In 2023, Central America and Mexico experienced an unprecedented surge in human mobility, marked by a significant increase in the number of individuals engaged in mixed movements across Central and North America. A multifaceted interplay of factors, encompassing violence, insecurity, human rights violations, poverty, inequality, and the detrimental impacts of climate change and disasters, has led to the intensification of cross-border movements. Additionally, the spread of misinformation and expectations on changes in US policies regarding territorial access post the lifting of Title 42, coupled with the perception of improved labor opportunities, has further contributed to the rising influx of individuals across the region. Despite increasing restrictions and border controls, thousands of individuals from various nationalities embarked on perilous journeys, often moving irregularly, or seeking resorting to the services of smuggling networks. This resulted in heightened risks, including fatalities, disappearances, extortions, sexual violence, and other severe human rights violations, as evidenced by the alarming number of 862 individuals reported missing.

The upsurge in mixed movements not only exposed refugees and migrants to severe dangers but also placed significant pressure on reception arrangements that were ill-prepared to cope with the increasing demand for essential services such as shelter, food, and healthcare. The dire situation at border crossings and reception facilities, struggling to cater to these needs, highlights the urgent need for a comprehensive and coordinated response to address the complex challenges of these mixed flows and ensure the safety and well-being of individuals in mobility.

Despite a seasonal decline in arrivals registered in the Darien during the final quarter of 2023, which was, however, 14% higher compared to the same period in 2022, the year witnessed a staggering total of 520,085 arrivals, indicating a 110% increase from the previous year. The majority of these individuals, constituting 63%, originated from the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, while Ecuadorians accounted for 11%, and Haitians made up 9%.
Mixed Movements
Overview of key figures and trends

The influx of arrivals from outside the continent in the Darien also continued to increase throughout the year, comprising 10% of all nationalities. Noteworthy among these were individuals from India, Afghanistan, and China, the latter constituting the most significant in number. Of the total individuals crossing the Darien, 5% originated from Asian countries, and another 5% from African countries.

In Honduras, there has been as well a significant increase in irregular movements, with official figures reporting 545,043 entries in 2023, marking a 189% surge from the previous year. This uptick could be attributed to the migration amnesty implemented in early August 2022, which led to an increased registration rate at INM (National Migration Institute) offices, as it mitigated concerns over fines. Additionally, in response to the growing demand, the INM expanded its operational capacity. The primary nationalities are Venezuelans (42%), Cubans (16%), Haitians (15%), and Ecuadorians (8%). Significantly, specific nationalities, particularly Cubans, Haitians, and certain African groups, often opt to bypass the Darien crossing, choosing instead to enter via air to bordering countries and then proceed northward.

In Guatemala, during 2023, Venezuelans and Hondurans were the primary nationalities involved in mixed flows, followed by a smaller number of Ecuadorians and Nicaraguans, according to various reports.

In Mexico, authorities reported more than 686,000 incidents involving individuals in an irregular situation. The predominant nationalities are Venezuelans (28%), Hondurans (15%), Guatemalans (10%), Ecuadorians (9%), and Haitians (6%). Compared to 2022, the number of incidents has risen by 58%.

In terms of asylum applications, over 144,000 new claims were registered in 2023, marking a 21% increase from the same period in 2022. The leading nationalities among asylum seekers in Mexico are Haitians (33%), Hondurans (27%), and Cubans (11%).

Data gathered from various monitoring initiatives in the region distinctly indicates that the primary objective for the majority of individuals in mixed movements is to reach the United States, although some have intentions to settle in Mexico. As of December 2023, there were over 2.5 million reported encounters at the U.S. Southwest land border. The most prevalent nationalities among these encounters are Mexicans (28%), Venezuelans (14%), Guatemalans (10%), and Hondurans (9%). In 2023, Notably, the number of Venezuelans encounters in 2023 increased by 115% in comparison to 2022.

Ensuring access to updated and accurate information for individuals involved in mixed movements is a continuous priority. This includes information on the availability of essential services, such as secure shelter spaces along the route, access to national asylum processes, eligibility for resettlement and other pathways, including the U.S. Parole Program, and the CBP One App. Without reliable information, individuals are left vulnerable to deception, more susceptible to accepting offers from smugglers, and at a higher risk of experiencing extortion, fraud, robbery, and abuse.

Buduka fled Nigeria with his wife, his daughter, and his son. After several flights from his hometown to Tokyo, Istanbul and Caracas, they walked through the Darien province five days to reach Panama. “I never expected to see all the dangers and risks in the Darien, climbing the mountains, crossing the waterways”. When asked about the reason why he crossed Darien, he replied: “If you had to choose, would you choose death or would you choose danger?”. Once in the country, he and his family sought asylum: “I needed to come to Panama because I feel it is safe here. Now I want my children to go to school, get a quality education and live a good life”. His daughter wants to be a pilot, and his son a football player. “I will support them, no matter what they choose to be”.

BC Human Mobility (October - December 2023)
Missing migrants in the Americas

- Since IOM began monitoring deaths and disappearances of migrants and people on the move, between 2014 until 31 December 2023, 9,072* cases have been recorded in the region. Actual figures may be a lot higher as not all deaths are recorded (MMP, 2023).
- From the second week of November through the last week of December, MMP investigated and followed up on multiple mass crossings of migrants on the Rio Grande, particularly in Piedras Negras, Coahuila and Eagle Pass, Texas where we recorded at least 15 migrant drownings as a result of these incidents (Idem).

*As of December 2023. The number of missing migrants in 2023 has been updated retroactively and is available at missingmigrants.iom.int
Mixed Movements  Colombia

- **372 k**: Exits from Necocli recorded by Maritime companies in 2023.
- **1,020**: Daily average exits from Necocli recorded by Maritime companies in 2023.
- **50%**: Decrease in exits from Necocli in the fourth quarter compared to third quarter of 2023.

Based on data provided by 55,873 refugees and migrants surveyed during the registration process in accommodation services and Points of Attention and Orientation (PAO), between October and December 2023, 71% expressed the intention to live in Colombia, (mainly in Antioquia, Bogotá D.C. and Norte de Santander). 14% indicated their willingness to return to Venezuela, while another 14% were in transit to a third country. 1% engaged in a pendular movement between Colombia and Venezuela.

Monthly flows of all nationalities recorded by maritime companies in Necocli 2023

1 January 2023 – 31 December 2023

Source: GIFMM-RAY 2023
**Mixed Movements Colombia - Health**

- **28,115** Individuals accessed health services offered by international cooperation in 2023. The most frequent provision of services were in the municipalities of Necoclí and Apartadó.
- **144** Cases managed in the last two months of 2023 with the case management tool promoted by PAHO.
- **97%** Prenatal check-ups provided to Venezuelan refugee and migrant women.

The most frequent provision of services were in the municipalities of Necoclí and Apartadó.

**Access to health care for refugees and migrants by week in 2023**

The main cause of admission to the health service was triage (1,984 in total), followed by emergencies (531 in total) and finally hospitalizations (240 in total). Graph 1 shows the fluctuation of these services for refugee and migrant population by week in the year 2023. It is important to note that 877 referrals to a higher level of care were derived from these services.

The main causes of hospitalization were mainly women related to childbirth and different types of infections, which include respiratory tract disorders, skin disorders, specific and nonspecific febrile syndromes.

**Access to health care by municipality | 2023**

- **66%** Necoclí
- **27%** Apartadó
- **4%** Turbo
- **2%** Chigorodó
- **1%** Carepa

Source: Cluster information tool, ESE Hospital San Sebastián de Uraba Hospital Care Registry - December 2023
A total of 147 events of public health concern were identified in 2023 for the refugee and migrant population of the Urabá subregion. Dengue and malaria are the most frequent outbreak events, as well as HIV and gestational syphilis, which should be monitored both in the migrant population and in host communities.
Mixed Movements Panama – Darien

520,085
People entered irregularly through the Darien Province in 2023.

63% VENEZUELAN
11% ECUADORIAN
9% HAITIAN
5% CHINESE
Main nationalities in 2023 in the Darien.

81,946
Irregular entries in the Darien Province registered in August, representing the highest number in 2023.

× 2 times
more irregular entries in the Darien in 2023, compared to 2022.


Source: Migraciones Panama.
Mixed Movements Panama – Darien

**328**

Individuals were interviewed by UNHCR between October and December 2023, entering Panama from Colombia in the Darien Province (Migration Reception Centers Lajas Blancas, San Vicente and Paso Canoas).

**56%**

Men

**44%**

Women

**33**

Average age

**22**

Different nationalities interviewed

**41%**

Reported to have experienced protection incidents during their journey through the jungle.

**Countries of origin**

- 60% Colombia
- 12% Ecuador
- 8% Haiti
- 8% Venezuela
- 5% Other

**Countries of intended destination**

- 90% United States
- 6% Canada
- 2% Other

**Food security**

- 80% of people faced lack of food and adopted severe coping strategies.
- 53% have an insufficient food consumption. 46% consumed one meal only and 7% none the day before the interview.

**Main reasons to leave country of origin**

- 61% Generalized violence and insecurity
- 58% Lack of employment/ Low income
- 28% Victim of violence
- 14% Lack of food
- 13% Lack of access to medical services

**Main needs now and to continue the journey**

- 56% Clothes and shoes
- 33% Food for the family
- 22% Medicines, health care
- 13% Information on protection and migratory alternatives
- 11% Internet, telephone

**Main protection incidents in the Darien**

- 65% Theft
- 45% Physical assault/ abuse
- 25% Scam or fraud
- 7% Abduction or kidnapping
- 6% Other

**Source:** Mixed movement monitoring UNHCR-WFP, Panama, 2023.
Mixed Movements Panama – Darien & Chiriqui

643 Individuals were interviewed at temporary migratory reception stations Darien and Chiriqui by OIM, between October and December 2023.

51% Men
49% Women

82% VENEZUELAN
11% COLOMBIAN
4% ECUADORIAN
3% HAITIAN
Main nationalities interviewed

31 Average age

Intention to return to country of origin
- Yes
- No
- Prefer not to answer

77% of interviewed individuals have completed secondary education.

96% of individuals mentioned the United States of America as their primary destination.

Main needs

Transportation 31%
Food and nutrition 17%
NFI 16%
None 12%
Medical assistance 11%

Information channels used by refugees and migrants

Whatsapp 32%
Telephone 25%
Facebook 21%
Internet 15%
Face to face 7%

Source: Interactive data dashboard on migrants in transit through the Americas
Mixed Movements Costa Rica

During December 2023, around 28,721 people entered the country in November 2023 as part of the migratory flow across the Americas. The majority would have entered through Paso Canoas, on the border with Panama (99 %) with a daily average of 926. It is estimated that the number of entries between January and December 2023 (529,348) have exceeded the 2022 total (226,610) by 133 per cent (DTM, 2023b).

Source: Migration Reception Station at Los Planes of Guacala, Chiriquí, Panamá, 2022-2023.
*Data available as of August 2023.
Mixed Movements Costa Rica

**613**
Individuals were interviewed by UNHCR between October and December 2023. Interviews took place in Ciudad Neily, Paso Canoas and Los Chiles.

**50%**
Men

**48%**
Women

**2%**
Non binary

**30**
Average age

**53%**
Reported that the fear of generalized violence and insecurity was a reason to leave the country of origin.

**58%**
Reported to have experienced protection incidents in the route.

**Countries of origin**
- Venezuela 9%
- Colombia 5%
- Ecuador 4%
- Haiti 1%
- Peru 81%

**Countries of intended destination**
- United States 99%
- Other 1%

**Main reasons to leave the country of origin**
- Lack of employment/low income 91%
- Lack of access to food 60%
- Fear due to the general situation of violence/insecurity 53%
- Lack of access to education 37%
- Lack of access to medical services or medicine 12%

**Main needs now and to continue the journey**
- Food for the family 91%
- Shelter 67%
- Clothes and/or shoes 52%
- Internet and telephone access 25%
- Information on protection and migratory alternatives 20%

**Main protection incidents during the route**
- Theft 49%
- Physical threat or intimidation 34%
- Extortion 17%
- Arrest or detention 15%
- Scam or fraud 7%

**Food security**
- 72% of people had food security issues in the last month.
- 55% spent whole days without eating and 17% have regularly skipped meals.
- 71% have an insufficient food consumption.
- 47% consumed one meal only and 24% none the day before the interview.

Mixed Movements Honduras

545 K
People entered Honduras irregularly in 2023.

144
Different nationalities entered Honduras irregularly in 2023.

42% VENEZUELAN
16% CUBAN
15% HAITIAN
8% ECUADORIAN
Main nationalities in 2023 in Honduras.

102 K
Irregular entries during October represented the highest number registered in 2023.

Monthly irregular entries in Honduras | 2023

Monthly irregular entries in Honduras by country of origin | 2023

Source: Instituto Nacional de Migración - Honduras, 2023
Mixed Movements Honduras

504
Individuals were interviewed by UNHCR between October and December 2023.

57% Men
42% Women
1% Non binary

32 Average age

38%
Reported to have experienced protection incidents during their journey.

Countries of origin
- Venezuela: 47%
- Cuba: 10%
- Ecuador: 8%
- Haiti: 7%
- Colombia: 11%
- Other: 17%

Countries of intended destination
- United States: 96%
- Canada: 3%
- Other: 1%

Food security
- 49% of people have food security issues in the last month.
  - 34% have regularly skipped meals and 15% spent whole days without eating.
- 32% have an insufficient food consumption.
  - 28% consumed one meal only and 4% none the day before the interview.

Main reasons to leave the country of origin
(More than one option could be selected)
- Lack of employment/low income: 75%
- Fear due to violence/insecurity: 40%
- Lack of access to food: 21%
- Victim of violence: 9%
- Lack of access to medical services/medicines: 7%

Main needs now and to continue the journey
(More than one option could be selected)
- Food for the family: 64%
- Drinking water: 26%
- Clothes and/or shoes: 25%
- Shelter: 22%
- Medicines/health care: 21%

Main protection incidents in the route before arrival to Honduras
(More than one option could be selected)
- Theft: 54%
- Scam or fraud: 42%
- Physical threat/assault: 25%
- Prefer not to say: 3%
- Exploitation work: 3%

Mixed Movements Guatemala

1,411
Individuals were interviewed by UNHCR between October and December 2023. Interviews were conducted in several provinces and border points including Petén, Chiquimula, Izabal, San Marcos, Hueuetenango as well as the capital Guatemala City.

- Men: 58%
- Women: 42%
- Average age: 31

- Countries of origin:
  - United States: 25%
  - Honduras: 42%
  - Ecuador: 16%
  - Colombia: 12%
  - Other: 10%

- Countries of intended destination:
  - United States: 96%
  - Mexico: 3%
  - Other: 1%

Main reasons to leave the country of origin:
- Lack of employment/low income: 77%
- Fear due to violence/insecurity: 41%
- Lack of access to food: 16%
- Victim of violence: 12%
- Lack of access to medical services or medicines: 10%

Main protection incidents during the route:
- Extortion: 50%
- Theft: 43%
- Scam or fraud: 23%
- Physical assault/abuse: 22%
- Deny entry: 5%

Main needs now and to continue the journey:
- Food for the family: 57%
- Medicines, health care: 40%
- Shelter: 37%
- Drinking water: 25%
- Clothes and/or shoes: 20%

- Food security:
  - 71% of people had food security issues in the last month.
  - 52% have regularly skipped meals and 19% spent whole days without eating.
  - 50% consumed one meal only and 4% none the day before the interview.

Reported that the fear of generalized violence and insecurity was a reason to leave the country of origin.

Mixed Movements Guatemala

1,788
Individuals were interviewed by DTM Guatemala between October and December 2023.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Men</th>
<th>Women</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>58%</td>
<td>42%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

31
Average age

17%
of women were pregnant or breastfeeding.

35%
of people interviewed reported having completed secondary education.

Countries of origin

- 31%
- 61%
- 6%

Main reasons to leave the country of origin**

- Better living conditions: 23%
- Find employment/improve salary: 17%
- Do not consider future in country: 15%
- Dissatisfaction with government: 14%
- End of Title 42: 13%
- Violence: 8%
- Other(*): 10%

Main needs now and to continue the journey**

- Shelter: 88%
- Food: 80%
- Assistance travelling: 68%
- Personal hygiene items: 62%
- Internet access: 53%
- Drinking water: 24%

*Other* category includes: family reunification, improving access to food; threats; discrimination; improving education; devaluation of education; currency devaluation; improving wages and income; and some feel persecuted for their political activities in their country.

**Includes data between 21 April – 30 November 2023.

Note: The interviewees had the possibility of selecting several options, so the percentages will not add up to 100%.

Source: Interactive data dashboard on migrants in transit through the Americas
Source: DTM Flow Monitoring (21 April – 30 November 2023)
Mixed Movements
Refugees and Migrants presence in Mexico (presentations and referrals)

Refugees and migrants presented and referred to Mexican Immigration authorities by country of origin and demographic group, January – September 2023

**Main nationalities**
- Venezuelan: 29%
- Honduran: 15%
- Guatemalan: 10%
- Ecuadorian: 9%
- Haitian: 6%
- Cuban: 3%
- Colombian: 3%
- Salvadoran: 2%
- Senegalese: 2%
- Nicaraguan: 1%
- Other: 6%

**Totals by demographic groups (Jan - Sep 2023):**

- **Presentations**
  - Men: 77% (437,365)
  - Women: 23% (128,996)

- **Referrals**
  - Men: 19% (41,346)
  - Women: 28% (60,809)
  - Children: 52% (113,660)

**Source:** Unidad de Política Migratoria, 2023.
Asylum trends in Mexico

144,286
Asylum applications were lodged in Mexico in 2023, representing an increase of 20% compared to 2022 (COMAR, 2023).

33 k
Asylum-seekers registered by UNHCR in Mexico in 2023.

70%
of asylum-seekers interviewed by UNHCR in Mexico in 2023, have specific protection needs.

Top 10 Asylum applications in Mexico by country of origin in 2023

- Haiti: 44,239
- Honduras: 41,935
- Cuba: 18,386
- Other countries: 18,210
- El Salvador: 7,200
- Guatemala: 6,117
- Venezuela: 6,111
- Brazil: 5,117
- Chile: 3,678
- Colombia: 3,489

Source: COMAR, 2023

Asylum-seekers with protection needs registered by UNHCR in Mexico in 2023

- Specific legal and physical protection needs: 16,084
- Child at risk: 5,769
- Serious medical condition: 3,267
- Single parent: 2,443
- Disability: 2,286
- Women at risk: 1,683
- Unaccompanied or separated child: 846
- SGBV: 479
- Older person at risk: 416
- Family unity: 44
- Torture: 23

Mixed Movements Mexico

1,113

Individuals were interviewed by UNHCR between October and December 2023. Interviews took place in 18 cities across Mexico.

48% Men

52% Women

34 Average age

Countries of origin
- Honduras 28%
- Venezuela 5%
- Cuba 6%
- Guatemala 7%
- El Salvador 10%
- Haiti 14%
- Ecuador 4%
- Colombia 21%
- Nicaragua 10%
- Other 10%

Countries of intended destination
- United States 28%
- Mexico 67%
- Other 5%

Main reasons to leave the country of origin (More than one option could be selected)
- 42% Victim of violence
- 41% Fear due to violence/ insecurity
- 41% Lack of employment/ low income
- 15% Lack of access to food
- 10% Lack of access to medical services or medicines

Main needs now and to continue the journey (More than one option could be selected)
- 69% Food for the family
- 39% Shelter
- 25% Clothes and/or shoes
- 21% Information on protection and migratory alternatives
- 20% Medicines, health care

Main protection incidents in the route before arrival to Mexico (More than one option could be selected)
- 57% Theft
- 47% Extortion
- 27% Physical assault/ abuse
- 16% Scam or fraud
- 6% Abduction or kidnapping

Reported that being a victim of violence, threats or intimidation was one of the main reasons to leave the country of origin. 41% cited lack of employment.

Reported to have experienced protection incidents in the route.

Reported one of their main needs was food for their family.

Countries of origin
- Venezuela 21%
- Guatemala 7%
- Haiti 14%
- El Salvador 6%
- Honduras 5%
- Cuba 4%
- Colombia 3%
- Nicaragua 3%
- Other 6%

Countries of intended destination
- United States 30%
- Mexico 28%
- Other 5%

Food security
- 37% of people had food insecurity issues in the last month.
- 21% have an insufficient food consumption.

Main needs now and to continue the journey (More than one option could be selected)
- 69% Food for the family
- 39% Shelter
- 25% Clothes and/or shoes
- 21% Information on protection and migratory alternatives
- 20% Medicines, health care

Reported one of their main needs was food for their family.

Source: Mixed movement monitoring UNHCR-WFP, Mexico, 2023.
Mixed Movements **Mexico South Border**

**195** Individuals were interviewed by IOM in Tapachula between October and December 2023.

**48%** Men, **52%** Women

**49%** Were between 26 and 35 years old.

**Countries of origin**
- Honduras: 25%
- Venezuela: 11%
- Cuba: 11%
- Haiti: 11%
- El Salvador: 3%
- Guatemala: 3%
- Mexico: 5%
- Not defined: 4%
- United States: 72%
- Others: 25%

**Countries of intended destination**
- United States: 25%
- Mexico: 6%
- Not defined: 3%

**Travel group of interviewed individuals**
- Alone: 25%
- With non-relatives: 6%
- With relatives and non-relatives: 3%

**Main reasons to leave the country of origin**
(More than one option could be selected)

- Socioeconomic conditions: 87%
- Violence/general security situation: 43%
- Family reunification: 43%
- Political reasons: 16%
- Other: 4%

**Main reasons to choose country of destination**
(More than one option could be selected)

- Employment: 93%
- More favorable socioeconomic conditions: 89%
- Safety: 43%
- Access to legal protection: 38%
- Family reunification: 34%
- Political stability: 21%
- Bilateral agreements: 1%
- Other: 1%

Source: *Flow Monitoring Surveys in Tapachula, IOM Mexico, October 2023.*
**Mixed Movements**

**Mexico North Border**

598 Individuals were interviewed by IOM in Ciudad Juarez and Tijuana between October and December 2023.

Men: 44%

Women: 56%

Was the average age 34

### Countries of origin

- Mexico: 46%
- Venezuela: 7%
- Honduras: 12%
- Guatemala: 6%
- El Salvador: 7%
- Cuba: 2%
- Colombia: 6%
- Haiti: 2%
- Other: 4%

### Countries of intended destination

- Mexico: 93%
- United States: 7%

### Main reasons to leave the country of origin

- Socio-economic conditions: 87%
- Insecurity/violence: 43%
- Family reunification: 43%
- Political reasons: 16%
- Other: 4%

### Main needs

- Protection and safety: 22%
- Income generation and employment: 16%
- Shelter: 12%
- Food and nutrition: 11%
- Medical assistance: 11%

Source: Flow Monitoring Surveys in Ciudad Juarez, Mexico, OIM, October 2023

Source: Ciudad Juarez and Tijuana (1 October – 30 December 2023) Interactive data dashboard on migrants in transit through the Americas
Land Border Encounters in Southwest in United States

**Encounters at the Southwestern United States border** in 2023 (2,542,079), representing a 1% decrease in comparison to encounters in 2022 (2,579,026).

- **57%** were adults travelling alone and 38% moving in family units in 2023.
- **5%** were unaccompanied children and adolescents in 2023.
- **9%** increase in the encounters from the last quarter of 2022 compared to the same period in 2023. December (302,034) is the month with the highest number of encounters recorded in 2023.

**Main country of origin in United States Southwest land border encounters in 2023**

- **29%** MEXICAN
- **14%** VENEZUELAN
- **10%** GUATEMALAN
- **9%** HONDURAN
- **6%** COLOMBIAN

Main nationalities in 2023.

**United States Southwest land border encounters, 2021-2023**

Returns to Northern Central American countries (El Salvador, Honduras and Guatemala)

**152,095**
Guatemalans, Hondurans and Salvadorians were returned from the United States, Mexico and other countries from January to December 2023.

**22%**
Decrease in total returns from January to December 2023 in comparison to the same period in 2022.

**53% GUATEMALA**
**39% HONDURAS**
**9% EL SALVADOR**
were the countries with the higher figures of returns from January to December 2023.


* Figures for Honduras have a cut-off date as of July 2023.