

Flow monitoring of people on the move across the Americas

Locations of high transit and migrant presence in Costa Rica

Cantons: Alajuela, Cartago, Corredores, Desamparados, Escazú, Heredia, La Cruz, Los Chiles, Liberia, San Carlos San Jose, Santa Ana and Tibas.



Situation report: June 2024

KEY FINDINGS

In order to characterize and understand the needs and migratory trends across the Americas in specific locations within Costa Rican territory, various tools from the Displacement Tracking Matrix (DTM) were combined to create this report. These tools include Flow Monitoring Registry (FMR), Emergency Events Tracking (EET), and Flow Monitoring Surveys (FMS) from the Mobility Tracking and Flow Monitoring components, respectively¹. The results of this report present information collected from 1 – 30 June 2024.

FLOW MONITORING REGISTRY



33,022 ESTIMATED NUMBER OF PEOPLE WHO ENTERED COSTA RICA FROM PANAMA IN MARCH 2024

Source: Projection from IOM Costa Rica, based on previously published monthly data².



32,541 PEOPLE MOBILIZED BY PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION THROUGHOUT COSTA RICA

Source: General Directorate of Migration in Costa Rica (DGME), 2024.

EMERGENCY EVENT TRACKING IN MONITORED LOCATIONS



937 INDIVIDUALS STRANDED IN MONITORED PUBLIC SITES
Average stay: 3 days

Source: DGME and estimation from IOM Costa Rica, based on key informants and direct observation.



981 INDIVIDUALS STRANDED IN 3 MONITORED SHELTERS
Average stay: 3 days

FLOW MONITORING SURVEY: LOCATION OF HIGH TRANSIT AND MIGRANT PRESENCE (806 individuals surveyed and 1,204 group companions)



44 % WOMEN | **56 %** MEN
32 % ACCOMPANIED MINORS



85 % OF INDIVIDUALS TRAVEL IN GROUPS

MAIN NEEDS*

Food and nutrition (53 %)



Income (15 %)

Shelter (14 %)

Other (17 %)

Source: IOM, 2024

¹ For more information, visit: www.dtm.iom.int

² Beginning August 30, 2023, there is no access to data on departures of migrants from the Temporary Migrant Reception Station (ETRM) in Los Planes de Gualaca, Chiriquí. This situation has been remedied with monthly estimates based on previously collected data.





Costa Rica, like other Central American countries, has been characterized as a migratory corridor of the **Flow of People on the Move across the Americas**, with migrants crossing by land from the border between Colombia and Panama through the Darien crossing, destined for the northern countries of the continent. According to data published by the Republic of Panama, between January and May 2024, 170,014 entries, through the Darien Region, into Panama were registered. According to data published by the Republic of Panama, in May 2024, 30,747 entries from Colombia were registered: 53 per cent were adult men, 27 per cent were women, 11 per cent boys and nine per cent girls. Sixty-nine per cent came from the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, five per cent from Ecuador, seven per cent from Colombia, five per cent from Haiti, five per cent from the People's Republic of China, and another nine per cent from more than 31 countries³.



During the first months of 2024, Costa Rica experienced a notable increase in the entry of people on the move across the Americas, in comparison with previous years. According to estimations from IOM Costa Rica, 24,011 people entered in the first 6 months of 2021, 45,988 in 2022, 194,243 in 2023, and 212,157 in the first 6 months of 2024 (Figure 1). Additionally, during the same period, (January-June) the General Directorate of Migration (DGME, by its acronym in Spanish) registered **208,201 people (98 % of the total estimated by IOM) using the direct transportation route between the Southern Migration Station (EMI Sur, by its acronym in Spanish), in Paso Canoas (border between Costa Rica and Panama), and Los Chiles (border between Costa Rica and Nicaragua)**⁴.

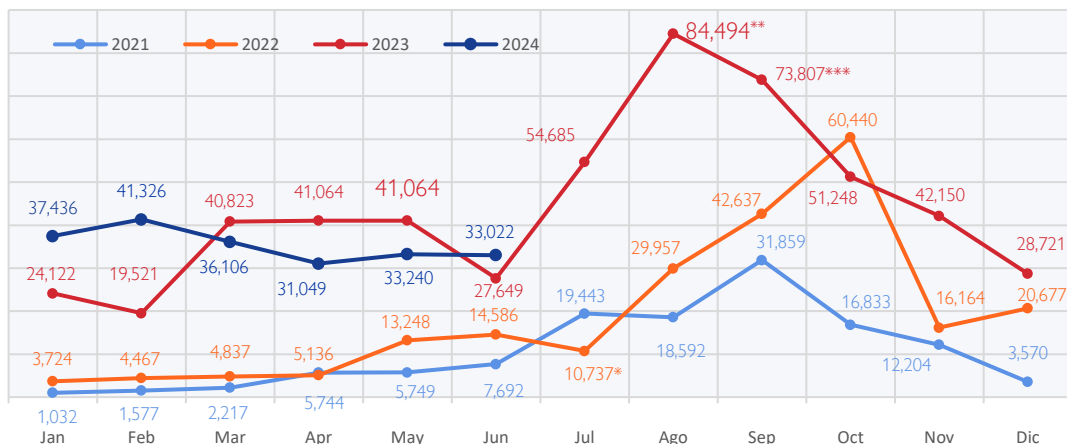


Comparing the records of regular and irregular migration movements highlights the dimensions of this flow. According to the DGME, during May 2024, there were 57,424 regular entries of foreign individuals through Costa Rica's land border posts (18 % via Paso Canoas), **while the estimated irregular entries of mobility flow across were equivalent to 58 per cent of the regular ones.**



On June 4th, the President of the United States of America signed an executive order on migration that could significantly affect this migratory flow. This order, which seeks to implement new immigration control measures at the southern border of the United States, could have repercussions throughout the migratory route, including transit countries such as Costa Rica. The potential impact of these measures on the volume and dynamics of the migratory flow through Central America is a crucial factor to consider in the analysis of the current and future situation⁵.

Figure 1. Estimated number of migrants entering Costa Rica, per month and year



212,157
Migrant individuals in
January and June 2024

529,348
Migrant individuals in 2023

226,610
Migrant individuals in 2022

126,512
Migrant individuals in 2021

*In July 2022, not all data was collected due to road closures in Panama. Source: Government of Panama, 2023.

** Data for August 31, 2023, was not available, so a weekly moving average was used.

*** As of September 2023, data correspond to estimates with a confidence level of 95 %.

³ For more information, visit: www.migracion.gob.pa

⁴ For more information, visit: www.migracion.go.cr

⁵ For more information, visit: <https://www.whitehouse.gov/es/prensa/declaraciones-comunicados/2024/06/04/hoja-informativa-el-presidente-biden-anuncia-nuevas-medidas-para-asegurar-la-frontera/#:~:text=El%20presidente%20Biden%20emiti%C3%B3%20una,sur%20de%20los%20Estados%20Unidos>

The data presented in this report does not represent the entirety of the migratory flow. June 2024



At the request of key informants (KIs), starting in October 2023, IOM Costa Rica calculates the potential entries of migrants into Costa Rica, considering historical data on the outflows of people from the Temporary Migrant Reception Station (ETRM) in Los Planes, Gualaca until August 30, 2023, and the inflows to Panama that are published on the website of the National Migration Service (SNM) of Panama⁶. In addition, since November 2023, the General Directorate of Migration and Foreign Affairs (DGME) of Costa Rica publishes a daily report of people mobilized by public transportation from the EMI Sur and the number of people who remain stranded in CATEM⁷.

During Jun 2024, **806 valid surveys** were obtained (99 per cent response rate and one per cent non-response rate), collecting information on 2,010 migrants (806 surveyed and 1204 group companions). The Flow Monitoring Surveys (FMS) data collection method consists of in-person surveys conducted with migrants on the move across the Americas in Costa Rica, in the cantons of Corredores, San Jose, and Los Chiles. The surveys are applied voluntarily to adults who represent groups or travel alone, in order to gain an in-depth understanding of the profile of migrants. In addition, the surveys are translated into Spanish, English, French, Portuguese, and Haitian Creole.

The flow monitoring points are locations with high mobility and concentration of migrants, which allows **differentiating between those stranded in shelters and those in transit sites**. Five per cent of the surveys were conducted with migrants stranded in CATEM (Corredores canton) and in two shelters in the San Jose canton, using a non-probabilistic convenience sampling technique, while the remaining 95 per cent were carried out with people in high migratory transit sites, such as the bus terminal at EMI Sur and the bus terminal in Los Chiles (see Map 1). This is because most migrants prefer to stay in transit areas where they have greater access to resources and transportation. Additionally, the logistics and security in shelters often limit the frequency and number of surveys that can be conducted in these locations.

At the bus station at **EMI Sur**, a **systematic random sampling** was implemented, which is an objective way of selecting a sample as it avoids inconsistent selection biases and aims to reflect the characteristics of the migrant population that passed through this site. Because it is a mobile population and its size is unknown, a large population is assumed. Under the assumption of simple random sampling, the sample size is estimated to include at least 386 people, assuming a response rate close to 100 per cent (based on historical data at the site), a confidence level of 95 per cent, and a maximum margin of error of 5 per cent.

In the shelters of **San José**, efforts are made to survey as many people as possible. For the surveys at high transit migrant sites **Los Chiles** and **EMI Sur**, a **non-probabilistic sampling method** was implemented. Although the data collected at these sites cannot be extended to the entire population, efforts will be made to increase the reliability of the profiling by taking as a reference the figure of 386 monthly surveys. Non-probabilistic sampling was chosen due to the specific conditions of these sites, which may include the mobility and geographical dispersion of the migrant population, making random sampling unfeasible. This type of sampling allows for more flexible and rapid data collection in contexts where the application of probabilistic methods is not practical.

Parallel to the quantitative information presented, descriptive information on the migratory dynamics of the flow through Costa Rica was also obtained through the Emergency Tracking Tool (EET), which allows tracking sudden movements and providing recent updates through interviews with key informants, direct observation, and compilation of secondary sources. This section will be represented in the report by a blue box, the same as this section of the methodology.

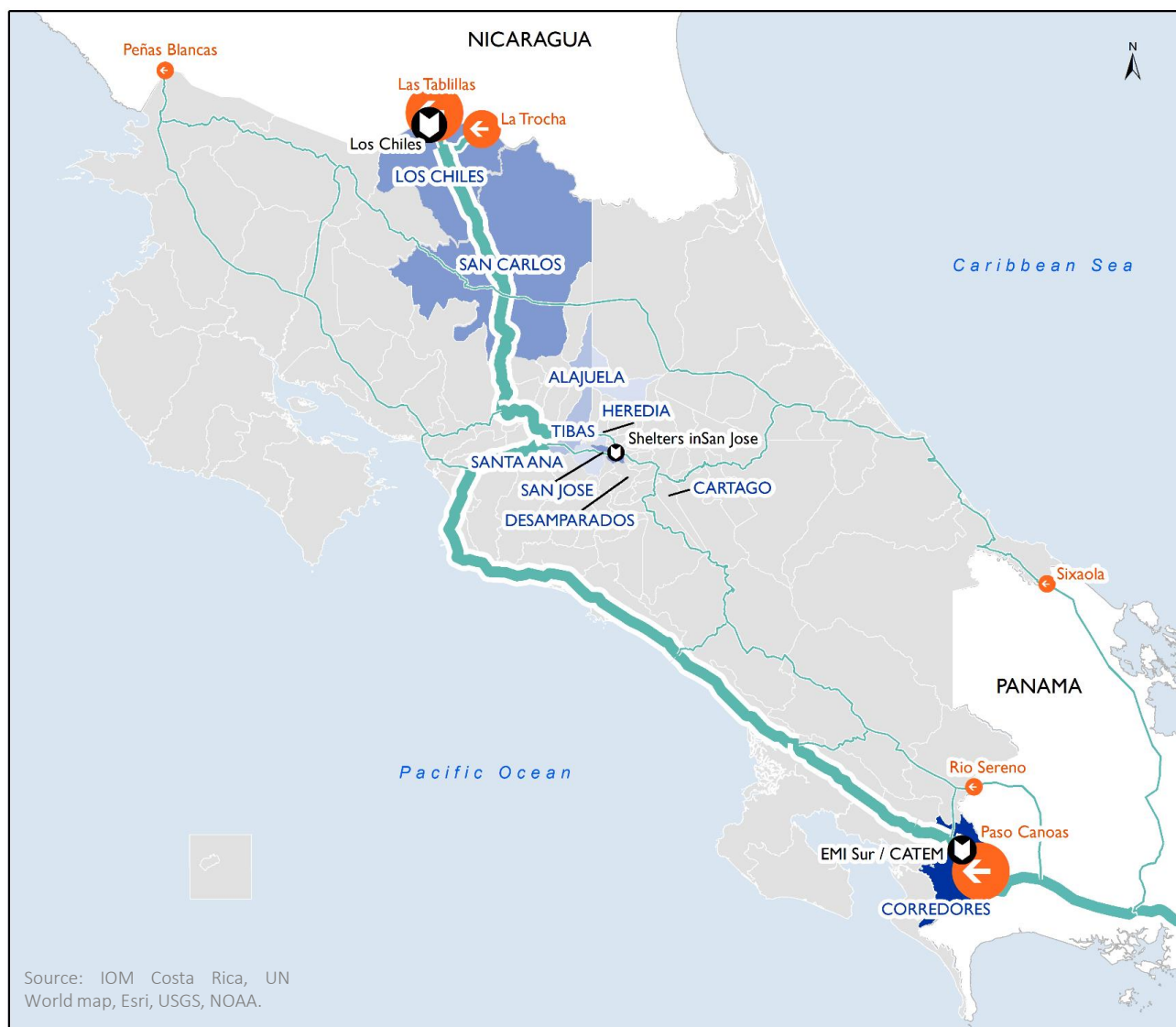
LIMITATIONS: Although the Government of Costa Rica implements an official registration system for those who travel the EMI Sur-Los Chiles route and counts the number of people who stay at CATEM, these are not published daily and, in addition, there are still flows through unofficial routes far from these controls, which makes it impossible to keep a complete record of all entries into the country. Additionally, the publication of these data is carried out through daily reports on the number of people mobilized by public transport and the people at CATEM. Another current limitation would be the changes in the internal dynamics of CATEM that have made it difficult to conduct surveys with the people in the shelter. Language and cultural barriers, temporary stays at monitoring points, geographical complexities, and irregular migration dynamics, including human trafficking networks, also represent additional challenges.

⁶ For more information, visit: www.migracion.gob.pa

⁷ For more information, visit: www.migracion.go.cr/Paginas/Centro%20de%20Documentaci%C3%B3n/Estad%C3%ADsticas.aspx

TREND DISPLACEMENT IN COSTA RICA

Map 1 Sites of high presence and transit of migrants in mobility through the Americas, and their movement through Costa Rica.
June 2024






Legend



Border Crossing

-  < 166
-  10,765
-  22,092 - 32,857

Surveys

-  21
-  410
-  317

Route

-  Direct Route EMI Sur - Los Chiles
-  Alternative Route

Stranded individuals per canton

-  < 27
-  232 - 363
-  28 - 47
-  892

Note: This map is for illustrative purposes only. The boundaries, names and designations used do not imply official endorsement or acceptance by IOM.

The data presented in this report does not represent the entirety of the migratory flow. June 2024





33,022

Estimated number of individuals entering Costa Rica. June 2024



Estimated decrease of 1 % compared to May 2024 estimations (33,240)



32,541

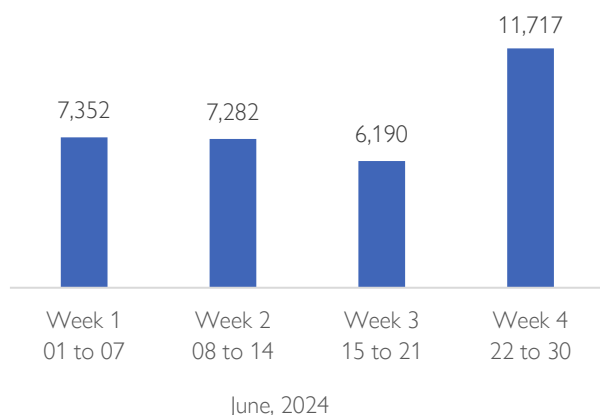
Individuals using direct public transportation from the southern to the northern border. May 2024

According to the International Organization for Migration (IOM) in Costa Rica, it is estimated that approximately 33,022 people from the migratory flow across the Americas entered the country in June 2024, with an average daily influx of about 1,101 individuals. Nearly 99 percent of these entries occurred through Paso Canoas, on the border with Panama.

The primary route identified was directly from EMI Sur (southern border) to Los Chiles (northern border), carried out by bus, costing approximately 30 US dollars (\$30 USD) per person and lasting less than a day. This month, it is estimated that about 32,541 people moved through this route, equivalent to 98 percent of the total flow entering the country (Figure 2). The presence of stranded individuals in public spaces in the Greater Metropolitan Area (GAM) and areas distant from Los Chiles indicates that alternative routes remain active, albeit to a lesser extent than in previous months and years.

In terms of migrant transportation on the south-north route, Figure 2 shows an increasing trend during the fourth week of June 2024, with a weekly average of 8,135 people. It is important to highlight the significant peaks recorded on June 24 and 30, with 1,579 and 1,710 migrants respectively, figures that nearly doubled the values observed at the beginning of the month.

Figure 2. Estimated number of individuals traveling on direct route (EMI Sur - Los Chiles), per week



ROUTES AND MOBILITY SCHEDULES

In June 2024, the mobility of migrants presented distinctive characteristics across different regions of the country, marked by variations in routes and transit times.

MOBILITY IN SOUTHERN CANTONS: At EMI Sur, the migratory flow was variable due to weather conditions in Panama and the Darien crossing. During the second and third weeks of the month, there was a decrease in the number of migrants, followed by an increase in the last week of June. Most buses transporting migrants from the southern area departed predominantly in the morning hours.

MOBILITY IN CENTRAL CANTONS: In the Greater Metropolitan Area (GAM), migrants primarily entered while traveling from community to community. Many returned from the northern zone of the country in search of economic resources to continue their journey. The GAM served as an important intermediate point where migrants could find temporary work or receive remittances. In terms of schedules, mobility in the GAM remained active throughout the day, with significant use of bus stops and shelters to rest and plan the next steps of their journey.

MOBILITY IN NORTHERN CANTONS: The route from the southern zone to the northern zone continued to be the main corridor for people on the move. During nighttime hours, there was a higher influx of individuals due to the arrival of more buses from the southern area. Additionally, a significant number of people used taxis or disembarked at unauthorized bus stops to reach unofficial border crossings (mainly La Trocha). The constant presence of migrants in the northern cantons was due to their need to gather economic resources before continuing their journey. This constant flow generated additional pressure on local transportation infrastructures.

⁹ The estimation of people is calculated using the data published by the DGME. For more information, please visit: www.migracion.go.cr/Paginas/Centro%20de%20Documentaci%C3%B3n/Estad%C3%ADsticas.aspx



INDIVIDUALS STRANDED AT MONITORED SITES

In June 2024, **937** migrants were identified as stranded in **public sites (a decrease of 15 % compared to May 2024)** in monitored cantons and **981 stranded in three shelters (an increase of 29 % compared to May 2024)**. The average length of stay remained at 4 and 6 days, respectively.

According to key informants, the presence of people stranded in the GAM and the northern zone is due to the search for resources to continue their journey or, in the case of Los Chiles, people waiting for monetary transactions or other people in the migratory flow.

INDIVIDUALS STRANDED IN SOUTHERN CANTONS: Based on the reports issued by the DGME on the people stranded in CATEM, it is estimated that, in June 2024, **892** people were sheltered. Thus, CATEM continues to be the main shelter. The authorities' efforts to provide transportation and humanitarian assistance have been critical to preventing the gathering of people in public areas. In addition, cooperation between non-governmental organizations and government agencies has been crucial in effectively managing the accommodation and services needed for these individuals

INDIVIDUALS STRANDED IN CENTRAL CANTONS: June 2024, 342 migrants were identified stranded in monitored public places in various cantons of the GAM, with San José standing out with 218 while, in the monitored shelters of San José, 89 people were registered, this figure has remained regular during 2024 (Graph 4).

INDIVIDUALS STRANDED IN NORTHERN CANTONS: Although the number of migrants stranded in the northern zone decreased from April (636 people) to May 2024 (477), during June 595 people were identified, approximately 74 percent more than in the GAM. The trend since December shows that this is an ongoing issue that requires attention and resources (Exhibit 3). Key informants have identified informal shelters in the northern zone, where migrants seek temporary refuge. Although complete records are not available, these shelters provide basic support, but face challenges in sanitary conditions and resources.

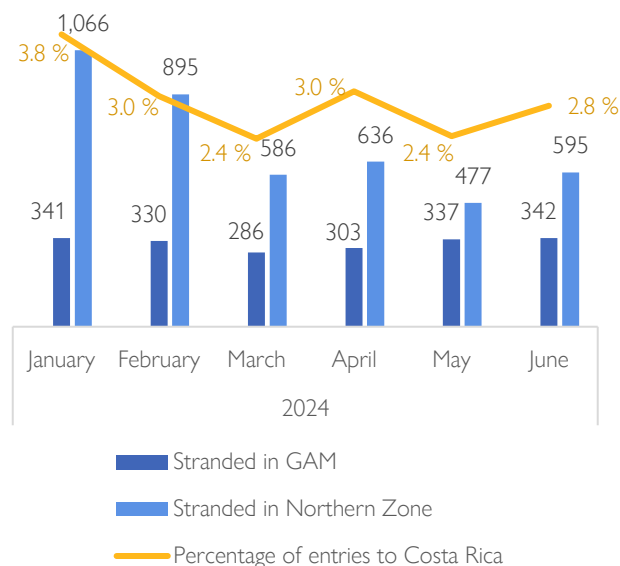
The data collected during June 2024 highlights the importance of strengthening cooperation in the northern zone, particularly in Los Chiles, where high numbers of stranded people have remained (4,255 from January to June of this year).



937

Individuals stranded in **public monitored sites**

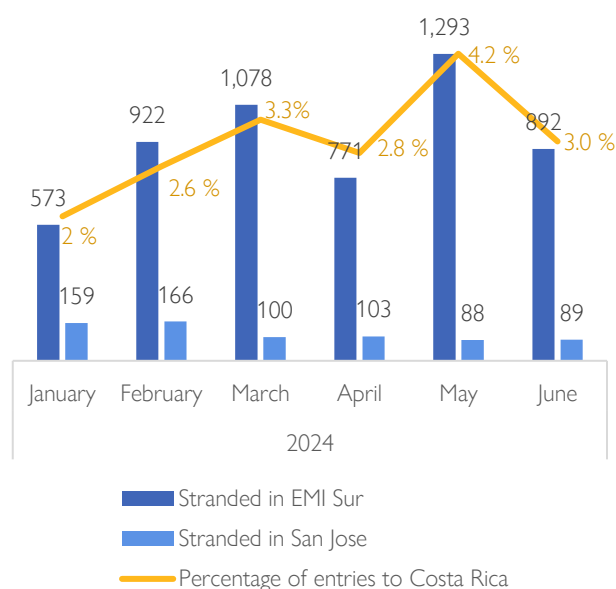
Figure 3. Monthly distribution of stranded individuals in public monitored sites



981

Individuals stranded in **monitored shelters**

Figure 4. Monthly distribution of stranded individuals in monitored shelters



FLOW MONITORING SURVEY

(Individuals surveyed: 713 | Group companions: 1,091)

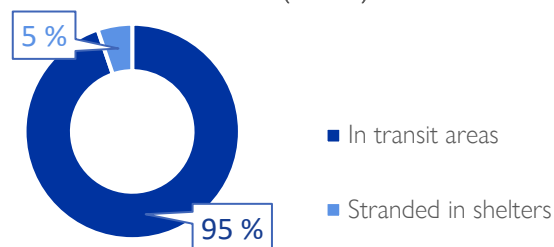
Data collection: June 01-30, 2024

This flow monitoring was carried out through individual surveys of persons of legal age (18 years or older) stranded in **two shelters in San Jose and in EMI Sur**, and surveys to people in transit in **two cantons in the northern zone (Los Chiles)** following a **non-probabilistic sampling methodology**. This means that the results obtained **cannot be generalized and they are not representative** to the total number of people moving through the Americas. Nevertheless, while the results cannot be generalized to the total number of people moving through the Americas, they do allow us to describe the migratory profile of the people surveyed during this period. In total, information was obtained on **2,010 migrants** (806 respondents and 1,204 group companions).



It should be noted that, for the purposes of this report, the **left side showcases data on the respondents who were at points of high transit locations** while the **right side presents data on the respondents who were in the monitored shelters**.

Figure 5. Surveys by type of movement of surveyed individuals (n=806)



764

Individuals surveyed in **high-traffic transit areas** throughout Costa Rica (bus station at EMI Sur and Los Chiles).



42

Individual surveyed persons surveyed **stranded in shelters** in Costa Rica (2 shelters in GAM 1 in southern border)

SOCIODEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE

NATIONALITIES OF SURVEYED INDIVIDUALS

percentage of individuals in transit by nationality (n=764)



percentage of individuals stranded in monitored shelters by nationality (n=42)



NIVEL EDUCATIVO DE PERSONAS ENCUESTADAS

Figure 6. percentage of individuals surveyed in transit by gender and highest level of completed education (n=764)

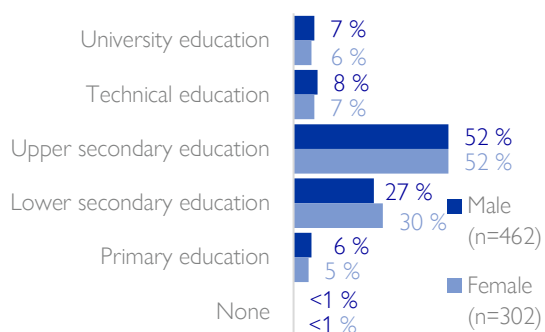
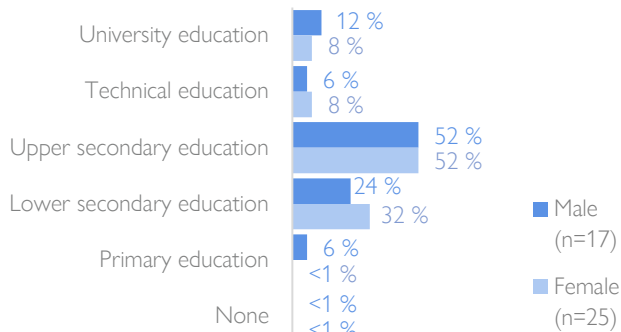


Figure 7. percentage of individuals surveyed in shelters by gender and highest level of completed education (n=42)



The data presented in this report does not represent the entirety of the migratory flow. June 2024



Out of 764 surveyed individuals at **transit locations**, data was collected on 1,113 travel family, resulting in a total of **1,877 group companions and surveyed individuals**. Among the analyzed groups, 16 per cent were individuals traveling alone (24 % of the surveyed men and 6 % of the surveyed women) and 15 per cent were couples. The larger groups (3 or more individuals), representing 69 per cent of the total (figure 8). The average travel group size was 3 people (excluding individuals traveling alone).

Regarding the distribution by gender and age, 56 per cent of the people within the travel groups, including surveyed individuals and their group companions, were men, while 44 per cent were women. Minors (17 years old or younger) made up 31 per cent of the total number of individuals, and the average age of the adults was 30 years, with minors averaging 7 years old (Figure 9).

Out of the 42 surveyed individuals in **3 shelters**, information was collected on 91 family, making a total of **133 group companions and surveyed individuals**. Of the analyzed groups, six per cent were individuals traveling alone (10% of the men and one per cent of the women), and five per cent were couples. The larger groups (3 or more individuals), representing 89 per cent of the total, The average travel group size was 3 people (excluding individuals traveling alone).

Regarding the gender and age distribution of the surveyed individuals and companions, 51 per cent of the members of the family, including surveyed individuals and their group companions, were men, while 49 per cent were women. Minors (17 years or younger) constituted 45 per cent of the total. The average age of the adults was 31 years and 8 years for minors (Figure 11).

Figure 8. Size and number of travel groups of surveyed individuals at transit sites (n=1,877)

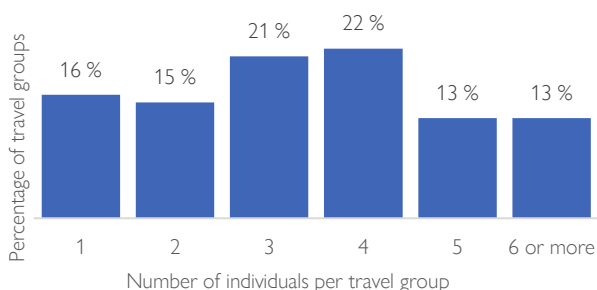
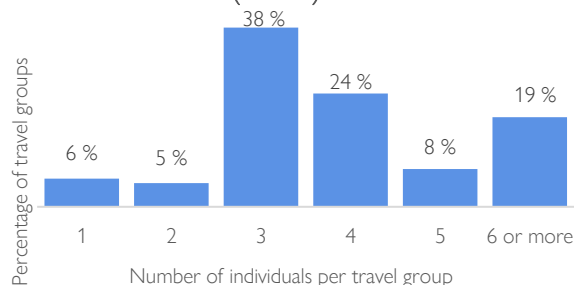


Figure 10. Size and number of travel groups of surveyed individuals stranded in monitored shelters (n=133)



GENDER AND AGE COMPOSITION OF INDIVIDUALS IN TRAVEL GROUPS

Figure 9. Percentage of individuals comprising travel groups in transit, by age and sex (n=1,877)

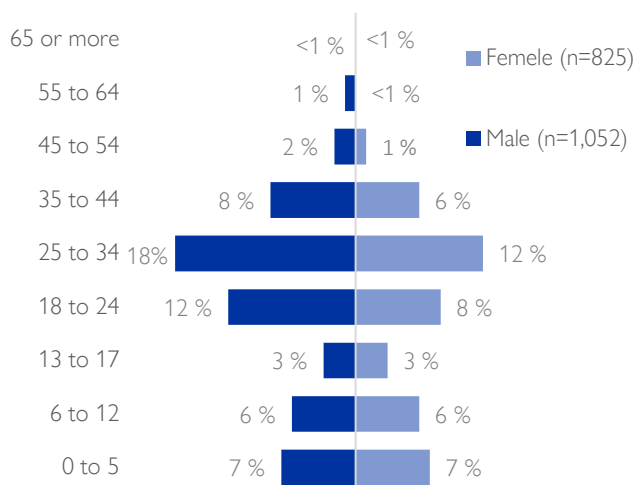
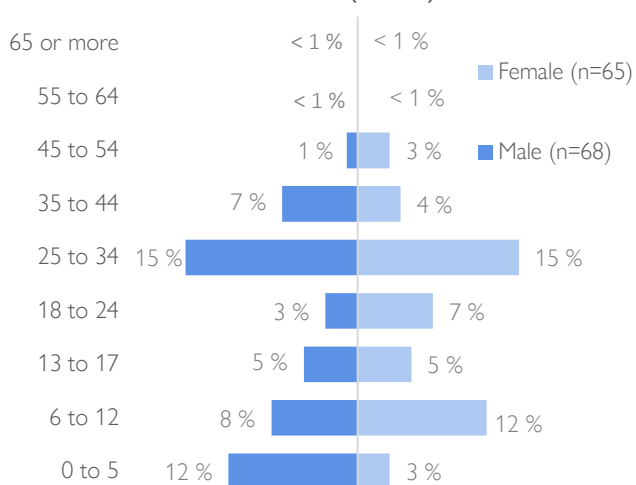


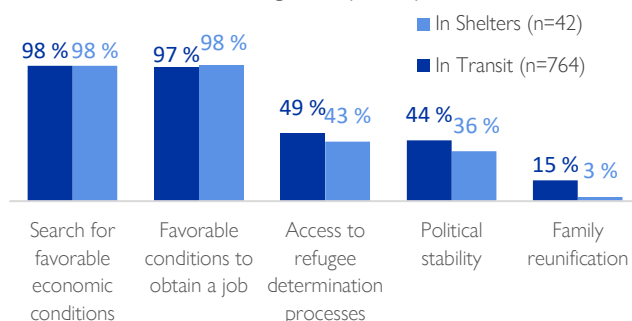
Figure 11. Percentage composition of groups of individuals stranded in monitored shelters, by age and sex (n=133).



REASONS FOR MIGRATING

Regarding migration reasons, surveyed individuals, both in transit and in shelters, primarily highlighted the search for favorable economic conditions and the opportunity to secure employment. Other reasons mentioned, albeit to a lesser extent, included access to refugee determination processes, political stability, and family reunification (Figure 12).

Figure 12. per centage of respondents in transit by main reason for migration (n=806)



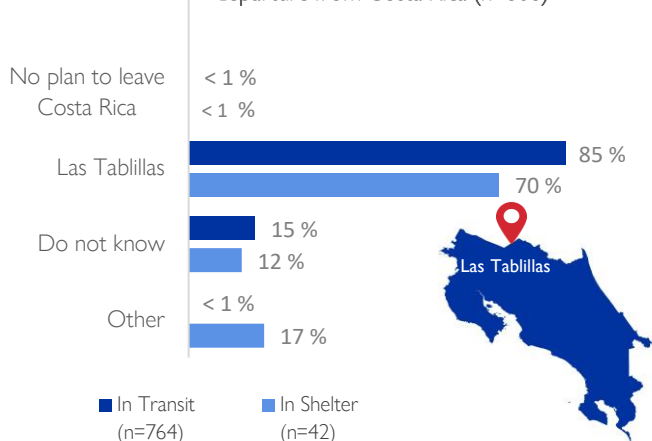
Note: individuals could choose more than one option

MIGRATORY ROUTE

The main route that surveyed individuals indicated they planned to leave Costa Rica was through **Las Tablillas border crossing in Los Chiles (83 %)**, while 15 per cent indicated not knowing which border crossing, they were exiting through (the remaining 1 % indicated other border posts, It can be associated to smuggling of migrants). On the other hand, none of the surveyed individuals indicated that they did not plan to leave Costa Rica.

Differences in exit locations were identified between individuals surveyed at transit sites and in shelters: 85 per cent of the surveys conducted at transit sites indicated that they would leave the country through Las Tablillas sector and 15 per cent indicated not knowing. On the other hand, of the individuals surveyed in shelters, 70 per cent were planning to leave through Las Tablillas, 16 % through other sites (mainly through La Trocha), and 14 per cent indicated not knowing (Figure 13).

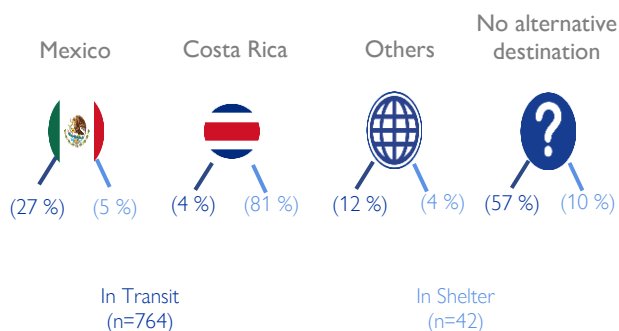
Figure 13. percentage of respondents by planned place of departure from Costa Rica (n=806)



The **destination indicated** by the surveyed individuals varied at transit sites and shelters: **96 per cent of the surveyed individuals at public sites indicated the United States of America**, compared to **95 per cent of the surveyed individuals in temporary shelters**. Other identified destinations were Canada (3 % of individuals in transit and 5 % of individuals stranded in shelters) and Mexico (less than 1 % of individuals in transit and less one per cent of individuals stranded in shelters. Additionally, there were individuals without an alternative destination (2 % and < 1 % respectively)

Differences were observed in the main alternative destinations mentioned among the individuals surveyed at transit sites and in shelters. For those in transit, 27 percent indicated Mexico as an alternative destination and 4 percent indicated Costa Rica, whereas this percentage was less than 5 percent and 81 percent, respectively, for individuals in shelters. The percentages of individuals without a defined alternative destination varied from 57 percent in transit individuals to 10 percent in stranded individuals.

Percentage of surveyed individuals by alternative destinations (n=806)



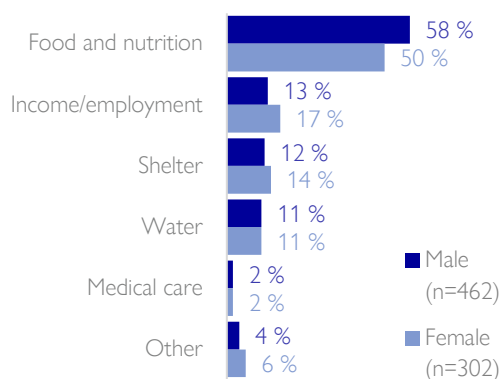
Other countries: United States of America, Spain, Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, Colombia.

The data presented in this report does not represent the entirety of the migratory flow. June 2024



Surveys conducted with migrants in transit sites and in shelters reveal significant differences in their needs and challenges. In transit, the most pressing needs are food and nutrition (55 %), and income/employment (14 %) and shelter (13 %). Respondents were also asked about the need for legal advice to learn about their migration options, with a 68 per cent response rates among respondent (Figure 14).

Figure 14. per centage of surveyed individuals in transit, by gender and main need (n=764)



Other needs: Non-food items (diapers, sanitation and hygiene items, feminine hygiene products), among others.



68 % indicated a need for legal advice to learn about migration options. (n=764)

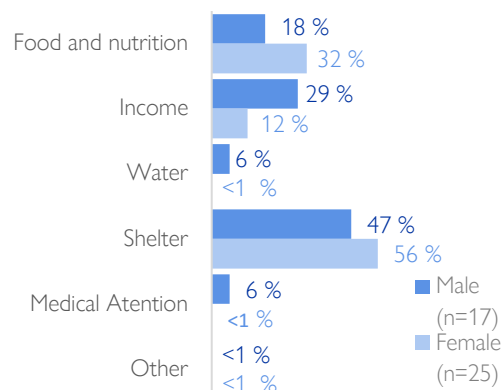


Main non-food need:

- 1- Soap (36 %)
- 2- Toilet paper (17 %)
- 3- Shampoo (16 %)
- 4- Deodorant (14 %)
- 5- Others (17 %)

Surveys conducted with migrants in temporary shelters indicate that the most pressing needs are, food and nutrition (38 %), shelter (36 %), and income/employment (9 %). Respondents were also asked about the need for legal advice to learn about their migration options, to which 56 percent expressed needing (Figure 15).

Figure 15. per centage of surveyed individuals stranded in shelters, by gender and main need (n=42)



71 % indicated a need for legal advice to learn about migration options. (n=42)



Principal necesidad no alimentaria:

- 1- Shampoo (14 %)
- 2- Blanket (14 %)
- 3- Soap (14 %)
- 4- Deodorant (10 %)
- 5- Others (48 %)

Despite continued coordination efforts between humanitarian actors and authorities during June 2024, challenges remain in the provision of services, infrastructure improvement, and response to health issues. In EMI South, the need for donations of non-food items is highlighted, including clothing (especially for children and babies), personal hygiene items, sanitary napkins, diapers, blankets, bottles and boiled water for them, adequate food, constant electricity for charging mobile devices, and services such as toll-free telephone lines and maps of the countries on the migratory route with information on the support agencies present.

In GAM, difficulties continue due to the lack of housing, psychosocial, legal, and medical care, clothing, and necessities. Although different local actors and organizations are present in GAM, it is essential to strengthen humanitarian efforts. Collaboration between entities remains crucial to provide

effective support and assistance to migrants.

In the northern zone, the needs of stranded migrants increased, especially in food, shelter, access to water, medical care, information, and psychological support. Communities such as Los Chiles and Ciudad Quesada experience a constant flow of stranded migrants due to lack of economic resources to continue their journey. Protection risks have been identified for vulnerable groups, such as women, children, and people with specific health care needs. In addition, the prolonged presence of migrants in these communities has generated tensions with the local population. New NGOs have begun offering services to migrants in transit, such as cell phone battery charging and internet services.

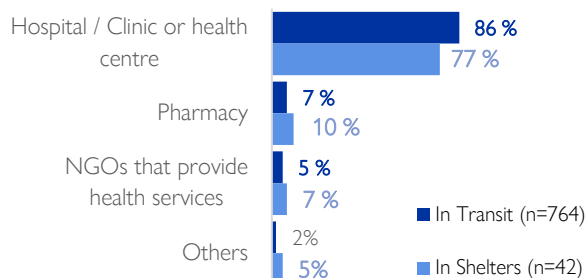


In case of needing medical assistance, 86 percent of the people surveyed in transit and 77 percent of those in shelters indicated that they would go to hospitals, clinics or health centers. On the other hand, 20 percent of people in shelters and 10 percent of people in transit would seek care from Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) that provide health services (Figure 16).

On immigration issues, most public hospitals and clinics in Costa Rica only attend to emergencies, pregnant women and minors. The data indicates that the preferences for hospitals and clinics are higher compared to other options, both for people in transit and those staying in shelters. These differences suggest that the perception of the availability and accessibility of health services varies according to the situation and location of migrants.

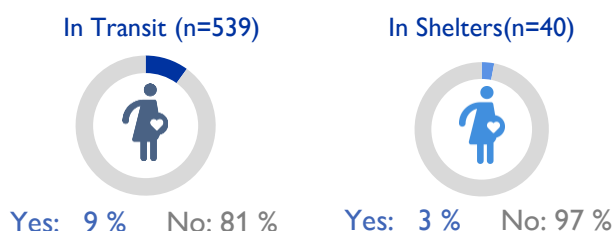
Some 8 percent of the women surveyed and companions over the age of 15 indicated that they were pregnant and had an average age of 25 years: 9 percent of the women surveyed at transit sites were pregnant and had an average age of 26 years, and among women in shelters, only 3 percent indicated that they were pregnant and had an average age of 18 years.

Figure 16. per centage of surveyed individuals by type of movement and injuries suffered during the journey (n=713)



Other sites: NGO's, Alternative Medicine, Local medical or nursing professional

Figure 16. per centage of women aged 15 and over by pregnancy status



OBSERVED HEALTH ISSUES

Main health conditions observed in stranded migrants include:

- **Gastrointestinal disease:** Diarrhea, vomiting, and stomach discomfort.
- **Physical injuries:** Lacerations, open wounds, bruises from falls, blisters on feet and hands, swelling of feet, fractures, and musculoskeletal injuries.
- **Mental health issues such as anxiety and depression:** Anxiety, depression, stress, and fatigue.
- **Respiratory illnesses:** Asthma, flu, cold, and cough.
- **Infectious diseases:** Conjunctivitis.
- **Others:** Fractures and musculoskeletal injuries, headaches, body and joint pain, skin burns, dehydration and malnutrition, fatigue and extreme tiredness.

During June 2024, an increase in physical injuries was observed in the EMI South, especially in feet and legs, due to the difficult conditions of transit through the rainforest. Migrants suffered open wounds, some in very poor condition, and a significant increase in cases of conjunctivitis. In addition, the lack of economic resources has led many people to stay longer in the EMI South, which increases the risk of mental health problems such as anxiety and depression.

Furthermore, high demand and resource limitations have hindered the implementation of preventive measures and the timely response to medical emergencies.

In the GAM, migrants faced similar health problems, with an increase in cases of dehydration and stomach upset. Mental health conditions, including stress and fatigue, are prevalent due to uncertainty and difficult living conditions. Despite the psychological assistance available in some shelters, the demand exceeds the current response capacity. Respiratory problems such as flu and cold were also common during this month.

In the north, the situation has been aggravated by the increase in migratory flow. Communities such as Los Chiles and Ciudad Quesada experienced an increase in demand for medical services that exceeds the available supply. Respiratory illnesses, such as asthma and influenza, were more prevalent compared to previous months. A lack of medical personnel and adequate infrastructure limited the ability to effectively address the health needs of migrants. The prolonged presence of migrants has also led to tensions with the local population, complicating the provision of essential medical services.

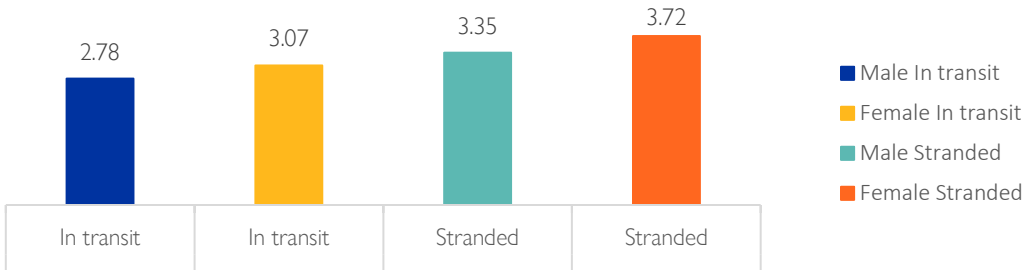


The composite indicator measures the level of vulnerability of travel groups on a scale of 0 to 5, **where 5 represents the highest possible vulnerability and 0 the lowest**. This indicator covers several critical dimensions: medical or psychosocial care, food and nutrition, shelter, economic income, access to water, the presence of minors traveling, and the number of people in the group. The indicator's methodology assigns an additional vulnerability point for each unmet need, considering the following criteria:

Table 1. Vulnerability indicator criteria

Variable	Answers	Contribution to the indicator
Most urgent need	Income; Shelter; Food and nutrition; Water; Health care; Medical care; Psychosocial care	1 point
2nd most urgent need	Income; Shelter; Food and nutrition; Water; Health care; Medical care; Psychosocial care	1 point
3rd most urgent need	Income; Shelter; Food and nutrition; Water; Health care; Medical care; Psychosocial care	1 point
Minors in travel groups	>=1	1 point
Travel group size	>= 3	1 point

Figure 17. Vulnerability level by sex and classification of migrants surveyed in May 2024



In general, both stranded and transit-on women have higher levels of vulnerability than men. The vulnerability index, which measures the level of risk and unmet needs, is 3.72 in women and 3.35 in men among the stranded people. For people in transit, the index is 3.07 in women and 2.78 in men.

Between May and June 2024, there is an increase of 0.7 points in the level of vulnerability among stranded women (from 3.65 in May to 3.72 in June), associated with an increase in the needs for shelter, food, and economic income. As for stranded men, they also experienced an increase of 0.38 points in their level of vulnerability (from 2.97 in May to 3.35 in May), due to an increase in the needs for shelter, food, economic income and travel groups of three or more people.

Migrant women continue to face more pressing challenges, risks and needs compared to men, placing them at greater risk and vulnerability. Therefore, it is essential to adopt a differentiated approach to humanitarian response, considering the specific needs of each group.



Los Chiles Terminal, northern Costa Rica
©IOM 2024/ Pamela MURILLO

CONCLUSIONS AND KEY FINDINGS



According to IOM estimates in Costa Rica, in June the flow decreased by one percent compared to May 2024 (from 33,240 to 33,022 people). However, when considering the first six months of the year, there is a 9 percent increase in the number of admissions during 2024 (212,179) compared to the same period in 2023 (194,243). Based on records from recent months, the current trend suggests that we are in a period of relative stability just before the usual peaks seen in previous years. Historically, the months of July through September have shown significant increases in migration flow, which could indicate an upcoming increase in numbers in the coming months.



The direct route from Paso Canoas to Los Chiles continues to be the most used by the flow in transit, with 98 percent of people moving along this route. EMI Sur continues to play a critical role in its management, providing essential services such as healthcare, legal and shelter, despite persistent logistical and health challenges. In the north, alternative routes and the growing demand for basic services and transportation remain a pressing reality.



In June 2024, migrants stranded in public places increased by 15 percent (from 707 in May to 814 in June) and people in shelter decreased by 29 percent (from 1,381 in May to 981 in June), compared to May. A change in geographical distribution was observed, with an increase in the northern zone, especially in Los Chiles and San Carlos, which could be related to factors such as migratory routes, economic opportunities, and availability of resources. Even though shelters may still have the capacity to accommodate more people, considering that their occupancy decreased compared to May, people prefer to continue their journey north and stay in public places. This is concerning because heavy rains occurred in June, which could increase the level of vulnerability of migrants due to viral and respiratory diseases. This highlights the need to strengthen shelter offerings in the northern area.



Surveys of migrants reveal significant differences in demographic profiles between migrants in transit and those stranded in shelters. The largest groups (3 or more people) accounted for 69 per cent of the total in transit, while in shelters this percentage rose to 89 per cent. Minors made up 31 percent of the total in transit, in contrast to 45 percent in shelters. Pregnant women in transit sites have an average age of 25 years, while in shelter sites they have an average age of 18 years. These differences highlight the need to provide direct and specific support to shelters, where larger groups are concentrated and with a higher proportion of minors, which implies requirements in terms of care, services and resources to guarantee their well-being and protection. The surveyed individuals in shelters tend to travel in larger groups and with more underage individuals compared to transit.



In June 2024, key informants from EMI Sur observed an increase in physical injuries, especially to feet and legs, and a significant increase in cases of conjunctivitis among migrants in transit, compared to previous months. This change underscores the need to adjust the health services available at transit points, focusing on the care of wounds and ophthalmological problems. With the difficult conditions of rainforest traffic, it is crucial to anticipate these emerging needs to ensure comprehensive and adequate care, considering the additional challenges that weather conditions may bring.

To access our new product with historical information about the Study, go to the following [STORY MAP](#) or scan the QR code.



For more information about the study, follow this [link](#) or scan the QR code.



Official Citation: International Organization for Migration (IOM). June 2024. DTM Flow monitoring of people on the move across the Americas in locations of high transit and migrant presence in Costa Rica, IOM, San Jose, Costa Rica. For more information on the conditions of DTM information products, please visit: www.dtm.iom.int/terms-and-conditions.

DISCLAIMER FROM IOM

This publication was made possible through the support of the Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration of the United States Department of State (PRM), under the Regional Migration Program. However, the opinions expressed herein do not necessarily reflect the official policy of the United States Government. This publication has not been officially edited by IOM.



IOM National Office in Costa Rica:
1A Avenue and 78A Street, in front of The Place Condominiums.
Rohrmoser, San Jose, Costa Rica
Telephone: +506 4052-3500
Email: IOMcostarica@iom.int
Website: www.costarica.iom.int