

HIGHLIGHTS

FLOW MONITORING REGISTRY

Source: Migrant Reception Station (MRS) in Los Planes, Gualaca, Chiriquí.
Government of Panama, 2022



13,248 PEOPLE DEPARTING FROM PANAMA
158% increase in the flow in comparison to April 2022 (5,136 people)

FLOW MONITORING SURVEY

Source: IOM, 2022



45% OF THE FLOW IS COMPOSED OF MEN BETWEEN 26 AND 35 YEARS OF AGE,
WITH AN AVERAGE AGE OF **31 YEARS**



HIGHLIGHTED NATIONALITIES

Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela (85%), Haiti (5%),
Dominican Republic (2,5%), Senegal (2,5%)



89% OF PEOPLE REPORTED COMMUNICATING IN **SPANISH**
5% in **Portuguese**, 4% in **Haitian Creole**, 1% in **French** y 1% in **English**.



91% OF PEOPLE HAVE THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA AS THEIR FINAL DESTINATION



95% OF
PEOPLE MIGRATED
ACCOMPANIED

74%
men

26%
women

<1% elderly
people
(+60 years)

19% minors
(17 years
or younger)

4% increase in the flow of minors
compared to previous month (**20%** in
April 2022)

METHODOLOGY

The Flow Monitoring component of the DTM (Displacement Tracking Matrix)¹ tool consists of a registry of migrants and the application of surveys directed at representatives of travel groups, facilitating the generation of quantitative estimates on the flow of people in a defined location and, from this, the collection of qualitative data.

The data for the flow monitoring registry is obtained from official data provided by the Government of Panama, corresponding to the voluntary departures of migrants from the MRS of Los Planes, in Gualaca, through the National Migration Service (SNM). The instrument used for the flow monitoring surveys is in Spanish, English, Haitian Creole, French and Portuguese in order to increase the number of people who can be surveyed and collecting data on gender, age, nationality, characteristics of the trip, migration route, country of habitual residence, in addition to counting the people who make up the travel group of the people surveyed. For the definition of monitoring sites (Map 1), the baseline for the evaluation of irregular migration flows and mobility tracking in border localities in southern Costa Rica under the context of COVID-19 was taken as a reference, based on consultations with key informants² and field work.

For the study, records of irregular departures from Panama between May 1 and May 31, 2022, were obtained, corresponding to 13,248 irregular departures to Costa Rica. In parallel, a stratified random sampling by monitoring points was carried out during May. A total of 159 surveys were conducted with migrants, 52 per cent (72) were valid surveys and 48 per cent were invalid (refusals by respondents). 85 per cent of valid surveys were conducted to Venezuelans migrants, therefore, **the results of the surveys carried out on the migrant population in May 2022 are not representative of the total registered departures from the SNM Los Planes, therefore, it is not recommended to extrapolate the characteristics of the people interviewed to the rest of the flow.**

Map 1. Distribution of monitoring points



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.

¹. Information associated with the data collection methodology is available at www.dtm.iom.int/about

². Retrieved from: <https://dtm.iom.int/reports/costa-rica-linea-base-para-la-evaluaci%C3%B3n-de-flujos-migratorios-y-presencia-de-migrantes-1>

CONTEXT



Within the framework of the COVID-19 emergency, since March 19, 2020, the Government of Costa Rica has kept its land border with Panama closed for the Binational Controlled Flow Operation, which sought an orderly and safe migration of migrants moving through the Americas.³



From August 2021 to April 2022, the Government of Panama reports the entry into Panama of 107,789 migrants: Haiti (53%), Cuba (10%), Brazil (7%), Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela (6%), Chile (6%), among other countries in South America, Africa and Asia (12%)⁴.

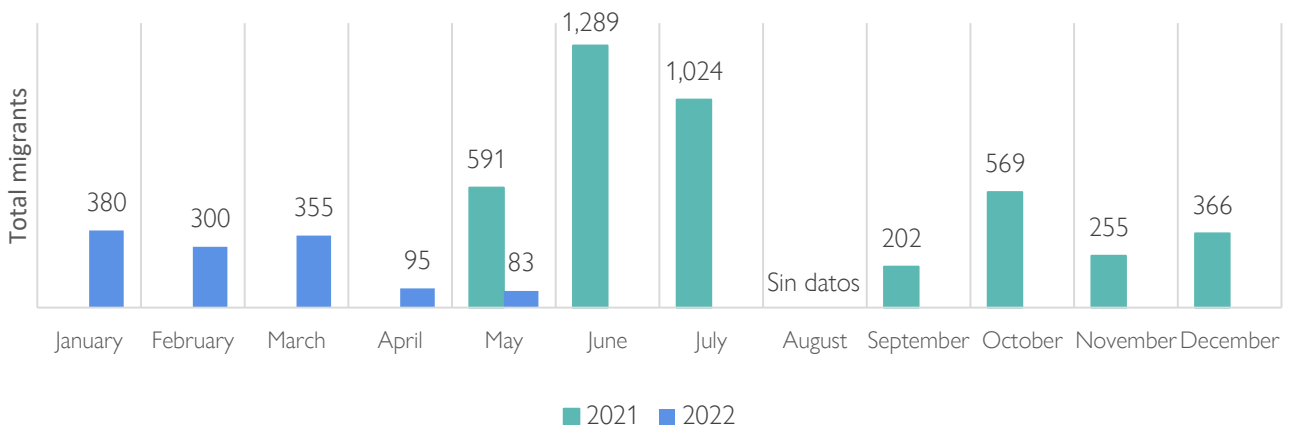


In Costa Rica, during 2022, a steady increase in the number of migrants of this migration flow has been identified (as of April 2022 it has increased by 269% compared to December 2021, when the monitoring of flows in Costa Rica began). According to data from the General Directorate of Migration and Aliens (DGME, by its acronym in Spanish), during Mayo 2021 and May 2022, 5,509 rejections⁵ were reported in Paso Canoas.



In general, the presence of increasingly numerous groups of migrants stands out (groups of up to 30 people) who approach the bus stations minutes before the trip begins, which is associated with the intermediation of third parties that buy the travel tickets, inform the migrants about the schedules and transport them from Paso Canoas to Río Claro or Ciudad Neily.

Figure 1. Number of rejections at the Paso Canoas border, May 2021 – May 2022



Source: DGME Costa Rica, 2022

³. People in mobility through the Americas is understood as the migration flow of people who migrate from Panama to Costa Rica, through Central America and North America, and is mainly composed of nationals from Haiti, Cuba, as well as other countries in South America, Africa and Asia.

⁴. Information on the DTM: Flow Monitoring in Darien, is available at: www.panama.iom.int/es/dtm-monitoreo-de-flujos-migratorios-en-panama

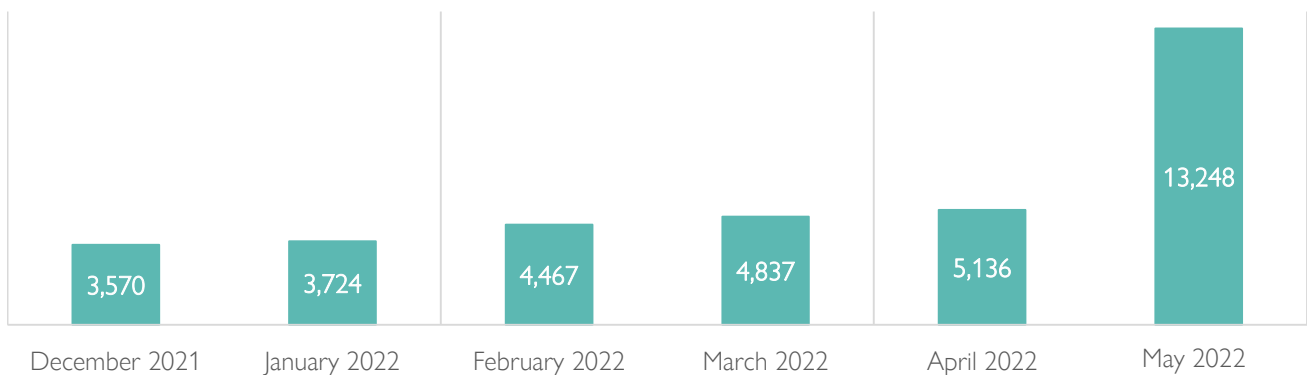
⁵. Section 64 of the General Migration and Aliens Law establishes that rejection is the action by which the migration authority denies the foreigner entry to the country, ordering their immediate return to the country of origin or precedence, which is executed when the person does not comply with the entry requirements demanded by the legislation in force, presents an impediment to enter the country or is caught trying to evade migration control or entering through a place not authorized for such purpose. Information about rejections available at : www.migracion.go.cr/Paginas/Centro%20de%20Documentaci%C3%B3n/Estad%C3%ADsticas.aspx

FLOW MONITORING REGISTRY

REGISTRY OF VOLUNTARY DEPARTURES OF MIGRANTS FROM THE MRS OF LOS PLANES, PANAMA

According to the registry of voluntary departures of migrants from the MRS of Los Planes, in Gualaca, Panama, between December 2021 y May 2022, there was an increase in the migration flow of 60 percent: from 3,570 migrants in mobility through the Americas in December 2021 to 5,136 in April 2022. However, between May 1 and May 31, 2022, 13,248 migrant departures were registered, equivalent to an average of 427 departures per day. This figure represents an increase of 158 percent compared to the 5,136 people who left the MRS in April 2022 (Figure 2). This May flow represents the 42 percent out of the 31,412 entries to Costa Rica in 2022.

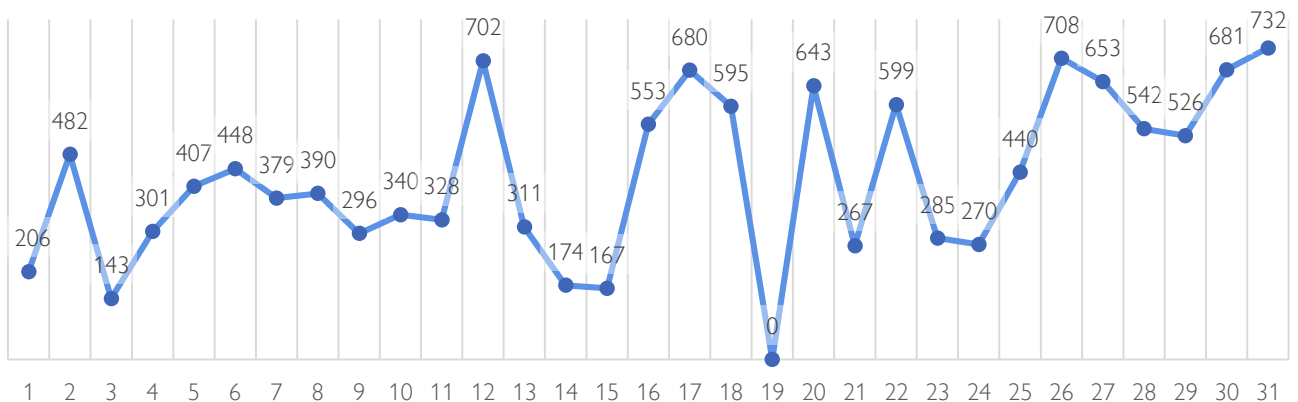
Figure 2. Registered monthly departures of migrants in the MRS of Los Planes, Chiriquí December 2021- April 2022



Source: Government of Panama, 2022

Figure 3 shows the registered departures from the MRS of Los Planes for May 2022, which show an increasing trend. Between May 1 and May 15, 2022, 5,074 departures were registered, with an average of 338 daily movements, while between May 16 and 31 the registry increases to 8,174 departures, with an average of 511 daily movements.

Figure 3. Registered daily departures of migrants in the MRS of Los Planes, Chiriquí May 2022



Source: Government of Panama, 2022

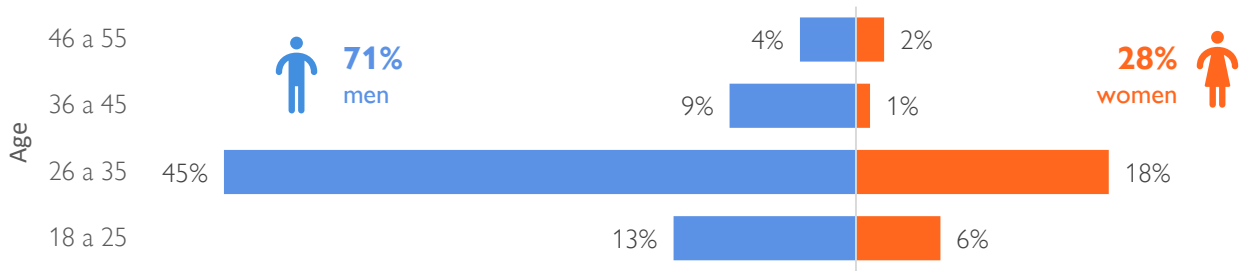
FLOW MONITORING SURVEY

SOCIO-DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS

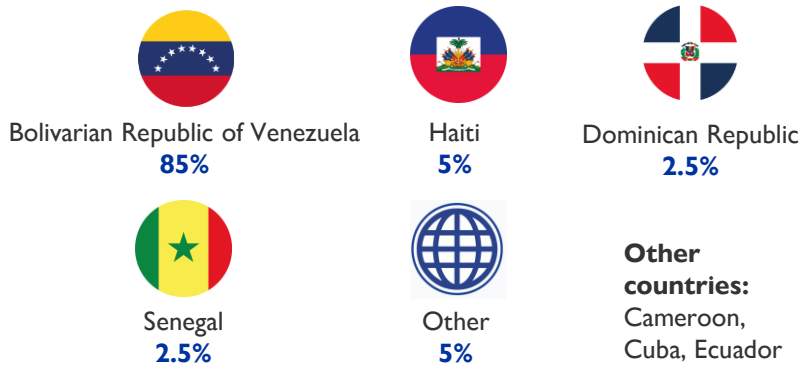
A) Gender and age

The migrant population surveyed in May 2022 is composed by 71 percent men, 28 percent women and 1 percent people who indicated other gender. The average age is 31 years, with most people (73%) between 26 and 45 years of age (see Figure 4).

Figure 4. Percentage of people in mobility situation through the Americas by age and gender



B) Country of nationality



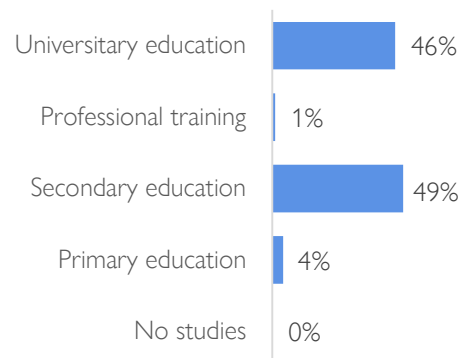
For May 2022 there is a bias in the surveys carried out, associated with the fact that 85 percent are people of Venezuelan nationality. This proportion does not fit the reality of the flow.

C) Educational level

It is identified that the population surveyed is, mainly, people with complete high school or higher; 46 percent indicated university studies as the highest level of education completed, 49 percent high school, while only 4 percent indicated primary education. Likewise, it is identified that women have a higher educational level compared to men; 52 percent of women report having completed their university education, compared to 45 percent of men.

Of the four percent of people who indicated primary education as the highest level of studies completed, 33 percent are from Senegal, equivalent to 50 percent of people identified with this nationality.

Figure 5. Percentage of people in mobility situation in the Americas by educational level completed

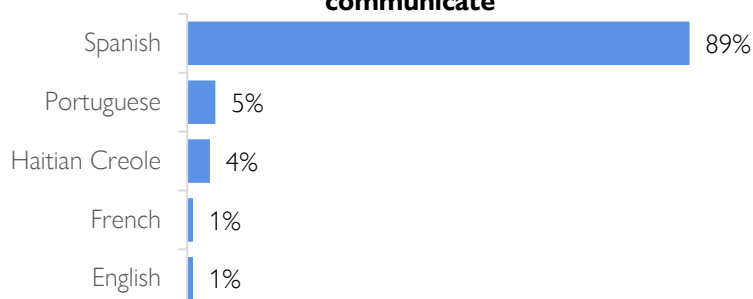


D) Language

The main language in which migrants normally communicate is Spanish (89%), however, other languages are identified in smaller proportions: Portuguese, English, Haitian Creole and French (Figure 6). Between December 2021 and May 2022, there has been a decrease in the number of people who normally communicate in Haitian Creole; between December 2021 and April 2022, 11 percent of the population reported communicating in Haitian Creole, compared to 4 percent in May 2022.

The population that normally communicates in Portuguese is composed of 25 percent people from Haiti and 75 percent people from Africa (Senegal and Cameroon).

Figure 6. Percentage of people in mobility through the Americas according to the language in which they normally communicate



Seventy five percent of Haitian nationals normally communicate in Haitian Creole, followed by Portuguese (25%).

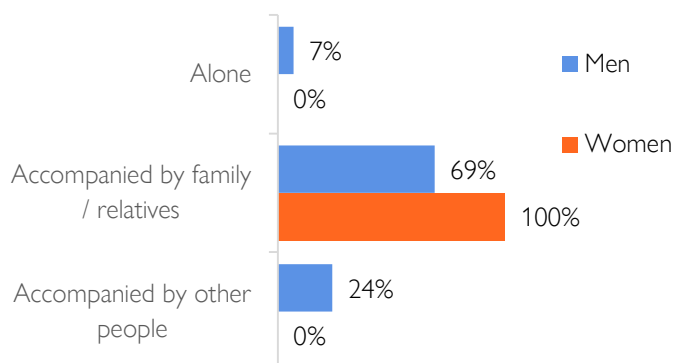
MIGRATION SITUATION

E) Accompaniment during the journey

The survey collected information on the groups with whom people travel, that is, the people who accompany the surveyed migrant during his or her migration journey. A total of 525 people were counted, of which 74 percent are men and 26 percent are women. It is estimated that 19 percent of the groups of accompanying persons are under 18 years of age and less than one percent are elderly people.

Five percent of people migrated alone and 95 percent migrated with a group: 77 percent were accompanied by their family and/or relatives, with an average of seven people per travel group. In addition, it is identified that, on average, women travel in larger groups and with a greater number of women, compared to men.

Figure 7. Percentage of travel accompaniment of people in mobility situations through the Americas, by gender

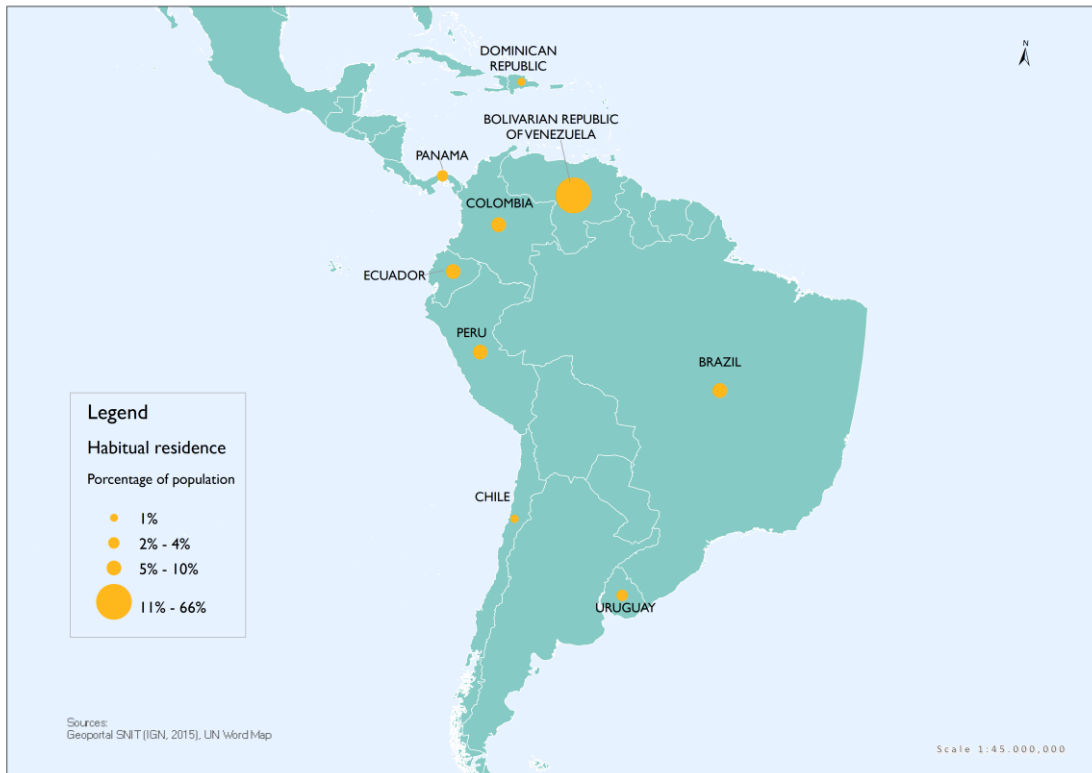


- Travel groups of surveyed men are an average of six people. They are made up of 16 percent women and 14 percent people under the age of 18 years.
- Travel groups of surveyed women are an average of eight people. They are made up of 45 percent women and 30 percent people under the age of 18 years.

MIGRATION ROUTE

It is identified that the main countries of habitual residence (countries in which people lived a year or more before starting their trip) of people in a situation of mobility through the Americas surveyed are the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela (66%), Brazil (10%), Colombia (6%), Ecuador (6%), Peru (5%) and 7 percent among 4 other countries (Map 2). Eighty percent of the population indicated having left their last country of habitual residence between March 2022 and May 2022, 10 percent indicated an earlier date and 10% indicated that they did not remember the date.

Map 2. Country of usual residence of people in mobility situation through the Americas



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Of the percent of persons originating from the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, 77 percent lived in their country of origin before starting their migration journey (26% indicated residing in Maracaibo, 14% in Caracas, 9% Falcón, among others), 7 percent in Colombia (3% indicated residing in Bogotá, among others), 6 percent in Ecuador (4% indicated residing in Quito), 3 percent in Peru, among others. Regarding the start date of the trip from their country of habitual residence, 93 percent indicated between March and May 2022.



Of the four per cent of migrants from Haiti, 100 percent resided in Brazil, specifically in Santa Catarina (50%), Rio de Janeiro (25%) and Sao Paulo (25%). Regarding the start date of the trip from their country of habitual residence, 67 percent indicated between March and May 2022.

G) Main migration routes

Map 3 shows the main migration routes identified by the migrant population moving between South American countries and to Central America. One identified route begins in Brazil and Bolivia, continuing to Peru (mainly Lima), and then moving on to Guayaquil and Quito in Ecuador and continuing through Colombia, mainly through Cali, Bogota, Medellin and Necocli. Another route identified it's starting from the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela and Colombia, mainly through Bogota, Medellin y Necocli.

There are two routes to enter Panama through the Darién, **30 percent** of surveyed migrants indicated having crossed the Darien through Bajo Chiquito, 54 percent through Canaán Membrillo, and 16 percent preferred not to answer the question or indicated they did not know. Both routes connect with the Pan-American highway, to go mainly to David, Panama and continue their journey through Central America.

Map 3. Main transit route and cities of the migrant population in mobility through the Americas



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Bajo Chiquito Route:

36 percent are women.

100 percent of people that indicated taking this route are from the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela.

72 percent indicated residing in the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela and 28 percent from other South American countries (Chile, Colombia, Ecuador and Peru).

Canaán Membrillo Route:

25 percent are women.

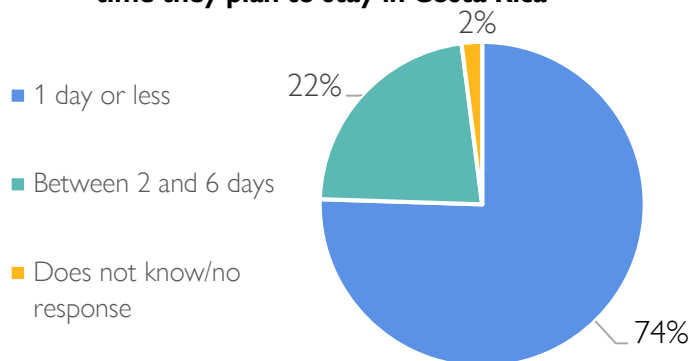
82 percent of people that indicated taking this route are from the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela.

68 percent indicated residing in the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela and 32 percent from other South American countries (Brazil, Ecuador, Peru y Uruguay).

F) Stay in Costa Rica

The population surveyed indicated having no plans to stay in Costa Rica permanently: 95 per cent indicated having entered Costa Rica at least one day before being surveyed and five percent between two and five days before. Also, 65 per cent indicated that they want to stay one day or less in Costa Rica, 33 per cent between 2 and 6 days, and 2 per cent indicated not knowing or did not respond (Figure 7).

Figure 7. Figure 8. Percentage of people in mobility situation through the Americas by approximate length of time they plan to stay in Costa Rica



Fifty one percent of the flow indicated that their migratory journey, from leaving the last country of habitual residence to the date of entry from Costa Rica, lasted less than a month, while 28 percent indicated that it lasted between 1 to 2 months, 11 percent indicated more than two months and 10 percent indicated not remembering the date of departure from their usual residence.

NEEDS IDENTIFIED BY MIGRANT POPULATION

People had the possibility of choosing more than one option.

Sixty seven per cent of the population indicated having some information needs during their stay in Costa Rica, equivalent to an increase of 13 percent compared to the previous month (in April 2022, 54% indicated that they had some information need).

The May identified needs on the migratory flow are related mainly to access to shelter, medical assistance, safety, among others.



No need
33%



Safe shelter
40%



Medical assistance
38%



Safety
22%



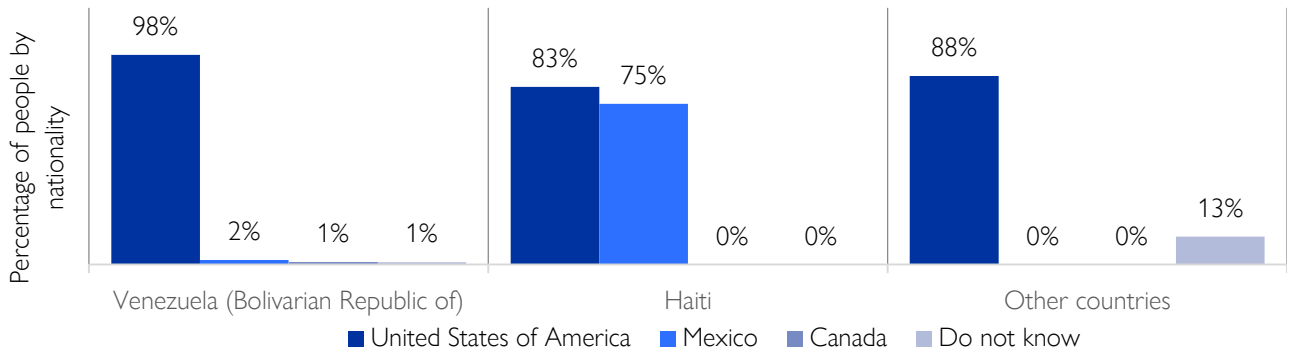
Access to food
17%

Needs differentiated by gender are identified, where 87 percent of women indicated having some information need in Costa Rica, compared to 60 percent of men. Women surveyed express the need for a safe shelter (61%), medical assistance (43%), security (26%), and food (26%). While men express having needs in medical assistance (36%), safe shelter (33%), security (21%), food (10%), among others.

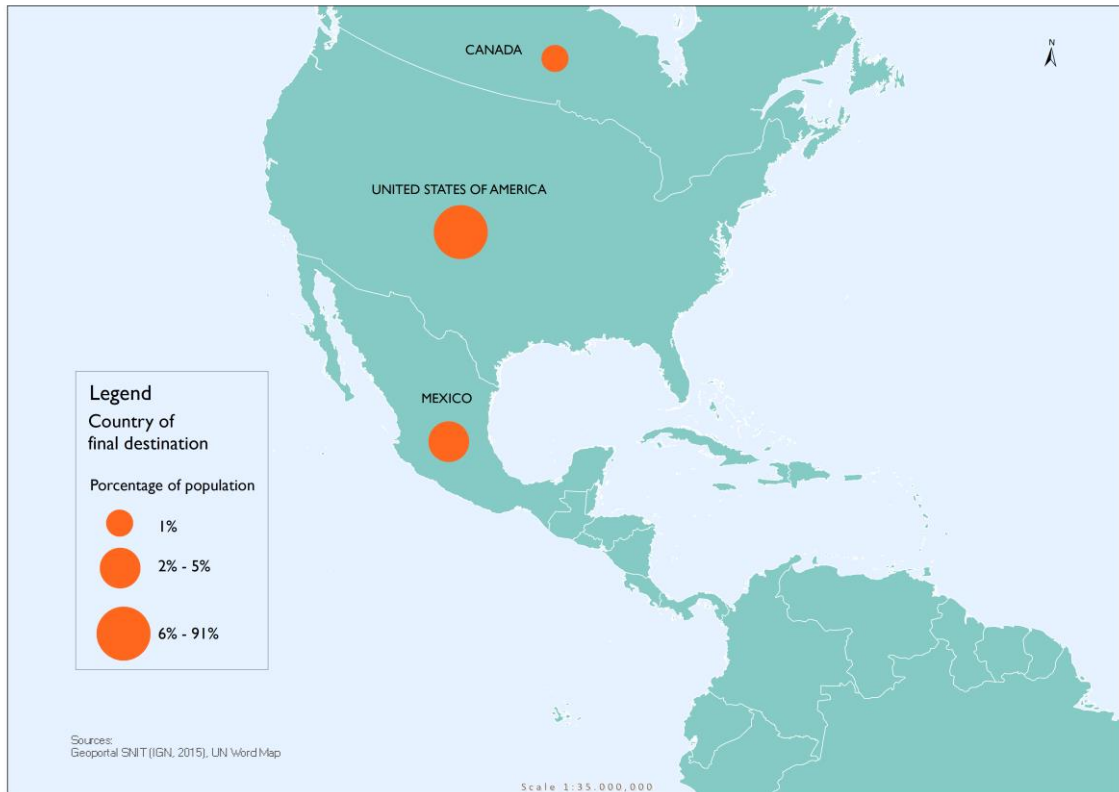
G) Destiny of the migration route

Regarding the countries of destination of the population, the United States of America was the main destination country (91%), followed by Mexico (5%) and Canadá (1%), and three percent indicated not knowing their destination country. Of those who indicated that Mexico was their final destination, 75 percent were people from Haiti and 25 percent were people from the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela.

Figure 8. Figure 9. Country of final destination by main nationalities identified



Map 4. Map 4. Country of final destination of people in mobility situation through the Americas



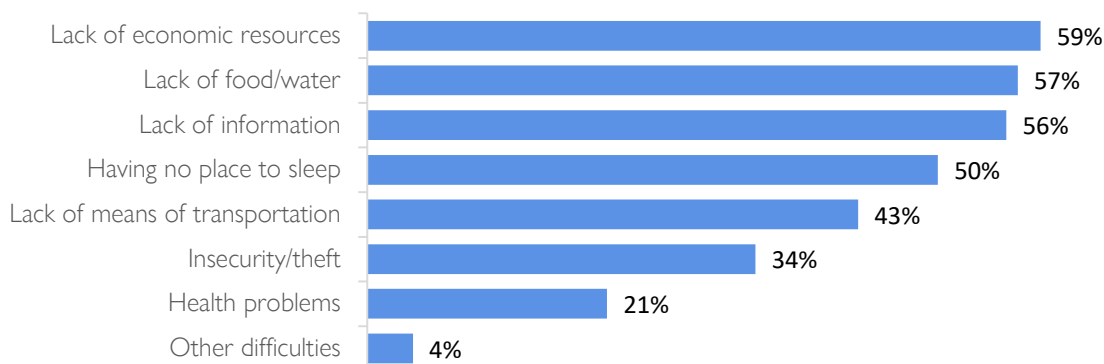
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H) Difficulties during the journey

Regarding difficulties during the trip, 59 percent of the population pointed out lack of economic resources, followed by lack of food or water (57%), lack of information (56%), not having a place to sleep (50%), lack of means of transportation (43%), among others (Figure 9).

Figure 9. Figure 10. Number of people who experienced difficulties during the journey, according to the type of difficulty

People had the possibility of choosing more than one option.



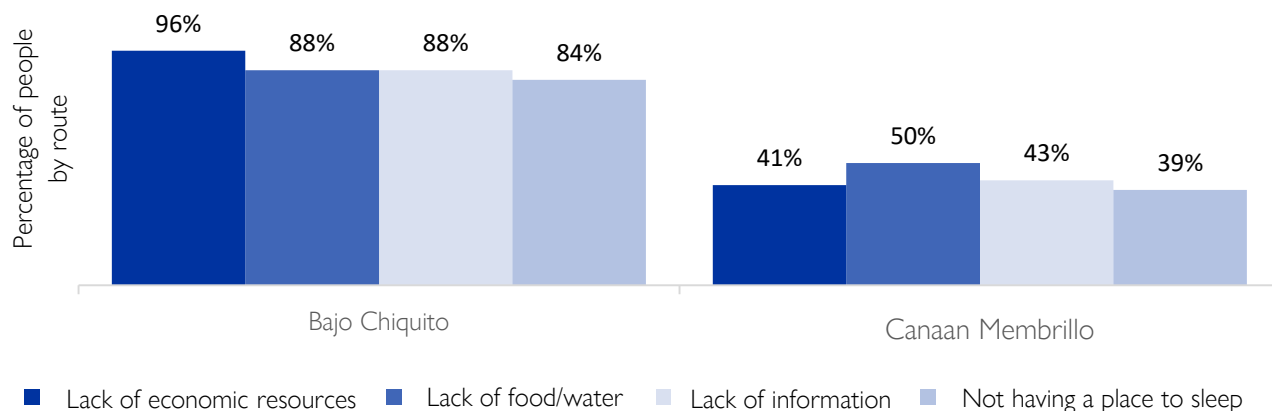
Other difficulties: Documentation problems, deportation and psychosocial effects.

In addition, a difference according to gender is noted; 74 percent of women indicated having suffered difficulties due to lack of economic resources (53% of men), 65 percent of women expressed lack of food/water (55% of men), 61 percent lack of information (55% of men), 52 percent did not have a place to sleep (50% of men) and 65 percent of women expressed the lack of means of transportation (36% of men), among others.

According to Figure 10, it was identified that a higher percentage of people who traveled through Bajo Chiquito (96%) experienced difficulties during the trip, compared to people who traveled through the Canaan Membrillo route (64%).

Gráfico 10. Number of people who experienced difficulties during the journey, according to the route to enter Panama through Darien

People had the possibility of choosing more than one option.



Out of 84% who indicated a route (30% Bajo Chiquito, 54% Canaan Membrillo).

CONCLUSIONS



The flow of migrant population moving through the Americas continues to be high compared to previous years and, in the same way, May represents the month with the highest number of departures registered in the MRS Los Planes, Chiriqui, equivalent to 42 percent of the records for the year. Between January and April 2022, 18,164 people registered their departure from the MRS Los Planes and the consequent entry into Costa Rica, while for May 2022 the registration is 13,248 people.



Due to accessibility and language issues, there is an overrepresentation of the surveyed population of Venezuelan nationality, therefore, the characteristics of the people surveyed were not extrapolated to all the people counted in the departure records.



For May 2022, it is identified that the women of the flow present situations of vulnerability different from men; the percentage of expressed needs is higher in women than men (87 percent of women versus 60 percent of men). In the same way, the percentage of difficulties during the trip is higher in women: the greatest difficulty expressed by women is the lack of economic resources (74% of women), while that of men is the lack of food/water (55% of men).



Two main routes were identified to enter Panama through the Darien; by Bajo Chiquito or by Canaan Membrillo: the Bajo Chiquito route is taken mainly by people of Venezuelan nationality and, in addition, it is the people who transit this route who experience a higher percentage of difficulties during the trip (96 percent of people experienced difficulties), in comparison with the people who transited the Canaan Membrillo route (64% of people experienced difficulties); the greatest difficulty expressed by the people who indicated traveling through the Bajo Chiquito route is the lack of economic resources (96%), while that of the people who indicated the Canaan Membrillo route is the lack of food/water (55%).

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