



**MMC Latin America  
and the Caribbean**

**QUARTER 1 2023**



**Quarterly Mixed  
Migration Update:  
Latin America and  
the Caribbean**

This Quarterly Mixed Migration Update (QMMU) covers the Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC) region. The core countries of focus for this region are the countries currently affected by the Venezuelan crisis and the Caribbean islands. This QMMU covers Mexico and Central American countries concerning northern movements to the United States. Depending on the quarterly trends and migration-related updates, more attention may be given to some countries over the rest.

The QMMUs offer a quarterly update on new trends and dynamics related to mixed migration and relevant policy developments in the region. These updates are based on a compilation of a wide range of secondary (data) sources, brought together within a regional framework and applying a mixed migration analytical lens. Similar QMMUs are available for all MMC regions.

MMC is a global network engaged in data collection, research, analysis, and policy and programmatic development on mixed migration, with regional hubs hosted in Danish Refugee Council (DRC) regional offices in Africa, Asia and the Pacific, Europe, and Latin America, and a global team based across Copenhagen, Geneva, and Brussels. For more information on MMC, the QMMUs from other regions, and contact details of regional MMC teams, visit [mixedmigration.org](https://mixedmigration.org) and follow us at [@Mixed\\_Migration](https://twitter.com/Mixed_Migration)

### **MMC's understanding of mixed migration**

"Mixed migration" refers to cross-border movements of people, including refugees fleeing persecution and conflict, victims of trafficking, and people seeking better lives and opportunities. Motivated to move by a multiplicity of factors, people engaged in mixed migration have a range of legal statuses as well as a variety of vulnerabilities. Although entitled to protection under international human rights law, they are exposed to multiple rights violations along their journey. Mixed migration describes refugees and migrants traveling along similar routes, using similar means of travel – often traveling irregularly, and wholly or partially, assisted by migrant smugglers.

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# Quarterly Mixed Migration Update: Latin America and the Caribbean

## Quarter 1 - 2023

### Key Updates

- According to the latest update of the Interagency Coordination Platform for Refugees and Migrants of Venezuela (R4V), as of March 2023, [7,239,953](#) Venezuelans had left the country. Of these, [6,095,464](#) (84%) are in Latin American and Caribbean countries.
- Between [April 1 and 30, 2023](#), Venezuelan Special Protection Permit (PEP) holders and Venezuelan asylum-seekers who have not completed the United Venezuelan Migrant Registry (RUMV) [will be eligible for Temporary Protection Status \(ETPV\) in Colombia](#). As of March 2023, more than [1,600,000](#) temporary protection permits (PPT) had been issued.
- Humanitarian actors in the field have reported an increase in Ecuadorians trying to reach Central America by travelling through the Darién Gap. Increases in [violence and extortion by criminal groups](#) in Ecuador are some factors that motivate people to leave the country.
- In March 2023, [191,899 “encounters”](#) were reported at the southern border of the United States (US), a decrease of 24% compared to December 2022 (252,012 “encounters”). This decrease could be related to the development of [new legal avenues](#) to enter the US for some nationalities, and by [the continuation](#) of Title 42, which prevents people from applying for refugee status at the border.
- Faced with the [eventual termination](#) of Title 42 in May 2023, the U.S. Government announced a proposed rule that could increase the [restrictions](#) for asylum seekers from protection at the country’s southern border. This [proposed rule](#), according to the Homeland Security Department, would encourage people on the move to [“take advantage”](#) of the legal, orderly, and safe pathways of regular entry into the U.S. or seek protection in transiting countries.
- On March 24, Canada and the United States expanded their bilateral [safe third country agreement](#) (STCA) placed in 2004. This agreement [allows](#) authorities from both countries to [turn back asylum seekers](#) who claim protection at [unofficial entry points](#). According to the Canadian authorities, nearly [40,000](#) people entered the province of Quebec in 2022, [more than double the number register in 2019](#).
- The CBP One™ mobile application (app), reports systematic errors, information entry failures, and constant breakdowns. Although the app was intended to [facilitate the processing](#) of asylum-seekers, the generation of advance travel authorizations, and the obtaining exemptions from [Title 42](#), human rights organizations have claimed it uses [exclusive algorithms that could increase discrimination and exclusion of minorities and vulnerable groups](#).

## Regional Overview\*



Canada has warned about the increase in irregular movements into its territory via [unauthorised points](#), from the state of New York in the US. According to the Canadian authorities, more than [40,000](#) people entered the province of Quebec in 2022

On February 22, Mexican immigration authorities found [34 migrants](#) in an overcrowded hotel room in Tamaulipas, Reynosa. The [National Migration Institute \(INM\)](#) reported that the migrants came from Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, and China.

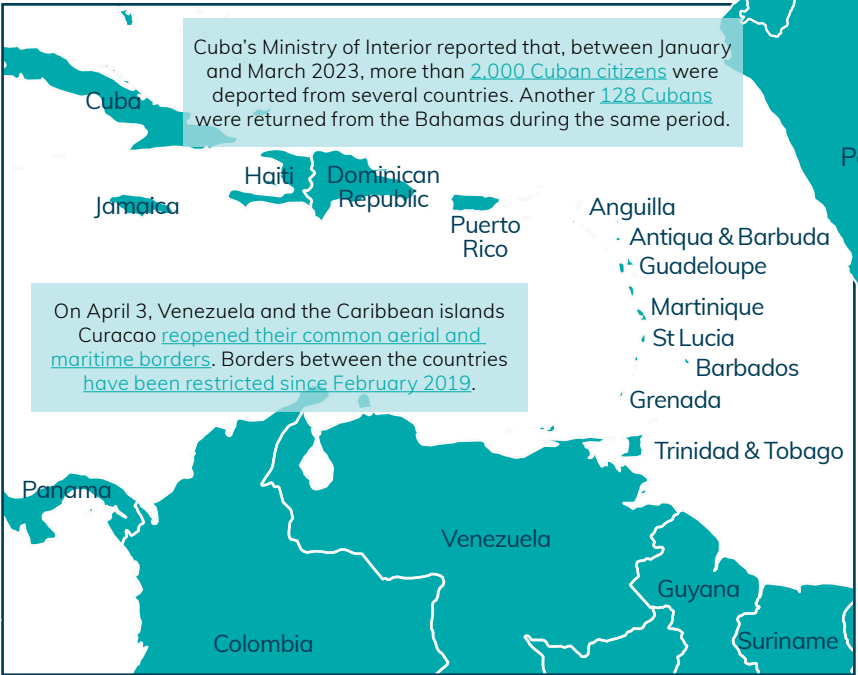
On March 9, Guatemala expelled [283 migrants](#) to the border with Honduras. Most of the people came from Haiti, India, and Cameroon and were found in different [lodgings in the city of Chiquimula](#), in the east of Guatemala.

On March 20, Honduran government approved [the Law for Prevention, Care and Protection of Internally Displaced Persons](#) due to violence. It [recognizes](#) the rights of the victims and establishes a [legal framework](#) for victim restoration and preventing new displacements.

On April 3, the Puerto Rican authorities [repatriated 39 migrants to the Dominican Republic](#) following an interception at sea close to Mona Passage waters. At least one of the migrants deported [was charged with attempting re-irregular](#) entry to the United States across Puerto Rico.

According to UNICEF, the number of children and adolescents crossing the Darien Gap by foot [has increased seven-fold between January and February 2023](#) (+9,000 children). During the same period last year, less than [1,400 were reported](#).

## The Caribbean



Cuba's Ministry of Interior reported that, between January and March 2023, more than [2,000 Cuban citizens](#) were deported from several countries. Another [128 Cubans](#) were returned from the Bahamas during the same period.

On April 3, Venezuela and the Caribbean islands Curacao [reopened their common aerial and maritime borders](#). Borders between the countries [have been restricted since February 2019](#).

For 30 days, up to March 31, Peruvian authorities [extended the deadline for requesting a Temporary Permit Card \(CPP\)](#). Foreign citizens who are in an irregular migratory situation can regularize their stay in Peru for two years with this extension. Up to this point, more than [340,000 migrants](#) have processed their CPP.

\*The map information refers to selected updates and does not represent all mixed migration in and out of Latin America and the Caribbean.

# Mixed Migration Regional Updates

## Venezuelan mixed migration

### Movements towards South America

According to the latest update of the Interagency Coordination Platform for Refugees and Migrants of Venezuela (R4V), as of March 2023, [7,239,953](#) Venezuelans have left the country. Of these, [6,095,464](#) (84%) are in Latin American and Caribbean countries. Colombia remains the main host country for Venezuelan refugees and migrants in the region ([41%](#)), followed by Peru ([25%](#)), Ecuador ([8%](#)), Chile ([7%](#)), and Brazil ([7%](#)).

Despite Uruguay receiving comparatively fewer arrivals of Venezuelans than other countries in the region, numbers are increasing. In 2022, more than [9,000 Venezuelans](#) entered Uruguay from Venezuela and other countries in the region.

In response, Uruguayan authorities announced [changes in processing residence permits and visas for Mercosur nationalities to prevent the increase in migration](#). From [February 17](#), people from Venezuela, Argentina, Paraguay, and other Mercosur member countries must pay approximately [80 dollars](#) to obtain a visa. Previously, the process under the Mercosur agreements was free.

Local actors state that [charging](#) for the procedures could generate [new barriers to regularisation for recent arrivals with limited economic resources](#). [Uruguay](#) and [Argentina](#) extended [the Mercosur Residence Agreements](#) to Venezuelans in 2017 following Venezuela's [suspension](#) from the regional treaty.

Cross-border movements between Colombia and Venezuela [could increase](#) with the reopening of the vehicle and pedestrian traffic via border bridges in Norte de Santander. According to the Interagency Group for Mixed Migration Flows ([GIFMM, Colombia](#)) as of December 2022, [more than one million](#) people were involved in movement across the border, mainly to access [medicines, medical care, and food](#).

### Migration and the regularisation process in Colombia

According to R4V, as of March 2023, [2,477,588](#) Venezuelan refugees and migrants were in the country with [1,611,317](#) holding Temporary Protection Permits (PPTs). Although national authorities announced [an intended increase in PPTs](#) earlier this year, Venezuelans have continued to report delays in obtaining them.

Since February 28, Colombian migration authorities have been implementing the comprehensive plan [“You are still in time”](#) to facilitate [alternatives](#) for accessing PPT for the Venezuelan population in the country.

This strategy will be in place between [April 1 and 30, 2023](#), and will benefit Venezuelans, holders of a Special Permit of Permanence (PEP), migrants who did not complete their Single Registry of Venezuelan Migrants (RUMV) before May 2022, and asylum refugees who did not apply to the RUMV before January 31, 2021.

During the waiting period for delivery of the document, a [PPT Processing Certificate](#) will be distributed to facilitate access to services, as well as entering, transiting within, and leaving Colombia.

## Peru

Peru is the second most common destination for Venezuelan refugees and migrants. As of March 2023, more than [1.4 million](#) Venezuelans were in the country. Increasing instability in Peru, due to [social demonstrations](#) and [political changes](#) since December 2022, has disrupted movements across the border, specifically with Bolivia.

[The transit of people](#) and trade through Desaguadero along [the international bridge was affected](#) due to roadblocks and demonstrations. During blockades, refugees and migrants in [transit](#) through Desaguadero were unable to continue their journey to Bolivia due to the [traffic restrictions](#). (see [QMMU 4 2022](#))

[The extreme weather conditions](#) in Desaguadero proved hazardous for people on the move, trapped in the city. In February, at least [four Haitian nationals died in Desaguadero](#) due to a combination of health problems, the [harsh climate, and poor access to food and shelter](#).

Venezuelan refugee and migrant populations in Peru continue to face significant issues. According to a [survey](#) conducted by the National Institute of Statistics and Informatics (INEI) in 2022, [80%](#) of working Venezuelans have no employment contracts. This situation negatively impacts their access to healthcare, housing, and education services. [29%](#) of those interviewed reported facing [discrimination](#) upon arrival in Peru, with women being the most affected.

According to [the UNHCR and the Ombudsman's Office of Peru](#), Venezuelan women suffer double discrimination due to their gender and nationality. In 2022, [85%](#) of the cases of gender violence registered by the Ministry of Women and Vulnerable Populations (MIMP) were [of Venezuelan nationality](#) (2,010 of 2,374 cases).

In January 2023, the Congress of Peru approved the [modification of the articles of Legislative Decree 1350](#) (Migration Law) on the grounds of "[national security](#)". Now, foreigners who wish to access housing must present documentation proving their [official immigration status in the country](#).

The Ombudsman's Office of Peru rejected the recent changes to Decree 1350 because they would further "[stereotypes that stigmatize refugees and migrants, associating them with crime](#)". The Office added that this provision threatens the fundamental right of access to housing, especially for pregnant women, children and adolescents, and the elderly.

## Brazil

As of March 2023, there were [414,502](#) Venezuelan migrants and refugees in Brazil. According to the [Observatory of International Migration \(OBMigra\)](#), in February 2023, [17,414](#) people of Venezuelan nationality entered Brazil. This number is an increase of [39%](#) compared with February 2022 (12,556 people).

During the same period, asylum claims for Venezuelans decreased by [20%](#) (from [3,321 in 2022](#) to [2,661](#) in 2023). Approximately [51%](#) of the applications submitted in February 2023 were made in [Pacaraima](#), Roraima state, a significant border cross point near Venezuela, used by Venezuelan refugees and migrants, and Indigenous communities to arrive in Brazil.

In February, the Ministry of Justice and Public Security (MJSP) began developing a [national public policy on migration, refugees, and statelessness](#). This process includes debates related to migration regularisation, integration, social participation, and protecting the human rights of people on the move through the country.

This process is necessary to guarantee the comprehensive protection of refugees and migrants in the country. In February, the Brazilian authorities reported [rescuing 24 Venezuelans](#) working in “[degrading conditions](#)”, [living in industrial buildings without beds or access to sanitation facilities](#). According to official data, more than [2,000 people](#) were rescued from similar situations in 2022. Of those rescued, 148 were foreigners.

## Ecuador

As of March 2023, about [8%](#) of Venezuelan refugees and migrants in the region were in Ecuador.

According to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Ecuador, as of February 2023, more than [106,000 people](#) had completed their “[migratory registration](#)” through the official platform “[I am here](#)” and [47,821](#) had received the [Temporary Residence Visa of Exception](#) (VIRTE) as of April 18.

Since February 17, [Venezuelans who arrived irregularly](#) in Ecuador can apply for the migratory regularisation process. Despite this initiative's progress, some claim that an [increasing number of Venezuelans are leaving the country](#) due to the economic situation, lack of employment, and access to fundamental rights.

## Chile

According to R4V, [444,423](#) Venezuelan refugees and migrants were in Chile in March 2023.

Since October 2022, the Chilean Senate has been [discussing options](#) to facilitate the expulsion of foreigners. This quarter the Senate approved a [new bill](#), not yet in force, that seeks to extend the period of detention up to five days for foreigners who are subject to the administrative expulsion processes in Chile.

National authorities have advocated for an increased detention period to facilitate the necessary steps required to complete expulsion, including in that time, the purchasing of tickets and identity verification. The current regulation [stipulates that expulsion should occur within 48 hours](#).

Immigration controls in the border regions between Bolivia and Peru continue to be tightened. On February 20, 2023, the Ministry of the Interior and Public Security published Decree DFL 1 “[for protection of border areas](#)” to reduce and control the entry of refugees and migrants through unauthorised points.

This decree argues for temporary militarisation for 90 days of the [regions of Arica and Parinacota, and Tarapacá and Antofagasta](#), in the north of the country, beginning [February 27](#). The decree also grants the armed forces the ability to request and verify the identity of anyone at the border and to check luggage, clothing, or vehicles if there is any suspicion of a crime.

The right to [use deterrents such as non-lethal arms, riot control, and force as a last resort](#) is also included in the Decree. Concerns have been raised by the [National Network of Migrants and Promigrants](#) have stated that the Decree leads to stigmatisation, discrimination, and criminalisation, [“instead of receiving protection and humanitarian aid, \[refugees and migrants\] face a racist system that stigmatizes, discriminates, and criminalises them”](#).

The impact of the Decree on border areas is already beginning to be reported. During the first week of March, [Bolivian authorities](#) near the border with Chile warned about a possible humanitarian emergency due to the number of people met by armed forces when attempting to use the unauthorized crossing.

In [Sabaya](#), a Bolivian city near Colchane in Chile, more than 1,000 people were reported by local authorities to be [sleeping in public spaces without access to water or a sufficient food supply](#), waiting to cross the border.

According to official data, the number of weekly irregular crossings, on the northern border with Bolivia decreased by [55% on March 2023 compared to the same month last year](#). Mixed movements among Venezuelans went from [80% to 36% since Decree DFL 1 took place](#) in February 2023.

## Mixed movements to Central America

### Panama

In January 2023, The [National Migration Service of Panama \(SNM\)](#), registered [24,634](#) entries into the country from the Darién Gap. This number is an increase of 400% ([4,702 entries](#)) compared with January 2022.

#### Graph 1. Entries in Panamá from the Darién Gap by region

Regions	Month*	Index
	January 2023	
South America	11,005	45%
Antilles	10,468	42%
Asia	2,051	8%
Africa	993	4%

Note: Graph made by MMC, with [official data SNM Panamá](#)



The nationalities of the people travelling through the Darién Gap have changed since January 2023. According to the SNM, in January, [42%](#) of the entries to Panama were Haitians (10,222 people), [26%](#) were Ecuadorians, and [9%](#) were Venezuelans. In 2022, Venezuelans were the [most common nationality](#) using this dangerous route.

Despite implementing [new legal paths](#) for regular entry into the US, which seek to curb attempts to [enter Panama or Mexico irregularly](#) (see [QMMU 4 2022](#)), Venezuelans, Haitians, and Cubans continue to attempt to enter Central America through the Darién Gap.

The number of Ecuadorians travelling to Central America through the Darién Gap has increased exponentially from [330 people](#) in 2021 to [29,356 people](#) in 2022. In January 2023, Panama's National Migration Service reported [6,352](#) Ecuadorian entries.

This increase [is likely to be driven](#) by the escalation of [violence resulting from drug trafficking and extortion by criminal groups](#) in Ecuador, [increases in visa costs and the economic solvency requirement for entry into Mexico](#), and long waiting periods for visa processes.

In February 2023, [maritime transport companies in Necoclí](#) reported 22,611 departures of people headed for Darién Gap, which is [6%](#) more than in January (21,307). Of the reported departures, about [7,300](#) were people of Venezuelan nationality, and more than [4,000](#) were Haitians.

According to the [local GIFMM of Urabá](#), between [March 17 and 24](#), about [8,154](#) people left Necoclí heading to Darién Gap. During this period, in Turbo, Antioquia, local humanitarian actors report increased [homelessness](#) among refugees and migrants due to a lack of resources and limited options to leave via irregular maritime transport.

Other risks for refugees and migrants were reported. In February, a traffic accident was reported by National Authorities near the border with Costa Rica. [At least 39 refugees and migrants died](#). On February 25, another [bus with more than 50 people caught fire](#).

Following these accidents, the Panamanian authorities [temporarily suspended](#) the transport of people from the Migratory Reception Stations (ERM) to Costa Rica. Transport services are part of the [controlled flow policy](#) implemented by Panama in 2016. The transport service from the province of Darién to Chiriquí was [resumed on March 1](#).

On April 1, 2023, the [Ministry of Public Security of Panama](#) stated that more than [80,000 people](#) crossed the Darién during the year's first quarter.

## Costa Rica

Costa Rica received more than 200,000 refugee applications between [2018 and 2022](#). [Eighty-nine percent](#) of the applications were from Nicaraguans, who are experiencing [increases](#) in repressive actions, [restrictions](#) on fundamental freedoms, and a systematic absence of human rights [guarantees](#).

In January this quarter, Costa Rica received 4,615 refugee applications, of which [91%](#) (4,615) were from Nicaraguans, [4%](#) (178 applications) from Cubans, and [2%](#) (97 applications) from Venezuelans.

[Changes in regulatory determinations](#) and care mechanisms for asylum-seekers (announced in November 2022; see [QMMU 4 2022](#)) have increased [the number of people staying outside immigration offices, waiting for an appointment](#), who consequently are exposed to increased risk of [extortion](#).

In response, since February 23, the General Directorate of Migration and Aliens of Costa Rica has implemented a [hotline for asylum-seekers](#). The hotline facilitates the allocation of appointments to [first-time asylum-seekers](#) in the country.

Nationals of Cuba, Nicaragua, and Venezuela under the [“Special Temporary Category”](#) can contact a hotline from [March 1, 2023](#). This Special Temporary Category, signed in November 2022, will benefit those asylum seekers whose applications are pending or denied. (see [QMMU 4 2022](#))

Costa Rican authorities [foresee an increase in mixed-migration movements](#) through the territory in 2023 due to changes in the political, economic, and social contexts and migration regulations in the south of the region such as Chile and Perú.

## Guatemala

Guatemala has strengthened its [immigration controls](#) throughout the territory. Since January 2023, the authorities have expelled [858](#) migrants who entered the country irregularly through the border point of [Agua Caliente](#) with Honduras. [Thirty-five percent](#) of the expulsions in January were Haitians, and [20%](#) were Venezuelans.

Actors in the field have warned of possible risks associated with data protection and security of refugees and migrants hosted in shelters across the country as a result of authorities implementing Article 101 of the [Agreement of the Migration Authority 7-2019](#). This article establishes that centres housing refugees and migrants are [required](#) to create files with [personal information that are to be shared](#) periodically with the immigration authorities.

In Guatemala, there are at least nine centres in which more than [20,000](#) people temporarily reside. The commissions of articulated protection for the rights of migrants, including the Church, claim that the Article 101 provisions [“violate the right to personal data privacy of the migrants hosted”](#). The “Red Clamor”, a regional network of the Catholic Church also [concerned about the potential closure](#) of migrant shelters in the country since Article 101 continues in place.

Between January 1 and April 10, 2023, 16,620 Guatemalans were deported, or “voluntarily returned” by air from the US ([75%](#)) and Mexico ([25%](#)). In this same period, another [10,514](#) Guatemalan citizens, were deported or “voluntarily returned”, by land from Mexico, according to the Reception Centre for Returnees in Tecún Umán II and El Carmen.

## Honduras

The Honduran authorities recorded [53,349](#) irregular entries of refugees and migrants across the southern borders between January 1 and March 22, 2023. Of these entries, 22% were made by Venezuelans, 21% were Haitians, 21% were Ecuadorians and 6% were Cubans.

During this period, [82%](#) of the irregular entries are mainly reported in the municipalities of [Danlí, CAMI Choluteca, and Trojes](#), in the south of the country, near the border with Nicaragua. [The registration of irregular entries](#) corresponds to the number of people who request a transit permit to continue their trip through the country.

Currently, people on the move who enter Honduras irregularly are exempt from paying fines due to the [extension of the “migratory amnesty”](#) until June 2023. This measure was first implemented in August 2022.

[Humanitarian actors](#) continue to report precarious conditions for people in transit through the country. According to the [LIFE-Honduras Consortium](#), between January and February 2023, [16%](#) of children under five years of age who attended in Danlí and Trojes displayed signs of malnutrition.

Between 16 January and 16 March, the Migrant Care Centre ([CAMI Danlí](#)) supported more than [5,900](#) people, mostly from Ecuador, Venezuela, and Haiti, to access shelter, medical care, and food services. This shows the high levels of need among migrants and refugees transiting through Honduras. The [Francisco Paz Irregular Migrant Care Centre](#) was inaugurated in the Danlí (CAMI Danlí) department of Paraíso on January 16, 2023.

People travelling through Honduras are also at risk of [abuse](#) and are often in [unsafe situations](#), such as transit accidents, and homicide among others ([See QMMU 4 2022](#)). On February 24, a [bus](#) from Dalí to Tegucigalpa suffered an accident due to excessive speed, fewer passengers were injured.

## Mixed movements towards North America

### Mexico

According to data from the Commission for Refugee Assistance (COMAR), refugee applications increased by 29% in the first quarter of 2023 (37,606 [applications](#)) compared with the same period in 2022 (29,109 applications).

[Thirty-six percent](#) of the applications submitted between January and March 2023 were from Haitians, followed by Hondurans ([23%](#)), Cubans ([7%](#)), and Venezuelans ([6%](#)). Tapachula, in the south of the country (21,638 people), and Mexico City (7,950 people) were the two states with the highest number of applicants in the country in this period.

Continued [drivers of migration](#), changes in migration policies across the region, and strengthened entry restrictions into the US are likely the cause of increased numbers of those [seeking international protection in Mexico](#) (see [QMMU 4 2022](#)).

## Updates on mixed migration through Mexico

There has been an increase in the duration of stay of refugees and migrants transiting through the country due to new entry mechanisms for the US and [barriers](#) accessing transit permits, with many living in [temporary makeshift housing](#) in [public spaces](#) in [Chiapas](#) and [Oaxaca](#), in the south of the country.

Actors in the field have also reported an increase in the number of people who are [homeless](#) or living in [improvised camps](#) in precarious conditions. People on the move through Mexico also have limited [financial resources and limited access to work opportunities](#) that could facilitate access to housing services. Local actors report [low reception capacity](#) to cope with the number of people arriving or expelled daily from the US.

Refugees and migrants in the north of the country confirm that the [time spent in shelters](#) is lengthened by the [impossibility](#) of obtaining an appointment with the US authorities through the application CBP One™ that would offer them an early entry authorisation or exemption from immediate expulsion under Title 42 (see the thematic section below).

In February 2023, the National Migration Institute (INM) [opened](#) a new centre for refugees and migrants [awaiting](#) the delivery of a transit permit (Multiple Migratory Form, FMM) in Tapachula, Chiapas.

This centre replaced the [provisional module](#) established in November 2022 in Tapachula, where more than 23,000 people were previously processed. Between [July and December 2022](#), the INM installed a [similar centre](#) in the municipality of San Pedro Tapanatepec, Oaxaca.

Despite these initiatives by local authorities, people on the move face [long waits to access the FMN](#) and threats of [arrest](#) or [deportation](#). This has led to increased departures of new migrant caravans from Tapachula to the north of the country.

## Migrant caravans

On February 28, approximately [1,000](#) people left Tapachula in a caravan heading towards Huixtla as an alternative to the impossibility of obtaining documents to transit through the country. After arriving in Huixtla this caravan [continued](#) towards Escuintla, Chiapas.

At the beginning of March, another caravan, with around [250 people](#), left Tapachula for Tuzantán, about 40km away. The people in the caravan claimed they [would not remain in the city](#) because there were no opportunities for them, and reported that [“returning to their country of origin is not an option either”](#).

The current progress of these caravans is unknown.

On April 1, another caravan with more than 700 left Tapachula heading to Huixtla. This caravan called [“Via Crucis Migrantes”](#) was stopped by INM officials three days after starting. According to an [official statement of INM in Tapachula](#), refugees, and migrants were conducted to the States of Oaxaca and Tabasco to receive institutional assistance.

## Abuses and safety risks

On March 7, the authorities of the state of Veracruz [found 343 people](#) inside an overcrowded, abandoned trailer; [103 unaccompanied minors](#) were travelling with the group.

According to the authorities, smugglers had [used bracelets to identify people](#), and it is believed they had been travelling in the trailer for several days. [The unaccompanied minors were placed in the custody of the state of Veracruz](#), whereas the adults travelling alone were deported to their countries of origin.

On March 28, at least [40 migrants from Central and South America](#) died after a [fire broke out at a migrant detention centre in Ciudad Juarez](#). According to new sources in Mexico, the fire started due to a protest over possible deportations.

Mexican authorities regularly use [detention on a massive scale](#) as a measure to [control](#) irregular migration. In 2022, more than [300,000](#) asylum seekers and migrants were detained. Activists for [migrants' rights](#) are concerned about [overgrown, poor conditions](#), lack of information, and access to legal assistance in detention centres.

[The UN Committee on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and their Families \(CMW\) and the UN Special Rapporteur on the Human Rights of Migrants](#) advocated a prompt and independent investigation. The CMW Committee has urged Mexico to [gather evidence regarding the incident, including causes of death, and provide the necessary support to families and victims](#).

The Mexican Prosecutor's Office issued [arrest warrants](#) for [three migration officials, two private security workers, and a migrant accused of starting the blaze](#) at the migration centre. On April 17, the head of INM in Chihuahua [has been formally accused](#) of homicide after the blaze occurred in the detention centre of Ciudad Juarez.

## Situation on the border with the United States

### Encounters

In March 2023, the U.S. Department of Customs and Border Control (USCBP) reported [191,899](#) "encounters" along the southern border of the US, almost [24% fewer](#) than in December 2022 (252,012 encounters). [Twenty-three percent](#) of March's "encounters" were with people who had been recorded as previous "encounters" in the prior 12 months (43,958). [65%](#) were unique "encounters" (123, 898).

Comparing profiles, more than two-thirds of these "encounters" were single adults (133,292 people), and [23%](#) were individuals, belonging to family units (45,964). "Encounters" with unaccompanied minors increased by [14%](#) with [12,374](#) "encounters" in March compared with [10,845](#) in February 2023.

According to authorities, [February 2023 had the lowest number of encounters](#) on the southern border since December 2022. This decrease follows the implementation of more restrictive measures for entry into the US, for Venezuelans, Haitians, Cubans, and Nicaraguans, established in October 2022 for Venezuelan and expanded for other nationalities in January 2023 (See [QMMU 4 2022](#)). "Encounters" of these four

nationalities at the southwest border declined by [34%](#) between January and March 2023.

CBP reported that this “[increase in encounters from February to March is typical, as winter temperatures rise with the approaching spring](#)”.

## Graph 2. Encounters at the southern border regarding nationalities

Nationalities*	Month**		Index
	January 2023	March 2023	
Venezuelan	9,098	8,298	▼ -9%
Nicaraguan	3,376	476	▼ -86%
Haitian***	3,174	4,420	▲ 39%
Cuban	6,434	1,315	▼ -80%

Note: Graph made by MMC, with official data of “encounters” at the southern border, CBP

\*Selected nationalities correspond to nationals under new parole programs

\*\*Figures for the fiscal year 2023

\*\*\*It may be explained by difficulties to meet the strict requirement to apply for the new parole programs

In March, [27,783](#) Venezuelans, Haitians, Cubans, and Nicaraguans entered the country under [parole programs](#). However, compliance with [strict requirements](#), such as having an economic sponsor with regular status in the US, is becoming a [challenge](#). There has been a reported increase in people seeking [sponsors on social media](#).

According to [Associated Press](#), in dozens of posts in [Facebook groups](#), people are seeking “[financial sponsors](#)” in the US, for themselves and their families. In exchange for “[support](#)”, people can offer monthly payments, work, and the exchange of properties, among others.

Local organisations that help Haitian migrants also receive more than [100 emails daily](#) from people requesting support to find a financial sponsor in the US.

Potential sponsors offer their “services” for a one-off payment that ranges [from \\$2,000 up to \\$8,000](#). In some social media posts, “sponsors” offer “[packages](#)” of services for sponsoring regular entry, under parole programs, to the US that include [airport pickup, stay, and even corresponding tax payments](#).

It is unclear how many people have entered the US with sponsors contacted via social networks or underpayment agreements; however, migration [experts](#) warn of increased [risk](#) of [fraud, scams](#), exploitation, and smuggling schemes as a result of the new phenomenon.

The Department of Homeland Security (DHS) has been alerted to such scams and stresses the process of entry into the US is free. In 2021, the organisation [Welcome.us](#) created an online service called “[Welcome Connect](#)” to help Afghan refugees safely connect with potential sponsors in the US via secure and non-fraudulent means.

[Welcome.us](#) platform was extended in July 2022 to Ukrainians and Venezuelans, Haitians, Cubans, and Nicaraguan people.

## Expulsions and deportations

As of March 2023, [87,661](#) people ([46%](#) of total “encounters”) were expelled under Title 42, and [104,238](#) ([54%](#)) have been processed under Title 8. As in previous months, the majority of those expelled under Title 42 were single adults ([58%](#)), and [22%](#) were in family units.

In February, the U.S. Supreme Court cancelled the [oral arguments hearing](#) on Title 42 that was scheduled for March 2023. This decision appears to have been [prompted](#) by announcements from the Biden administration about a possible [end](#) to Title 42 in May 2023.

Border restrictions under Title 42 continue, following the Court’s [order](#) on December 27, 2022.

## Changes in United States policy

### Updates on immigration policy and access to refuge

On February 23, the Biden administration announced a new rule that could increase the restrictions for asylum seekers from protection at the country’s southern border of the US before the [eventual termination](#) of Title 42 in May 2023. The [proposed rule](#) would encourage people to “take advantage” of legal, orderly, and safe pathways for regular entry into the country.

In addition, this rule considers incorporating a [presumption of ineligibility](#) of access to refuge in the US for those who do not take lawful pathways or who have not tried [to seek](#) refuge or other protection in the transit countries through which they travel. This measure received [public comment](#) for 30 days and is reviewing.

The Danish Refugee Council in Mexico made comment on this rule in a [public statement](#). According to DRC’s statement, “[it is clear that there is an insufficient availability of regular pathways for access to U.S. territory and an insufficient availability of asylum and other forms of protection in Mexico](#)”. Furthermore, “[cited limitations in the recently created parole programs and the CBP One application are sufficiently serious so as to prevent them from effectively and fairly offering regular pathways for initiating the U.S. asylum process.](#)”

### Other updates related to mixed migration

In March 2021, Texas launched a border control programme called “[Operation Lone Star](#)”. Under this programme, between April 2022 and February 2023, Texas moved more than [15,800](#) migrants to Washington D.C., New York, and Chicago. Another [890](#) were moved to Philadelphia at the end of November.

On March 24, Canada and the United States expanded their bilateral [safe third country agreement](#) (STCA) placed in 2004. This agreement [allows](#) authorities from both countries to [turn back asylum seekers](#) who

claim protection at [unofficial entry points](#). According to the Canadian authorities, nearly [40,000](#) people entered the province of Quebec in 2022, [more than double the number register in 2019](#).

The original STCA agreement applied to asylum seekers who crossed the border at a port of entry. The [recent expansion of the agreement will prevent people who enter irregularly from seeking asylum](#). According to secondary sources, up to [250 people](#) travel daily to Champlain or Plattsburgh, a town in the north of the state of New York, and then move to [Roxham Roam](#), a border crossing south of Montreal.

In the previous week of STCA expansion, authorities in Quebec, Canada have asked New York [to immediately stop any form of assistance for refugees and migrants crossing the border](#). New York Mayor Eric Adams commented that his [administration helped](#) people wanting to go to another city or country: "[some want to go to Canada \(...\) and we are there for them as they continue to move on with their pursuit of this dream](#)".

New York City faces a [funding crisis](#) for the care of refugees and migrants, whose number exceeds [40,000](#) people since April 2022. Activists for human rights [fear](#) that this new agreement will lead to risky border crossings from the U.S. to Canada.

## Mixed-migration movements outside the region and by sea

Despite the risks of shipwrecks and death, an increasing number of people are migrating via sea routes.

The Bahamas plans to increase the number of [returns](#) of Haitian people who have entered the island irregularly by boat. In 2022, authorities reported repatriating more than [4,700](#) people. So far this year, more than [1,200](#) people have been repatriated from the Bahamas, with more than [600](#) being Haitian, followed by Cubans.

On the island of Abaco, Bahamas, [245](#) migrants have been detained in the framework of the operation "[Restore](#)", which started in February 2023. According to the authorities, [arrests occur](#) for not presenting immigration documentation or working outside the scope of a work permit.

In the fiscal year 2023, the United States Coast Guard (USGC) intercepted [3,367 Haitians](#) and [6,250](#) Cubans near Florida and other Caribbean islands belonging to the US territory. According to the [U.S Naval Institute](#), interceptions at sea are reaching a [critical point](#), especially in the southeast of the US and the Caribbean Sea.

Official statistics reveal that irregular migration in the Turks and Caicos Islands has increased by [52% so far this year](#). According to authorities, since the start of the fiscal year 2023, 2,352 people attempting to enter the island were intercepted at sea.

In December, around [690](#) people, mostly Haitian, were repatriated. On February 14, 202, another [15 Haitians](#) were returned to Trinidad and Tobago from Grenada despite there being a free-movement regime for six months under the agreements of [The Caribbean Community \(CARICOM\)](#).



# Thematic focus:

## CBP One™: From a basic migratory service portal to a whole system that can decide the future of asylum seekers

The US has emphasised the importance of [technology and innovation](#) in managing migration, across its land borders, along which an increasingly large number of refugees and migrants are processed every year under Titles 42 and 8.

Recently, Customs and Border Protection (CBP) announced the implementation of “[CBP One™](#)”, a mobile application intended to “[Secure, Orderly and Humane Border Processing](#)” at all border points. The growth of migration, in parallel with the adoption of more restrictive migratory provisions, such as the [maintenance of Title 42](#) and the implementation of [new legal pathways](#) for specific nationalities, have recently transformed the functionalities of [CBP One™](#).

In 2020, the app was used as a [basic services portal](#) by travellers, cargo transportation drivers, and certain international organizations to verify [Migrant Protection Protocols](#) (MPP) enrolment, before arriving at ports of entry. From January 12, 2023, the authorities made CBP One™ the [primary mechanism](#) to manage [asylum-seekers and migrants](#) requesting Title 42 exceptions or requiring advance travel authorisations under new legal avenues of regular entry.

The US migration authorities state these [digital tools](#) could benefit [migration governance for the US and other states](#). However, for people in mixed migration, reliance on mobile applications may cause [limitations and/or barriers](#) to accessing [fundamental rights](#), including [asylum protection](#), and increase discrimination and exclusion.

### What is CBP One™?

The CBP One™ app was first implemented in October 2020 as a [Customs and Border Protection Services Portal](#). The development of this mobile app was defined by the authorities as an effort to [improve the security of borders, travel, and commercial transit](#) through the US.

Ground and air travellers, intermediaries, or carriers and staff of international organisations could access this app to request an appointment with a migration agent [before heading to a port of entry](#). Among the [data requested](#) by the authorities are biographical and biometric information, telephone contacts, geolocation, and a photo of the user.

## How has CBP One™ been implemented?

The CBP One™ app was introduced as [an innovative, fast, and optimal solution](#) to facilitate orderly and safe arrival in the US. Initially, the [services offered](#) by CBP One™ were basic and asked a [series of questions](#) that guided the user according to their needs.

The [original uses](#) of the app offered basic services, such as access to [Form 1-94](#), to gain entry or exit from the US, schedule inspection appointments for cargo transport and facilitate entry processes for people under [Migrant Protection Protocols \(MPP\) and other specific cases](#).

In 2023, the DHS announced the expansion of CBP One™ services to “[streamline the port-of-entry experience, reduce wait times, and enable a safe and orderly process for all travellers](#)” following recent changes in regular access mechanisms to the territory.

As of [January 12, 2023](#), citizens of any nationality in central or northern Mexico who intended to travel to the US and [who do not have the requested documents or do not meet the eligibility requirements](#) for the new [parole programs](#) can use CBP One™ to present their case to the immigration authorities.

People on the move can request appointments up to [14 days in advance](#) with border agents at any of the [eight authorised entry points](#) by accessing CBP ONE™. The app was originally available in Spanish and English. Since February, the application can be accessed in [Haitian Creole](#).

## Who can use CBP One™?

Through CBP One™, [Venezuelan, Haitian, Cuban, and Nicaraguans](#) whose financial sponsors have been approved can request an appointment to enter the US.

Those citizens who [do not apply for parole programs](#) and who are seeking an [exception to Title 42](#) can also use the app to send information and request appointments with border agents at ports of entry. However, access to this measure is limited to those people [considered the most vulnerable](#).

To be eligible, individuals must meet at least one of the “[humanitarian interest](#)” [criteria in the application](#), including physical or mental illness, pregnancy, disability, being over 70 years old, or having been a victim of violence in Mexico, among others criteria. [Experts and activists](#) in human rights claim that these criteria exclude [LGBTQI+](#) people and people who, despite [not meeting these criteria](#), may be eligible for asylum.

## Limitations of CBP One™

In the field various [difficulties](#) accessing advanced authorisations and exceptions to Title 42 have been evident.

## Difficulties accessing the app for people on the move

First, the app can only be used on [smartphones](#) and with a [stable and fast internet connection](#). These requirements are a potential [barrier for many people on the move](#) since a significant proportion lose their phones during the trip (due to theft, extortion, etc.) or exchange or sell them to finance the journey.

Additionally, local organizations and actors in the field have identified that [old mobile models](#) or ones with little memory capacity do not support the app, presenting another barrier to accessing appointments for a significant number of people on the move.

## Appointment availability is limited, linked to geolocation, and system errors are common

Authorities have reported that only a few [appointments are open daily in the early morning hours](#). Until February, actors in the field were indicating that people on the move must access the app at [2 a.m.](#) for a chance to request an appointment.

However, constant failures and [system errors](#) can prevent applicants from finishing their process successfully. This issue reduces the chances of a successful application for those requiring protection and leaves them in a [lottery of attempt after attempt](#).

Furthermore, CBP One™ [geolocation](#) only allows access to appointments in border areas or Mexico City and blocks attempts to apply for appointments outside authorized locations. This situation has [increased the number of people stuck in shelters in those regions](#).

## Biases in appointment access

To complete the appointment process, people must upload a photo taken from the app as part of facial recognition. However, several complaints have been reported about this requirement because the app generates [errors](#) when capturing the image of asylum-seekers and migrants with [darker](#) or [not light skin](#).

The Mexican organisation “[Al Otro Lado](#)” has mentioned that people with dark skin have a higher error rate when completing their application and uploading their photos. Similarly, the organisation claims “[people must be in a bright light for facial recognition to work](#)”.

Faced with these barriers, asylum-seekers, and migrants, mostly Haitian, have resorted to [using construction lights](#), lamps, and flashes of their [faces](#) to avoid errors generated by the app.

Experts have stated that facial recognition algorithms more generally can increase [inequalities and exclusion](#) for [minorities](#) and vulnerable groups.

In addition, there is [concern](#) about how the use of CBP One™ may create [future risks](#) for people. U.S. authorities have claimed that the app [does not store](#) any type of [information on local servers](#) but in “[official](#)

and secure“ CBP systems. Human rights defenders have expressed concern about the possible use of these data to [monitor](#) applicants in the future.

## Difficult decisions for family groups

In [Tijuana](#) and other cities in the north of the country, great difficulties have been reported from families requesting group appointments. Some reports indicate the app [only allows two people per application](#). US border authorities have identified an increase in the number of [children travelling alone](#) and attending CBP One™ appointments by themselves as a result.

Families face difficult decisions during their CBP One™ appointment process: [wait indefinitely until](#) CBP One™ [updates appointments for extended family groups or split up](#). According to [secondary sources](#), the app has presented errors to complete appointments for more than 2 children in each family unit.

Actors in the field claim the app [“causes children to cross sooner or later as unaccompanied minors”](#), as others leave them with relatives [“mistakenly believing that they could cross with the children”](#). Officials from the DHS have reported that they are continuing to [improve](#) the app to facilitate access to family group appointments.

## Final comments

The use of technology to facilitate border control can be an innovative strategy, but the rights of asylum seekers and migrants must be adequately guaranteed. In 2022, the US government [strengthened](#) its migration policies in response to the [increase in mixed migration movements](#) through the Americas, particularly those heading to the US.

This has involved the use of different [legal paths](#) and controversial policies, such as [Title 42](#), as well as, the adoption of new technological tools, like CBP One™, to process asylum requests.

CBP One™ was started as a [simple application](#) used to manage the basic process of entering or exiting the US at a port of entry, but since January 2023 it has become the main system for managing asylum-seekers and migrants requesting Title 42 exceptions. This shift has left asylum seekers' [legitimate right](#) to apply for protection in the hands of a technological tool, which determines whether they will be granted an appointment to request asylum or not.

Human rights organizations in Mexico and the United States have said that people on the move have had trouble using the application, such as having trouble getting appointments and even being unable to use the application at all for some specific profiles (Haitians, families, among others).

In this regard, US governments must ensure that their migration policies are aligned with international human rights standards and that technological tools are used transparently in conjunction with a just asylum system.

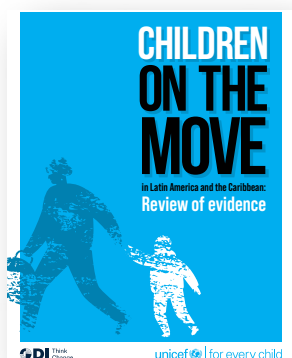
# Highlighted New Research and Reports



## [Public opinion on migration in Latin America and the Caribbean](#)

**Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) | January 2023**

The document explores the trend of public opinion regarding migration in the past five years in the Latin American and Caribbean region and was developed based on claims about the growing need to generate information and evidence on this issue in the region. The document presents a combination of traditional data sources (regional and national public opinion surveys) and non-traditional data sources (social media analysis, and media analysis). In addition, the document presents interventions and programmes that are effective at changing the way migration is thought about in the region.



## [Children on the move in Latin America and the Caribbean: Review of evidence](#)

**United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF) and The Overseas Development Institute (ODI) | January 2023**

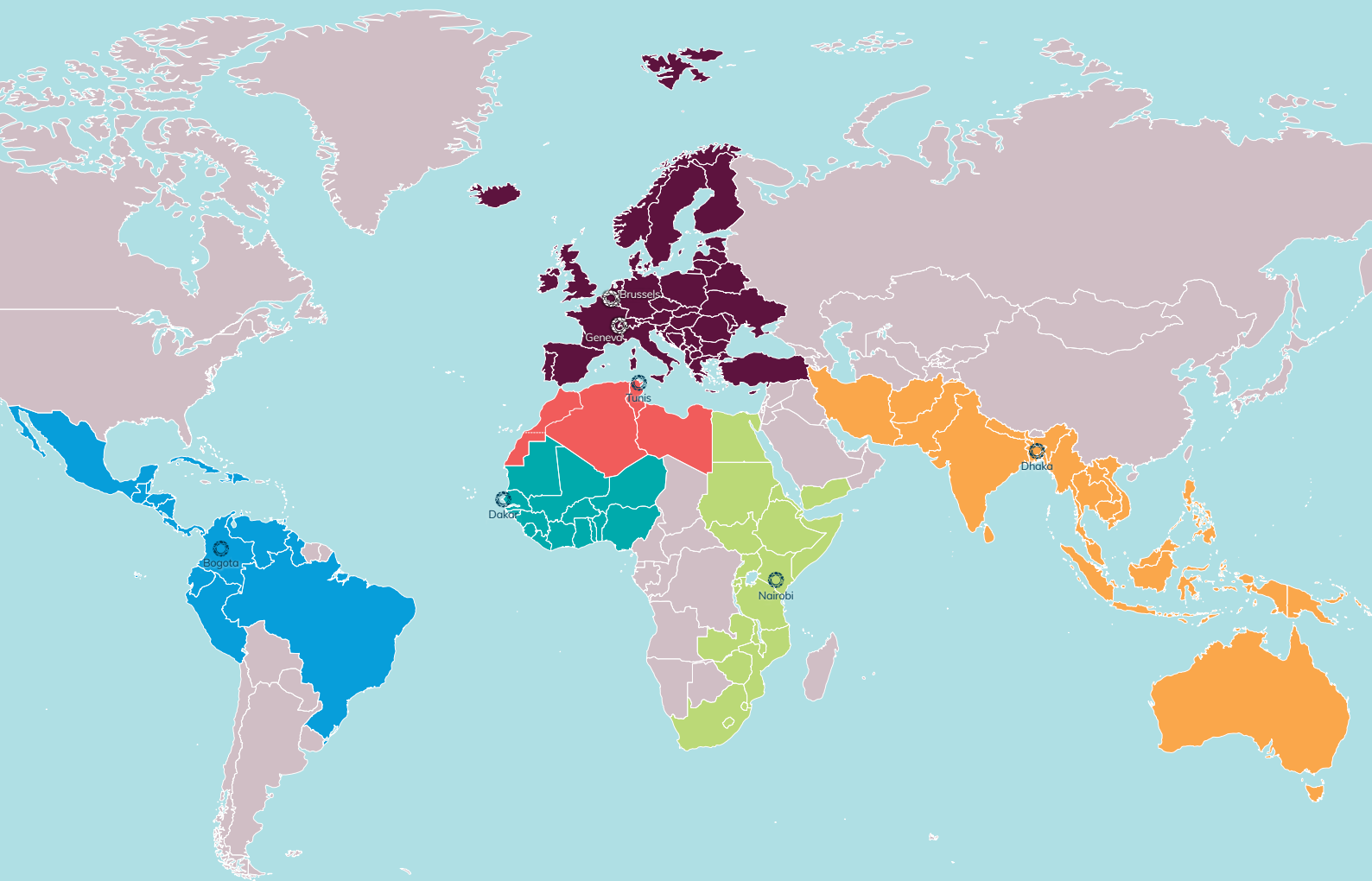
This review of evidence about children and adolescents on the move in LAC examines their needs in communities of origin, in transit, at their destination, and upon return. The document also synthesizes recent evidence concerning the experiences and needs of children affected by human mobility in the region, and how far programmes and policies are meeting those needs.



## [A Look at the Protection Crisis in Latin America 2021–2022](#)

**Danish Refugee Council (DRC) | March 2023**

This document includes analysis and various evidence of the risks, threats, vulnerabilities, and capacities of populations on the move and host communities in the region to help design protection strategies and responses. The DRC, through its regional protection programme, seeks to support the humanitarian community and duty-bearers in taking evidence-based protection measures.



MMC is a global network engaged in data collection, research, analysis, and policy and programmatic development on mixed migration, with regional hubs hosted in Danish Refugee Council regional offices in Africa, Asia and the Pacific, Europe, and Latin America, and a global team based across Copenhagen, Geneva, and Brussels.

MMC is a leading source for independent and high-quality data, research, analysis, and expertise. MMC aims to increase understanding of mixed migration, to positively impact global and regional migration policies, to inform evidence-based protection responses for people on the move, and to stimulate forward thinking in public and policy debates on mixed migration. MMC's overarching focus is on human rights and protection for all people on the move.

MMC is part of the Danish Refugee Council (DRC).

For more information visit:  
[mixedmigration.org](https://mixedmigration.org) and follow us at [@Mixed\\_Migration](https://twitter.com/Mixed_Migration)

