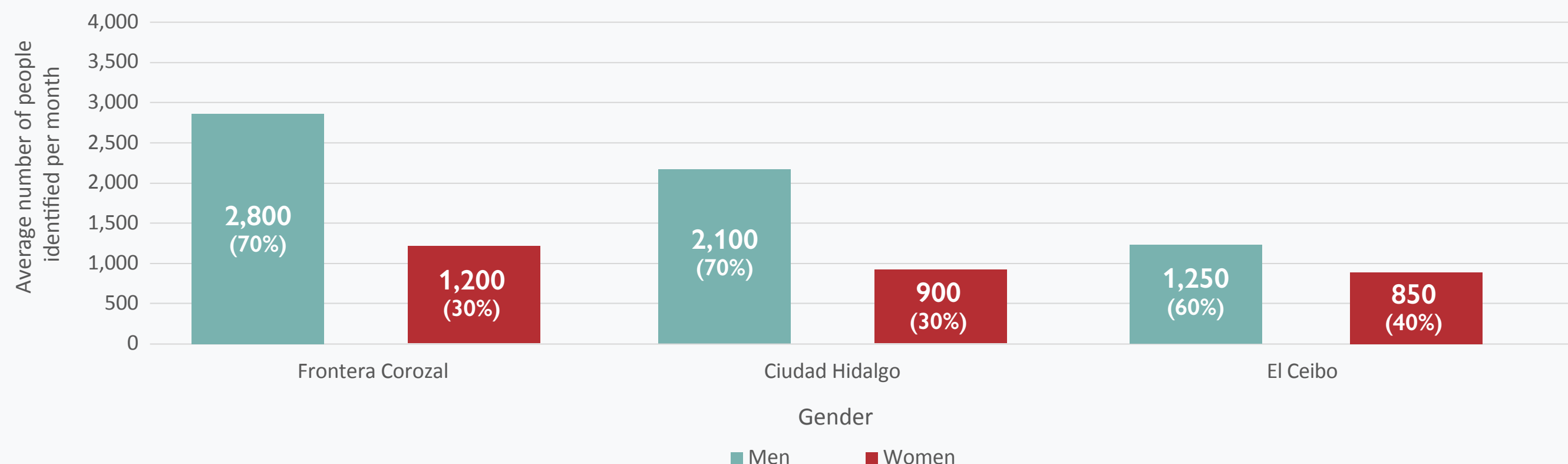


Regarding people in vulnerable situations, field staff limitations persist to be able to identify differentiated profiles, so there is a quantitative approach according to the capabilities of each key informant.

Minors are the most represented category of persons identified in vulnerable situations, with 500 being under 17 years of age, 2,150 unaccompanied minors, and 580 unidentified children under five years old. Minors represent 35 percent of migration flows; also, 75 pregnant women were identified.

Regarding unaccompanied adolescents, institutions currently do not have channeling routes that ensure their enjoyment of their rights. For example, having alternative accommodations, with decent conditions, and with attention to food and health, as well as institutional protocols that address their mobility profile and ensure the best interest of children.

Estimate of entries of irregular migrants by gender and border location (June, 2021)

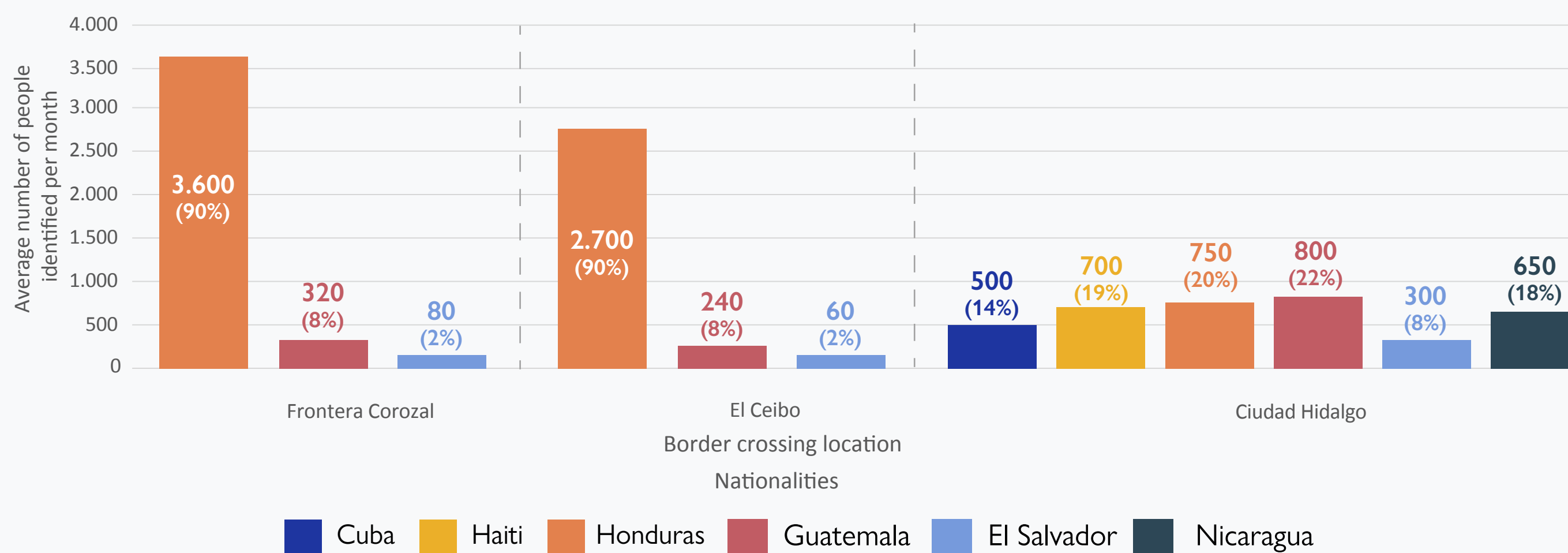


In Ciudad Hidalgo it is possible to identify the presence of traveling groups, which appear to be families made up of young people, mostly men, and women with children under 5 years of age.

In the location of Tenosique, informants have also identified that migrant women, in addition to facing situations of violence caused by the presence of gangs, also decided to leave due to gender-based violence. It is important to note that there are women who face multiple risks due to vulnerability, since some of them are also minors and/or are pregnant.

According to estimates by key informants, 90 percent of the people who come to rest at the Traveller's House (Casa del Caminante) Jtatic Samuel Ruiz García in Palenque, Chiapas, share that they have been robbed on the road or have lost their belongings due to having to run or hide when they felt in danger.

Estimate of entries of irregular migrants by nationality and border location (June, 2021)



The incoming flow was divided into six nationalities; the highest flow of people came from Honduras and Guatemala, and the other nationalities identified were mostly from Nicaragua, El Salvador, Haiti, and Cuba. Central Americans enter mainly through Frontera Corozal and El Ceibo, while in Ciudad Hidalgo there is a greater diversity of people of different nationalities entering through this border location.



Suchiate River, Ciudad Hidalgo, Mexico © IOM 2021

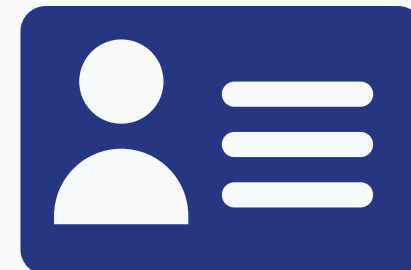
Informants have reported that, on average, around 66 percent of the migration flow of entry is made up of people of Honduran nationality and, according to the general data disaggregated by sex, most are men. 36 percent of the population is made up of unaccompanied children and adolescents, pregnant women and, to a lesser extent, LGBTI people.

Graph 5. Relationship between the communities of Ciudad Hidalgo, Palenque and Tenosique with the migrant population,

Xenophobia and rejection



Fraud, extortion, and theft due to falsification of immigration regularization processes before the INM



In general, the main reasons forcing Central Americans to leave their country of origin are, structural violence, and the presence of gangs who force people to pay fees for their businesses.

Most unaccompanied minors are adolescents between the ages of 15 and 17. According to Asylum Access and the Mexican Commission for Refugee Assistance (COMAR), some unaccompanied adolescents leave their country of origin because they want to reunite with a relative who lives in Mexico or the United States. However, in most cases, adolescents, mostly of Honduran and Salvadoran nationality, decide to leave their country because they fear being recruited by gangs.



CONCLUSIONS



Frontera Corozal was the location with greater entry of migrants in irregular condition, and was mainly used by Central American migrants.



The main nationalities detected and reported continue to be Honduran, Guatemalan and Salvadoran; however, the presence of Haitian and Cuban nationals has been determined. On the other hand, discrepancies were identified between the estimates of the different key informants regarding the nationality of the migrants, even when calculating the nationalities by locality, which could result in differences in the maximum values reported. This could mean that the estimates presented in this report are underestimated.



The month of June underscores the presence of extended families accompanied by adolescents, women, as well as girls and boys under five years of age. Similarly, a large number of unaccompanied adolescents were reported entering Mexico. Moreover, informants have identified people who have multiple vulnerabilities (for example, adolescent women who are pregnant). However, the limitations of key informants persist in terms of being able to identify differentiated profiles, so there is a quantitative approach according to the capabilities of each key informant.



Field work by IOM officers. © IOM 2020

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