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International Organization for Migration (IOM)  
The IOM Migration Agency

REGIONAL REPORT

# IRREGULAR MIGRATION FLOWS TO/WITHIN THE AMERICAS

FROM AFRICA, ASIA, AND THE CARIBBEAN



Luis Almagro  
Secretary General of  
the Organization of American States (OAS)

Nestor Méndez  
Assistant Secretary General of the OAS

Ideli Salvatti  
Secretary of Access to Rights and Equality

Betilde Muñoz-Pogossian  
Director of the Department of Social Inclusion

William Lacy Swing  
Director General of the  
International Organization for Migration (IOM)

Laura Thompson  
Deputy Director General

Marcelo Pisani  
Regional Director for Central American, North American, and the  
Caribbean

Luca Dall'Oglio  
Chief of Mission of the IOM in Washington, D.C.

#### Contributors to the project:

##### OAS

Betilde Muñoz-Pogossian,  
Department of Social Inclusion

Marcia Bebianno Simões,  
Department of Social Inclusion

Juan Manuel Jiménez,  
Department of Social Inclusion

Katiuska Lourenço da Silva,  
Department of Social Inclusion

Araceli Azuara,  
OAS Representative in the Dominican Republic

Fernando García-Robles,  
Department of Public Security,  
Secretariat for Multidimensional Security

##### IOM

Marcelo Pisani, Regional Office for Central American,  
North American, and the Caribbean

Salvador Gutiérrez,  
Regional Office for Central American,  
North American, and the Caribbean

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# 1 Background

On May 4, 2016, the Costa Rican Minister of Foreign Affairs, Manuel A. González Sanz, was received by the Permanent Council of the Organization of American States during a special meeting to address to situation of irregular migration flows in the region. As part of his remarks, the minister noted the recent phenomenon of irregular migration flows that have seen a significant uptick throughout the region. The minister explained the situation in Costa Rica, which has been a point of entry and transit for thousands of migrants of Cuban origin and from outside the hemisphere, primarily from Africa and Asia. During this same speech before the Permanent Council, the Costa Rican state requested that the OAS Secretary General prepare an “urgent study on the migration situation in the region,” to address the recent increase in the irregular flow of migrants from Africa, Asia, and the Caribbean. The OAS Permanent Council received the request during the meeting. OAS Secretary General Luis Almagro, in response to the request, commissioned the study to the Secretariat of Access to Rights and Equality, through its Department of Social Inclusion, the area charged with supporting OAS efforts on migration matters. The OAS Secretariat of Multidimensional Security’s Department of Public Security and the OAS representation in the Dominican Republic also contributed to the report.

1. Foreign Minister of Costa Rica Manuel A. González Sanz’s remarks to the OAS Permanent Council, in its special meeting to address migrant flows in the region, May 4, 2016. Available in Spanish at: <http://www.emba-jadacostarica.org.sv/index.php/novedades/comunicados/890-intervencion-del-canciller-manuel-gonzalez-sanz-ante-el-consejo-permanente-de-la-oea>.

Given the International Organization for Migration’s (IOM) work as the main international organization on migration, the OAS Secretary General and the Deputy Director General of the IOM agreed to partner in preparing this study. This report presents the joint work of these two organizations. The study also includes contributions from the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), through its Regional Delegation for Mexico, Central America, and Cuba.



## 2 Introduction

Against a backdrop of increased regional migration, there has been a surge particularly in flows from Africa and Asia to Latin America, largely stemming from political, social, and religious conflicts and economic hardship in the countries of origin, as well as more restrictive migration policies in Europe and the liberalization of visa systems in some Latin American countries.

This phenomenon has caught the interest of Latin American governments since the beginning of the decade. In April 2010, the Organization of American States (OAS) held a Special Forum on Extracontinental Migration in the Americas. Representatives from the national migration departments of Argentina, Colombia, Costa Rica, Ecuador, Guatemala, Mexico, and Panama, in addition to representatives of the International Organization for Migration (IOM) and the UN High Commission on Refugees (UNHCR), noted that the phenomenon of extracontinental migration to Latin America was “new and growing,” comprised of mixed migration flows with diverse types of migrants: economic migrants, refugee applicants, refugees, and victims of migrant smuggling.

Six years after this Special Forum, irregular mixed migration flows from Africa and Asia have, indeed, been growing. They have also become considerably more diversified and have fluctuated, on occasion exacerbated by specific circumstances, such as the visa waiver for Chinese nationals in Colombia in 2007 and the general visa waiver for all countries in Ecuador in 2008.

This is a complex phenomenon in terms of how policies and migration management address the situation. On the one hand, the migration is highly ethnically diverse, and as such its linguistic, religious, and cultural make-up varies widely. On the other hand, the irregular status under which the migrants comprising this flow across the Hemisphere must operate and travel makes them particularly vulnerable to smuggling and trafficking and to other risks intrinsic to irregular movement.

Irregular migration flows from the Caribbean, specifically Cuba and Haiti, have grown substantially over this same period, but for different reasons. Much of the Cuban movement may be due chiefly to the rapprochement between Cuba and the United States and expectations regarding an imminent end to the preferential immigration treatment Cubans have received in the US. Much of the Haitian migration to South America, particularly to Brazil, may be attributed to the consequences of the 2010 earthquake in Haiti and subsequent natural disasters. The Haitian migration that followed to Mesoamerica and the United States may largely be a result of the Brazilian economic crisis.

This complex situation necessitates implementing comprehensive, flexible responses that reflect the ever-changing realities and the specific responsibilities of each country involved, including enacting legal changes that enable a more appropriate and humane management of this type of flow.

This study aims to document these migration flows to foster an informed regional dialogue, while also contributing to the development of a comprehensive action strategy that encompasses the multiple challenges posed by irregular migration flows from both within and outside the Americas. This strategy must be founded on the shared regional responsibility for migration governance.



## 3 Settlement in the Americas by immigrants from Asia, Africa, Cuba, and Haiti

This section analyzes censuses from the countries of the Americas that are countries of transit or destination for immigrants from Asia, Africa, Cuba, or Haiti (this may include both authorized and unauthorized migration). It also studies the migration flows based on temporary and permanent permits issued each year (authorized migration). This section aims to determine the magnitude and general characteristics of the settlement of immigrants from these regions and countries.

### 3.1 Census data: immigrant (stock) population in the Americas, circa 2013

The stock migrant population in the Americas has grown from approximately 34 million in 1990 to 61 million in 2013 – an almost 78% increase, compared to the 42% observed in the rest of the world (Table 1). Nearly all of this increase was in Canada and the United States, where the immigrant population has practically doubled since 1990, reaching 53 million in 2013.

In contrast, the immigrant population in Latin America and the Caribbean has increased a mere 19% since 1990, for a population of 7.7 million in 2013. However, if the measurement period is restricted to 2000-2013, the increase in the immigrant population in Latin America and the Caribbean is slightly higher than Canada and the United States (35% LAC vs. 31% Canada and the US).

Despite the number of immigrants settling in Latin America and the Caribbean between 1990 and 2013, immigration is still limited there, accounting for only 1.4% of the total population in 2013. In Canada and the US, this figure stands at 14.9%.

**Table 1.** International migrant stock by country and region of residence, 1990-2013

Country or region of residence	International migrant stock as a percentage of the total population (both sexes)		Index of change in the migrant stock (1990=100)			Number of immigrants
	1990	2013	2000	2010	2013	2013
Canada and the United States	9.8	14.9	145	184	191	53,069,159
Caribbean	1.6	2	125	150	154	748,834
Central America	1.6	1.1	60	94	104	1,915,673
Andean Region	1.4	1.4	104	138	145	1,919,527
Southern Cone	1.4	1.2	94	107	111	3,142,911
Latin America and the Caribbean	1.6	1.4	88	112	119	7,726,945
Total Americas	4.7	6.2	135	171	178	60,796,104
Rest of the World	2.6	2.8	107	135	142	170,726,111
Grand Total	2.9	3.2	113	143	150	231,522,215

Source: Third Report of the Continuous Reporting System on International Migration in the Americas (SICREMI) - SICREMI 2015 OAS/OECD.

The United States receives the largest number of migrants from both the Americas and the rest of the world. Between 1990 and 2013, the immigrant population in the United States doubled. By 2013, five out of every six immigrants from the Americas and one out of every five from the rest of the world lived in the United States.

Although the United States has remained a magnet for potential immigrants from the Americas and the rest of the world in recent decades, many other countries in the Hemisphere have seen a significant increase in immigration, regardless of their level of development. The immigrant populations in Central America and the Andean region, in particular, have swelled markedly since 2000.

A series of legal, economic, social, and cultural factors influenced the growing number of immigrants in Latin America and the Caribbean between 2000 and 2013. First, the economies of these regions experienced higher economic growth, thus creating, in general, more job opportunities. Second, the various integration systems linking certain countries in the Americas, most notably Mercosur, have increased their number of member countries and introduced provisions to facilitate the entry, stay, and access to employment of the citizens of these countries. Third, this heightened mobility in Latin America and the Caribbean over the last decade could also stem from loosened restrictions on entry, in general, in conjunction with other factors, like lower transportation costs, better access to information on work opportunities in other places, and the influence of diasporas that encourage

migration. However, the increases recorded remain very low in many countries, such that the immigration stock remains proportionally small.

As regards the origin of the immigrants entering each country in the Americas, most of the movement has generally occurred within the same region or between neighboring regions. The exceptions are Canada, Brazil, Cuba, and the United States, where the majority of the immigrants come from outside the Hemisphere.

On average, 64% of the immigrants in the Caribbean are from that region, 63% in the Andean region, and 44% in the Southern Cone. The average is lower for Central America (32%), owing to the high percentage of immigrants in Mexico from the United States<sup>2</sup>.

**Table 2.** Distribution of immigrants in the Americas by region or continent of origin, 2013

Country/region of residence	Origin									
	Canada and the United States	Caribbean	Central America	Andean Region	Southern Cone	Europa	Asia	Africa	Oceania	Total
Canada and the United States	2.3	12.4	31.1	3.9	1.5	14.9	29.6	3.9	0.4	100
Caribbean	7.8	64.2	1.7	6.1	3.1	13.2	3.3	0.5	0.1	100
Central America	48.1	2.2	32.3	7	2.3	4.8	3.1	0.1	0.1	100
Andean Region	4.9	2.5	2.4	63.2	9.4	13.6	3.6	0.3	0.1	100
Southern Cone	1.6	0.4	0.5	27.1	43.6	20.7	4.9	1.1	0.1	100
Latin America and the Caribbean	14.6	7.3	9	29.2	20.9	14.2	4.0	0.6	0.1	100
Total Americas	3.8	11.7	28.3	7.1	4	14.8	26.4	3.4	0.5	100
Rest of the World	1.2	0.8	0.2	1.3	1.3	30.1	46.5	17.7	0.9	100

Source: Third Report of the Continuous Reporting System on International Migration in the Americas (SICREMI) - SICREMI 2015 OAS/OECD.

<sup>2</sup> However, many of these immigrants are not foreigners, but rather the children born in the United States to Mexican parents who later return to their country of origin.

<sup>3</sup> Third Report International Migration in the Americas -SICREMI 2015 OEA/OECD, p.35.

In 2013, the immigrant population of Asian origin in Latin America accounted for 4% of the total number of immigrants of all origins, with immigrants of African origin accounting for a mere 0.6%. These figures clearly demonstrate the very low levels of settlement in the region. Brazil posted the highest percentage of immigrants of Asian (16.9%) and African (3.1%) origin, followed by Panama, with 15.2%<sup>3</sup> of immigrants being of Asian origin. The United States is the destination country for the vast majority of Cubans (81.4%) and Haitians (56.7%).

**Table 3.** Cuba and Haiti: Country emigrant stock by five principal countries of destination, 2013

Country total population estimate 2013 (thousands)	Country emigrant stock by five principal countries of destination (as percentage of total emigrants)						Total distribution	Emigrant stock level estimate 2013
	United States	Spain	Italia	Puerto Rico	Mexico	Other		
Cuba	United States	Spain	Italia	Puerto Rico	Mexico	Other		
11,266	81.4	7.8	2.2	1.2	0.9	6.6	100.0	1,476,344
Haiti	United States	Dominican Republic	Canada	France	Bahamas	Other		
10,317	56.7	22.1	6.3	6.2	3.5	5.2	100.0	1,175,098

Source: SICREMI 2015 OAS/OECD based on United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs (2013). Trends in International Migrant Stock: The 2013 revision.


### 3.2 Data from migration flows: temporary and permanent permits issued each year 2011-2014

Migration flows in the Americas, both permanent and temporary, increased by an average 5% per year over the 2011-2013 period, but by 17% per year for Latin American and Caribbean countries (OAS/OECD 2015).


The growing immigration in Latin America and the Caribbean was owed primarily to intraregional migration. However, immigration from outside the Americas also rose 12% over the 2010-2013 period.

The tables below present the trends in temporary and permanent permits in the countries studied, by country of origin included in the study (Cuba, Haiti, and Asian and African countries) for the 2011-2014 period.


Tables 4 to 10. Permanent and temporary permits by country of origin, selected countries, 2011-2014

United States 	2011	%	2012	%	2013	%	2014	%	TOTAL 2011-2014	%
Cuba (Permanent and temporary)	37,573	1.5	33,894	1.3	33,154	1.3	47,583	1.7	152,204	1.4
Haiti (Permanent and temporary)	23,695	0.9	24,427	1.0	21,722	0.8	16,652	0.6	86,496	0.8
Asia (Permanent and temporary)	1,692,191	67.3	1,678,966	66.0	1,710,418	65.3	1,438,154	50.2	6,519,729	61.8
Africa (Permanent and temporary)	241,952	9.6	259,062	10.2	242,314	9.2	147,284	5.1	890,612	8.4
Rest of the world	519,555	20.7	545,987	21.5	613,525	23.4	1,216,312	42.4	2,895,379	27.5
Grand total	2,514,966	100.0	2,542,336	100.0	2,621,133	100.0	2,865,985	100.0	10,544,420	100.0


Source: SICREMI OAS/OECD database.

Costa Rica 	2011	%	2012	%	2013	%	2014	%	TOTAL 2011-2014	%
Cuba (Permanent and temporary)	142	0.9	139	0.8	89	0.4	112	0.3	482	0.5
Haiti (Permanent and temporary)	28	0.2	19	0.1	24	0.1	20	0.1	91	0.1
Asia (Permanent and temporary)	393	2.4	396	2.3	465	2.0	762	2.3	2,016	2.3
Africa (Permanent and temporary)	84	0.5	58	0.3	60	0.3	67	0.2	269	0.3
Rest of the world	15,690	96.0	16,384	96.4	22,749	97.3	31,715	97.1	86,538	96.8
Grand total	16,337	100.0	16,996	100.0	23,387	100.0	32,676	100.0	89,396	100.0


Source: SICREMI OAS/OECD database.

Mexico 	2011	%	2012	%	2013	%	2014	%	TOTAL 2011-2014	%
Cuba (Permanent and temporary)	3,773	4.7	4,173	5.7	5,532	3.6	6,708	5.2	20,186	4.6
Haiti (Permanent and temporary)	285	0.4	162	0.2	293	0.2	328	0.3	1,068	0.2
Asia (Permanent and temporary)	7,790	9.6	7,309	9.9	14,311	9.2	13,889	10.7	43,299	9.9
Africa (Permanent and temporary)	486	0.6	442	0.6	736	0.5	766	0.6	2,430	0.6
Rest of the world	68,474	84.7	61,709	83.6	134,037	86.5	108,309	83.3	372,529	84.8
Grand total	80,808	100.0	73,795	100.0	154,909	100.0	130,000	100.0	439,512	100.0

Source: SICREMI OAS/OECD database.

Panama 	2011	%	2012	%	2013	%	2014	%	TOTAL 2011-2014	%
Cuba (Permanent and temporary)	88	1.4	128	1.4	138	2.7	68	0.9	422	1.5
Haiti (Permanent and temporary)	19	0.3	24	0.3	34	0.7	11	0.1	88	0.3
Asia (Permanent and temporary)	403	6.4	608	6.8	611	12.1	404	5.4	2,026	7.3
Africa (Permanent and temporary)	8	0.1	17	0.2	12	0.2	4	0.1	41	0.1
Rest of the world	5,821	91.8	8,149	91.3	4,268	84.3	7,036	93.5	25,274	90.7
Grand total	6,339	100.0	8,926	100.0	5,063	100.0	7,523	100.0	27,851	100.0


Source: SICREMI OAS/OECD database.

Brazil 	2011	%	2012	%	2013	%	2014	%	TOTAL 2011-2014	%
Cuba (Permanent and temporary)	420	0.4	355	0.3	5,828	4.6	7,218	6.6	13,821	2.9
Haiti (Permanent and temporary)	2,705	2.3	3,353	2.8	1,873	1.5	2,113	1.9	10,044	2.1
Asia (Permanent and temporary)	26,540	22.7	25,115	20.6	23,616	18.5	20,396	18.6	95,667	20.1
Africa (Permanent and temporary)	3,002	2.6	3,554	2.9	3,879	3.0	4,454	4.1	14,889	3.1
Rest of the world	84,045	72.0	89,479	73.4	92,648	72.5	75,486	68.8	341,658	71.8
Grand total	116,712	100.0	121,856	100.0	127,844	100.0	109,667	100.0	476,079	100.0

Source: SICREMI OAS/OECD database.

Ecuador 	2011	%	2012	%	2013	%	2014	%	TOTAL 2011-2014	%
Cuba (Permanent and temporary)	321	2.9	1,220	6.1	2,356	7.8	14,608	16.3	18,505	12.3
Haiti (Permanent and temporary)	48	0.4	112	0.6	170	0.6	446	0.5	776	0.5
Asia (Permanent and temporary)	1,462	13.1	2,821	14.0	4,961	16.5	13,119	14.7	22,363	14.8
Africa (Permanent and temporary)	69	0.6	122	0.6	180	0.6	349	0.4	720	0.5
Rest of the world	9,254	83.0	15,869	78.8	17,704	74.5	60,934	68.1	103,761	68.8
Grand total	11,154	100.0	20,144	100.0	30,083	100.0	89,456	100.0	150,837	100.0

Source: SICREMI OAS/OECD database.

Colombia 	2011	%	2012	%	2013	%	2014	%	TOTAL 2011-2014	%
Cuba (Permanent and temporary)	351	1.7	343	1.4	695	2.3	2,075	2.9	3,464	2.4
Haiti (Permanent and temporary)	40	0.2	49	0.2	150	0.5	382	0.5	621	0.4
Asia (Permanent and temporary)	1,016	4.9	1,163	4.9	3,116	10.5	13,406	19.0	18,701	12.9
África (Permanent and temporary)	129	0.6	182	0.8	477	1.6	2,444	3.5	3,232	2.2
Rest of the world	19,330	92.6	21,942	92.7	25,254	85.1	52,097	74.0	118,623	82.0
Grand total	20,866	100.0	23,679	100.0	29,692	100.0	70,404	100.0	144,641	100.0

Source: SICREMI OAS/OECD database.

Using the total number of temporary and permanent permits issued as the benchmark, all of the countries studied showed a significant upward trend in migration flows, either for all of the 2011-2014 period or much of it. For Cubans, the United States, followed by Mexico and Ecuador, were the countries issuing the most temporary and permanent permits. Of note is the steep rise in permits issued by Brazil in 2013 and Ecuador in 2014.

For Haitians and Africans, the United States and Brazil were the countries issuing the lion's share of permits. For Asians, the United States and Brazil were also first, followed by Mexico, Ecuador, and Colombia.

In absolute terms (number of permits), the United States is the main destination country, with the largest numbers of permits issued to Cubans, Haitians, Asians, and Africans. The number of US permits issued is between 3 and 41 times the total number of the rest of the Latin American countries studied.

There are glaring differences in the distribution of permits issued by the United States and select Latin American countries, broken down by country or region of origin (Table 11). The characteristic, growing intraregional immigration among the countries of Latin America and the Caribbean can be seen in the “other origin” category, which accounts for 78.9% of their immigration; this figure for the United States is 27.4%, with the majority of its immigrants coming from outside the Americas.

This result, measured by migrant flows, matches the result obtained from the censuses, which indicate that 66.4% of immigrants in 2013 in Latin America and the Caribbean are from countries in the same region

**Table 11.** Permanent and temporary permits in the United States and selected countries in Latin America, 2011-2014

	UNITED STATES		LATIN AMERICA	
	Number of permits	% of total	Number of permits	% of total
Cuba (Permanent and temporary)	152,204	1.4	56,880	4.3
Haiti (Permanent and temporary)	86,496	0.8	12,688	1.0
Asia (Permanent and temporary)	6,519,729	61.8	184,072	13.9
Africa Permanent and temporary	890,612	8.4	21,581	1.6
Rest of the world	2,895,379	27.5	1,048,383	78.9
Grand total	10,544,420	100.0	1,328,316	100.0

Source: SICREMI OAS/OECD database.

Note: Selected countries are Brazil, Colombia, Costa Rica, Ecuador, Mexico and Panama. It does not include humanitarian visas given by Brazil.

The number of permits issued by the United States and Latin American countries to migrants of Asian origin is far higher than the number issued to those of African origin. As a result, there has been more Asian than African settlement in the Americas.

In the case of Haiti, the United States and Latin American countries issue practically the same percentage of permits, 0.8% and 1%, respectively.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>4</sup> Humanitarian visas issued to Haitians in Brazil were not included, given that this is a special category separate from the permanent and temporary residence categories usually used.

Lastly, in the case of Cuba, although Latin American countries issue a larger proportion of visas to Cubans (4.3%) as compared to the United States (1.4%), in absolute terms, the number of permits issued by the United States is three times higher.



### 3.3 Conclusions on the settlement of immigrants from Asia, Africa, Cuba, and Haiti

- a) In the Americas, the United States receives markedly more immigrants from Asia, Africa, Cuba, and Haiti, both based on the number of immigrants measured by censuses or on the annual migrant flow measured in terms of temporary and permanent permits issued by each destination country.
- b) According to population censuses, 29.6% of immigrants in the United States are of Asian origin and 3.9% of African origin. In Latin America and the Caribbean, Asians accounts for 4% and Africans 0.6% of the total immigrant population.
- c) 81.4% of all Cuban emigrants and 56.7% of Haitian emigrants reside in the United States.
- d) The majority of migration in Latin America and the Caribbean (except Brazil) is intraregional: 66.4% of all immigrants are from the region.
- e) As regards migration flows (measured as authorized migration based on the annual number of temporary and permanent permits issued) in the countries under study, there was a general year-on-year upward growth trend for the 2011-2014 period. The United States, compared to the Latin American countries that responded to the survey conducted for the purposes of this study issued more permits than these countries, in the following ratios: Cubans (3:1), Haitians (7:1), Asians (35:1) and Africans (41:1).
- f) Among the group of Latin American countries studied, Brazil issued the largest number of temporary and permanent permits to Haitians, but at very low relative levels (between 1.5% and 2.8% of the total temporary and permanent permits issued each year).
- g) Although there was a dramatic rise in permits issued to Cubans in 2013 by Brazil and 2014 by Ecuador, the United States, followed by Mexico and Ecuador, were the countries issuing the most temporary and permanent permits, a trend that held throughout the entire 2011-2014 period.
- h) Since 2013, the number of permits issued to Asians has risen steeply in Ecuador and Mexico, but the percentage of total permits issued to Asians remained almost constant. Beginning in 2014, the number of permits issued to Asians also rose significantly in Colombia, but in this case, from 10.5% to 19%. For all three countries, the largest percentage of permits issued was to Chinese nationals. Both the Asian immigrant population established in the Americas and its regular flows have been much larger than those from Africa, indicating that Asian migration is a more formally established migration.



## 4 Application for asylum in the Americas (2001-2015)

Applications for asylum in Latin America and the Caribbean are, in general, an unusual phenomenon, with 2015 rates of 45 applications per million inhabitants, equivalent to one-tenth of applications recorded in Canada and the United States (435). This ratio has held steady since 2013. However, between 2014 and 2015, the number of applications doubled 2013 levels for both Latin America and Canada and the United States (Table 12).

The Latin American countries recording the highest increases in the number of asylum applications, both in absolute terms and proportionally, were: Brazil, Costa Rica, Mexico, Panama, and Argentina, with significant differences in the country of origin of the applicants.

Cuadro 12. Asylum seekers in the Americas, 2001-2015

Country of asylum	Average 2001-2005	Average 2006-2010	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	% Change 2015/2013	Number per million population (2015)
Canada	32402	28506	22543	24985	20223	10356	13661	19511	88	543
United States	49084	40393	42971	60587	66101	68243	96152	135964	99	423
Canada and United States	<b>81486</b>	<b>68898</b>	<b>65514</b>	<b>85572</b>	<b>86324</b>	<b>78599</b>	<b>109813</b>	<b>155475</b>	<b>98</b>	<b>435</b>

Country of asylum	Average 2001-2005	Average 2006-2010	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	% Change 2015/2013	Number per million population (2015)
Antigua and Barbuda	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	15	1400	163
Bahamas	27	0	1	9	50	95	5	5	-95	13
Barbados	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	...	...
Cuba	42	18	23	6	63	29	25	129	345	11
Dominica	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	...	...
Dominican Republic	0	1	3	28	12	11	22	32	191	3
Grenada	0	1	3	0	0	0	0	1	...	9
Guyana	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	0	...	...
Haiti	0	5	1	2	8	12	0	15	25	1
Jamaica	0	0	0	0	1	4	0	5	25	2
Saint Kitts and Nevis	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	...	...
Saint Lucia	0	1	3	2	0	1	0	2	100	11
San Vicente and the Grenadinas	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	...	...
Suriname	0	1	7	4	0	0	2	6	...	11
Trinidad and Tobago	0	49	22	29	5	44	181	129	193	95
<b>Caribbean</b>	<b>69</b>	<b>77</b>	<b>63</b>	<b>83</b>	<b>140</b>	<b>200</b>	<b>236</b>	<b>339</b>	<b>70</b>	<b>9</b>

Belize	21	12	25	32	58	52	74	637	1125	1774
Costa Rica	2437	961	991	964	1170	954	1844	2731	186	568
El Salvador	10	37	55	15	4	7	12	25	257	4
Guatemala	33	30	15	21	18	48	120	157	227	10
Honduras	75	41	68	9	9	57	11	16	-72	2
Mexico	408	578	1039	753	811	1296	1524	3423	164	27
Nicaragua	15	113	120	39	69	105	135	137	30	23
Panama	203	388	601	1396	756	827	1184	1830	121	466
<b>Central America</b>	<b>3201</b>	<b>2160</b>	<b>2914</b>	<b>3229</b>	<b>2895</b>	<b>3346</b>	<b>4904</b>	<b>8956</b>	<b>168</b>	<b>52</b>

Bolivia (Plurinational State of)	21	75	48	32	36	20	42	34	70	3
Colombia	32	160	161	84	99	229	745	449	96	9
Ecuador*	19496	14647	2227	1041	958	966	...	...	...	...
Peru	134	251	289	466	377	440	392	432	-2	14
Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of)	928	2418	3450	3176	2004	3497	2480	1488	-57	48
<b>Andean Region</b>	<b>19109</b>	<b>15132</b>	<b>6175</b>	<b>4799</b>	<b>3474</b>	<b>5152</b>	<b>3659</b>	<b>2403</b>	<b>-53</b>	<b>17</b>

Country of asylum	Average 2001-2005	Average 2006-2010	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	% Change 2015/2013	Number per million population (2015)
Argentina	350	663	796	871	1467	614	831	1264	106	29
Brazil	553	705	1087	4980	1124	4724	8950	14770	213	71
Chile	159	492	260	305	168	249	282	629	153	35
Paraguay	11	19	13	25	10	3	37	69	2200	10
Uruguay	14	26	21	20	37	37	63	87	135	25
<b>Southern Cone</b>	<b>1087</b>	<b>1905</b>	<b>2177</b>	<b>6201</b>	<b>2806</b>	<b>5627</b>	<b>10163</b>	<b>16819</b>	<b>199</b>	<b>60</b>
<b>Latin America and the Caribbean</b>	<b>12342</b>	<b>19274</b>	<b>11329</b>	<b>14312</b>	<b>9315</b>	<b>14325</b>	<b>18962</b>	<b>28517</b>	<b>99</b>	<b>45</b>
<b>Canada and the United States</b>	<b>81486</b>	<b>68898</b>	<b>65514</b>	<b>85572</b>	<b>86324</b>	<b>78599</b>	<b>109813</b>	<b>155475</b>	<b>98</b>	<b>435</b>
<b>All countries of the Americas</b>	<b>93828</b>	<b>88172</b>	<b>76843</b>	<b>99884</b>	<b>95639</b>	<b>92924</b>	<b>128775</b>	<b>183992</b>	<b>98</b>	<b>186</b>

Source: United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and for Ecuador the Directorate of Refuge of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.  
Note: For Ecuador, 2001-2005 average corresponds to years 2004-2005. Data available for Ecuador is until 2013.

In Brazil, most asylum applicants were nationals of the African continent, accounting for 55% of all applications for the 2014-2015 period. The most common countries of origin were: Senegal, Syria, Nigeria, Ghana, Lebanon, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Angola, Bangladesh, and the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela.

It is important to note that Brazil's asylum applications do not reflect the significant inflow of Haitians, particularly those affected by the 2010 earthquake and subsequent natural disasters. Many of these migrants have received residence permits based on humanitarian reasons, as refugee status is not recognized for persons displaced due to natural disasters. This specific group is treated as applicants for humanitarian residence permits (humanitarian visa).

According to the National Committee for Refugees (CONARE) of Brazil's Ministry of Justice, from 2010 to 2015, 48,371 applications for refugee status were made by Haitians. By the end of 2015, the Brazilian government had authorized permanent residence visas for 43,871 Haitians who had entered and settled over the previous four years.

As for Costa Rica, Mexico, and Panama, asylum applications were received predominantly from persons from within the region in 2014-2015.

- a) Costa Rica: 37% of the applications were made by Colombians, 29% by Salvadorans, 10% by Venezuelans, 8% by Cubans, and 5% by Hondurans.
- b) Mexico: 53% by Hondurans and 43% by Salvadorans.
- c) Panama: 58% by Colombians, 12% by Venezuelans, 10% by Nicaraguans, 9% by Cubans, and 5% by Salvadorans.

Lastly, the applications Argentina received for the 2014-2015 were similar to Brazil, although fewer in absolute terms and greater diversity of applicant country of origin: Senegal 30%, Cuba 18%, Syria 14%, Ukraine 11%, and Haiti 10%.

## 5 Movements of undocumented migrants from Africa, Cuba, and Haiti, 2011-2016

### 5.1 General characteristics

#### » CHARACTERISTICS OF EXTRACONTINENTAL MIGRATION

According to a 2011 study by FLACSO , extracontinental flows of migrants consisting mainly, but not exclusively, of men commonly traveling without their family, were arriving in the region, as confirmed during the visit to detention centers and through interviews with authorities<sup>5</sup>. Few cases of women and unaccompanied children and adolescents were reported. The average age of the individuals reported ranged from 20 to 40, with a higher concentration in the 20 to 30 age range; in other words, these migrants are members of the “working-age population” and young people.

The young people (mainly under the age of 30) from some African countries are educated, with medium to high levels of schooling and proficiency in a second language, although due to wariness and a lack of cooperation, they do not acknowledge speaking another language in their initial contact with the authorities. These migrants state that they have an education in such fields as economics, engineering, computer science, and education and say that they cannot practice their profession in their countries of origin due to the social and economic conditions and high levels of violence that reign in some of them (FLACSO 2011).

This same study (FLACSO 2011) notes that these individuals usually travel with money, although, according to some interviewees, not large amounts, but they have means at their disposal to withdraw cash while in transit, meaning they can access funds as needed to pay human traffickers. When intercepted and placed in the custody of immigration authorities, some of them ask permission to access an ATM and/or a money transfer company, where they can withdraw funds sent in their name by relatives in the United States or their country of origin.

5. FLACSO: Latin American Faculty of Social Sciences. 2011. “Diagnosis on the current situation, trends and needs for protection and assistance of extracontinental migrants and refugees in Mexico and Central America”, in cooperation with IOM and UNHCR.

From the administrative records on people detained by the government in the countries of the region that responded to the survey used to produce this report<sup>6</sup>, it can be observed that the majority of the people who make up the extracontinental flows are from Eritrea, Somalia, Ethiopia, Nepal, Bangladesh, China, India, Iraq, and Sri Lanka—countries where political, economic, and social conditions have become factors spurring migration.

The nationality of the migrants detained has become more diverse: in 2009, for example, Mexican immigration authorities detained nationals from 22 Asian and 20 African countries; in 2015, in contrast, nationals from 29 Asian and 29 African countries were detained.

## » CHARACTERISTICS OF CUBAN MIGRATION

Since the announcement in December 2014 that talks were beginning on the resumption of diplomatic relations between the United States and Cuba, and anticipating that the preferential migration policies offered by the United States to Cuban nationals could be rescinded, it is assumed that thousands of Cubans decided to leave their country and attempt to enter the United States by land and/or air, crossing Central America and Mexico to take advantage of the Cuban Adjustment Act<sup>7</sup> of 1966 and the “wet foot, dry foot policy” of 1995, which allows for the automatic admission of Cuban citizens who manage to reach U.S. territory and the rejection of those detained in U.S. waters<sup>8</sup>.

At the same time, the regulatory reforms<sup>9</sup> that have facilitated Cuban travel abroad have made it easier for Cubans to migrate to several countries in the hemisphere and from there, northward.

All this seems to have contributed to a significant flow of Cubans and spurred migration, chiefly over land, from Ecuador to the United States, the country where most Cubans have a real possibility of eventually regularizing their immigration status after some time has passed and certain requirements have been met.

The table below provides a brief chronology of what has been dubbed the “Cuban migrant crisis in Central America”:<sup>10</sup>

6. The countries that responded to the survey prepared for the production of this report include Colombia, Costa Rica, Honduras, El Salvador, Panama, and Mexico. A future edition of this report may include data from the rest of countries of the region.

7. For more information, visit: <https://www.uscis.gov/es/tarjeta-verde/Other-maneras-de-btenerla/cubanos/residencia-permanente-para-un-ciudadano-cubano>.

8. For more information, see the “Note” on this issue on page 44 of this Report.

9. For more information about these reforms, see Official Gazette of the Republic of Cuba, Ministry of Justice, Regular Edition. Havana, Cuba, Tuesday, October 16, 2012: <http://www.acnur.org/t3/fileadmin/Documentos/BDL/2012/8950.pdf?view=1>.

10. Chronology based on information in the international press.



April 2014	The Government of Ecuador announces that it will no longer request a letter of invitation as a visa requirement for migrants from the island, opening the door to Cuban citizens by issuing visas for up to three months.
December 17, 2014	The United States and Cuba announce the opening of talks on the resumption of diplomatic relations.
November 10, 2015	Costa Rican authorities dismantle and detain the members of a migrant trafficking organization, stranding thousands of migrants, mainly of Cuban, Haitian, and African origin, in Costa Rica without the means and/or contacts to continue their journey.
November 13, 2015	Costa Rica begins issuing special transit (safe conduct) visas, allowing these groups of migrants to proceed to Nicaragua.
November 15, 2015	The Government of Nicaragua closes its borders and deploys the army to prevent the migrants from entering.
November 24, 2015	The Central American Integration System (SICA) meets in San Salvador. SICA is comprised of eight countries from the area; representatives from Cuba, Ecuador, Mexico, and Colombia were also present at the meeting.
December 1, 2015	Based on the information from the foreign ministers at the SICA meeting, Ecuador makes the sovereign decision to reinstate the visa requirement for Cuban nationals wishing to enter the country as tourists.
December 18, 2015	Costa Rica withdraws from the SICA policy round table to protest the lack of regional support to resolve the migrant crisis.
December 28, 2015	The Central American and Mexican governments agree to mount an airlift and land bridge to deal with the crisis of migrants stranded in Costa Rica and Panama.
January 13, 2016	With assistance from the IOM, a pilot plan to transfer 189 Cuban migrants stranded in Costa Rica is implemented. The migrants are transferred by plane from the airport in Liberia, Costa Rica, to San Salvador and subsequently taken by bus to the Guatemala-Mexico border. In Tapachula, they are received by agents of the National Immigration Institute (INM), who register them as migrants. From Tapachula, the Cubans make their way through Mexico to the U.S. border.
February 5 – March 15 2016	Between February 5 and March 15 (the expiration date of the agreement to transfer the Cuban migrants), Panama, Costa Rica, and Mexico airlift 6,003 Cuban nationals from Ciudad Hidalgo, Chiapas, and through 38 direct flights from Panama and Costa Rica, to Ciudad Juárez, Chihuahua, and Nuevo Laredo, Tamaulipas, respectively.
April 2016	New groups of Cuban migrants are stranded at the Panama-Costa Rica border after the Costa Rican police refuse them entry.
May 9-25, 2016	Mexico accepts a second airlift from Panama to Ciudad Juárez, bringing in 3,161 Cubans on 22 flights.
May 9, 2016	Panamanian President Juan Carlos Varela announces the closure of the border with Colombia.
May-July 2016	Some 1,500 migrants, who have been arriving in Turbo, Department of Antioquia, Colombia, are stranded almost three months in that city. The majority of them take shelter in an old warehouse, where they live in overcrowded conditions the entire time.

Source: Prepared by OAS-IOM for this study.

In late July 2016, the Ombudsman’s Office in Colombia conducted a census of migrants living in the Turbo warehouse, reporting a total of 1,273: 821 men, 452 women (11 of whom were pregnant), and close to 300 children<sup>11</sup>.

In early August 2016, Colombia announced it would not conduct the airlift that the migrants were requesting, for two basic reasons: first, because by doing so, the Colombian State would be committing the crime of illicit trafficking in migrants, and second, because Mexico confirmed its position that it would not allow more transfer programs or support this type of initiative.<sup>12</sup>

With the announcement that Colombia would repatriate all undocumented migrants who refused “voluntary” deportation, these groups made their way to Panama through the rainforest known as the Darién Gap. On August 12, 2016, the last members of this group of migrants left Turbo.

On August 9, 2016, Panamanian President Juan Carlos Varela announced that while Panama’s borders would remain closed to irregular migration, it would provide humanitarian assistance to groups that entered Panamanian territory through the Darién Gap. He also indicated that a shelter would be built to house these migrants.

#### » CHARACTERISTICS OF HAITIAN MIGRATION

According to a report prepared by the Jesuit Refugee Service (JRS) with data from the National Immigration Office of Ecuador’s Police, published May 26, 2011,<sup>13</sup> there was a clear increase in the flow of Haitians toward Latin America.

The report states that, in addition to the earthquake that struck Haiti in January 2010, another factor driving Haitian migration was the closure of the French Guiana border. This French overseas territory was the main destination of Haitians in South America due to its linguistic, cultural, and ethnic affinity and the promise that traffickers would take the migrants to France and other parts of Europe. With the closure of the French Guiana border, Haitian migrants sought alternative routes. According to that same report, since there was armed conflict in Colombia, few employment opportunities in Peru, and Bolivia had strict border controls and a problematic geography, the route through Ecuador to Brazil became the most utilized.<sup>14</sup> The state government of Acre in Brazil estimates that 50,000 migrants, more than 80% of them Haitian, crossed its borders; of these, only 50 were still there in August 2016 and had entered the local labor market.

11. <http://www.defensoria.gov.co/es/nube/noticias/5541/Defensor%3%ADa-del-Pueblo-consolid%3%B3-censo-de-migrantes-en-Turbo.htm>.

12. <http://www.eluniversal.com.mx/articulo/nacion/politica/2016/08/7/mexico-no-abriramas-programas-para-trasladar-migrantes-flores>.

13. Servicio Jesuita a Refugiados para Latinoamérica y el Caribe (SJR LAC). 2011. “Los flujos haitianos hacia América Latina: Situación actual y Propuestas,” Wooldy Edson Louidor, 26 Mayo 2011, available at [https://www.entreculturas.org/files/documentos/estudios\\_e\\_informes/Flujos%20haitianos%20haciaAL.pdf](https://www.entreculturas.org/files/documentos/estudios_e_informes/Flujos%20haitianos%20haciaAL.pdf).

14. SJR LAC 2011 op. cit.

Interviews of Costa Rican border agents conducted by IOM personnel<sup>15</sup> show that Haitian migrants often attempt to pass for Africans when migrating illicitly through the countries of the Hemisphere. Underlying this interest in passing for African migrants, the authorities assume, is the idea that deporting them would potentially be more complicated.

Furthermore, the main reason why Haitian migrants who had originally settled in Brazil decided to leave that country was apparently the economic crisis, which had left them unemployed.

It should also be noted that the handling of undocumented Haitian migrants by authorities in the Americas could be complicated in the case of migrants born in the Dominican Republic who are not registered in Haiti; these individuals cannot return to the Dominican Republic, nor can they certify that they are Haitian nationals.

## 5.2 Routes

### » EXTRACONTINENTAL MIGRATION ROUTES

The majority of extracontinental migrants travel by air or sea with the goal of reaching the United States and Canada, identified as their main countries of destination, and they use several South and Central American countries as transit countries. Some migrants have permanently settled in Brazil and Argentina, where they have applied for asylum as refugees. However, increasingly, many of these individuals end up stranded on the coasts and in the territories of Andean, Central American, and Caribbean countries, subsequently attempting to continue their northward journey.

These migrants take different routes from their countries of origin in their travels north. Studies conducted individually by the IOM and jointly with other partners describe these routes. The information compiled in these studies and in other police investigations and reports is similar in substance and makes it possible to point out similarities in the bulk of the cases documented by the authorities.<sup>16</sup>

15. CHAVEZ, Sandra. Interview of July 14, 2016, in Paso Canoas (a town in Costa Rica). Interviewed by IOM official Mayvelline González.

16. OIM. 2013. "Migrantes extracontinentales en América del Sur: Estudios de caso" Cuadernos Migratorios no. 5, Buenos Aires, Argentina, available at: [https://publications.iom.int/es/system/files/pdf/cuaderno5\\_migrantes\\_extracontinentales\\_americaelsur.pdf](https://publications.iom.int/es/system/files/pdf/cuaderno5_migrantes_extracontinentales_americaelsur.pdf)  
OIM-ACNUR. 2011.

First, it appears that the vast majority of the intercontinental travel of the extracontinental migrants who reached the Americas was by air, with migrants using intercontinental flights departing in most cases from Europe or South Africa and arriving mainly in Brazil or Ecuador. In some of the cases investigated, it was found that the individuals often used false or altered travel documents to board intercontinental flights.

Second, it appears that once in the Americas, the majority of these migrants continued to travel north, mainly by land. However, their journey occasionally included travel by boat, crossing Colombia, Panama, and Central America; once in Mexico, the migrants would take the Pacific or Atlantic route to reach the United States.

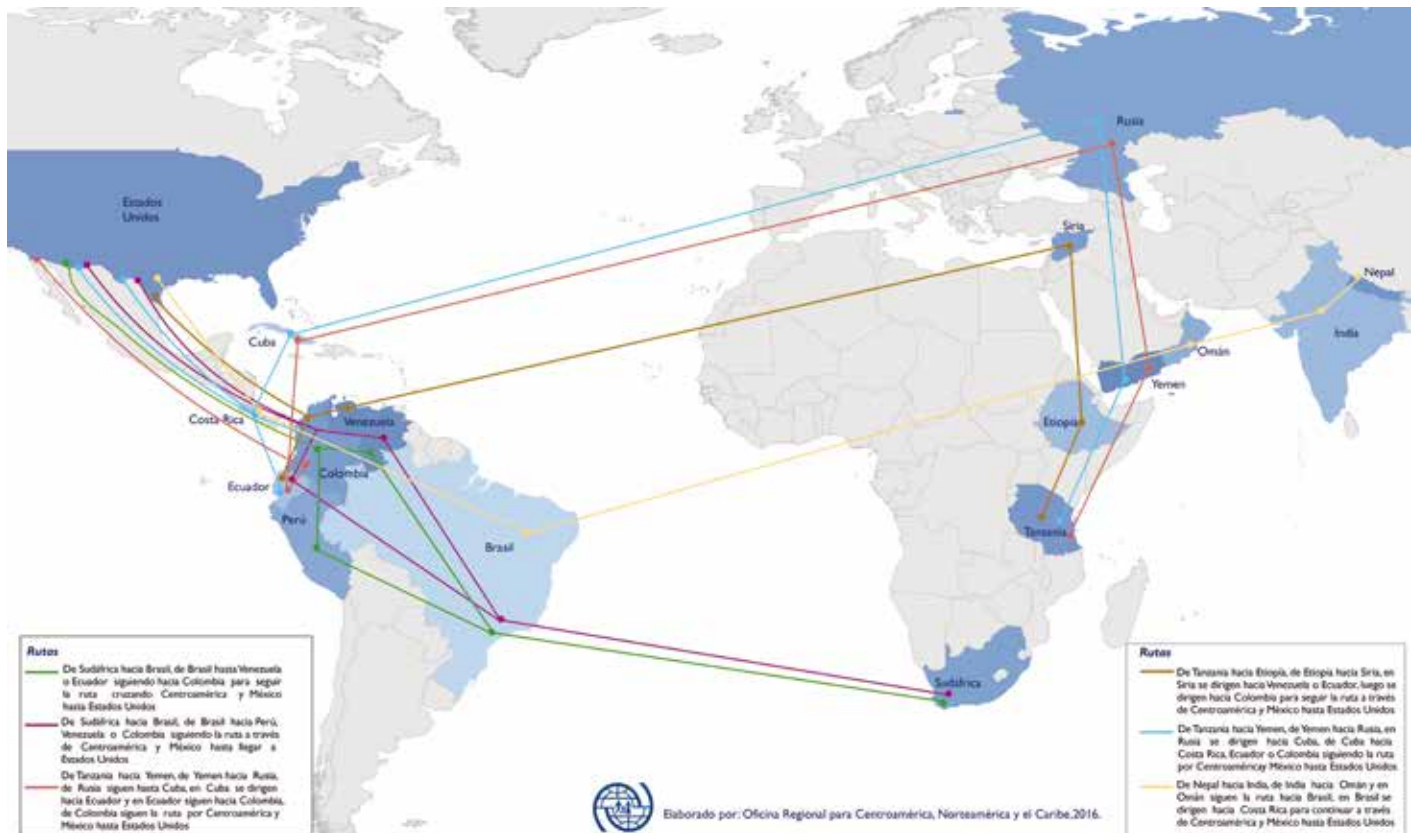
While it is known that some of these individuals reached the Americas by sea from other continents on cargo and fishing vessels, these routes are very hard to track, and given the difficulty of these voyages, it is assumed that these routes have been less used by migrants.

Finally, concerning the routes that these migrants took before crossing the Atlantic, police reports indicate that they may have passed through several countries, in many documented cases flying from their countries of origin to Ethiopia, United Arab Emirates, Turkey, and Russia.

Main routes used by undocumented extracontinental migrants over the past seven years, according to documented cases (routes with intercontinental flights)

- » Routes in which the point of entry to the Americas is Brazil  
Migrants spend several weeks or months in Brazil and then continue on to Ecuador or Colombia, later entering Panama and crossing several or all the Central American countries and Mexico.
- » Routes in which the point of entry to the Americas is Ecuador  
Migrants may have spent some time in Ecuador. They then enter Colombia, proceed to Panama or another Central American country, sometimes by sea, and continue by land to North America.
- » Routes in which the point of entry to the Americas is Cuba  
Once migrants reach Cuba, they fly to Central America and continue their journey by land to North America.

Map 1. - Some the main routes used by extracontinental migrants in transit



Source: IOM - Extracontinental Migration in South America.

### » HAITIAN MIGRATION ROUTES

As documented in the SJR LAC<sup>17</sup> study , several routes are used to transport human trafficking victims from Haiti to Brazil. However, in recent years, the most common route is through the Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Peru and, ultimately, Brazil. According to the information in the aforementioned report, the main routes taken by Haitian migrants to Brazil have been mapped.

17. SJR LAC 2011 opc. cit.

Map 2. - Main routes taken by Haitian migrants to reach Brazil



Source: Fernandes et al. 2011:81.

18. Article published in O Globo, 11/11/2015, <http://g1.globo.com/distrito-federal/noticia/2015/11/brasil-autoriza-permanencia-definitiva-44-mil-refugiados-haitianos.html>.

Other sources generally confirm this information. To reach Brazilian territory, Haitians generally leave the Haitian capital, Port-au-Prince, by bus, traveling to Santo Domingo, the capital of the Dominican Republic. Once there, they purchase a plane ticket to Panama, continuing on by plane or bus to Quito, Ecuador. From there, they proceed to the Peruvian city of Tumbes and then to Piura, Lima, Cusco, and Puerto Maldonado. Finally, they reach Iñapari on the border with Brazil, where they enter that country and settle.<sup>18</sup>

The SJR also noted the existence of at least two routes used by human traffickers operating out of Haiti, especially in the country's western and northern regions. Migrants are transported to these locations deceived by the promise of educational and work opportunities in the United States and Europe. That same report states that these networks use Cuba and the Dominican Republic as transit countries for migrants to reach Ecuador. The majority of Haitian trafficking victims do not remain in Ecuador but are taken to Chile, Venezuela, and above all, Brazil.

#### » **CUBAN MIGRATION ROUTES**

For several years, Ecuador's relaxation of immigration laws may have indirectly made the country the first step in a flow of Cuban migrants anxious to enter the United States.

On arriving in Ecuador by air, these migrants proceed northward by land to Colombia and from there, proceed by boat to Panama, from whence they continue by land, crossing the Central American countries and ultimately reaching the Mexico-U.S. border. A substantial number of them remain stranded in Ecuador, Colombia, Panama, Costa Rica, and El Salvador for different lengths of time.

Map 3. Main routes taken by Cuban migrants to reach United States



Source: Statement of a Cuban émigré: Part V<sup>19</sup>.

19. See: <https://cubanosporel-mundo.com/blog/2015/12/05/el-relato-de-un-emigrante-cubano-parte-v/> dic., 2015.

20. <http://www.eluniverso.com/noticias/2016/04/14/nota/5523636/tras-cierre-ecuador-cubanos-encuentran-nueva-ruta-migratoria>.

Recently, after Ecuador stopped issuing tourist visas to Cuban citizens in December 2015, Cubans attempting to migrate by land to the United States began using Guyana as the starting point for their journey. The new route begins with a flight to Guyana; from there, the migrants travel by land to Venezuela, Colombia, and the Central American countries, ultimately reaching Mexico and the U.S. border.<sup>20</sup>



### 5.3 Communities most affected by irregular migrant flows

According to the information provided by the countries who responded to the survey prepared for this study,, a significant number of extracontinental and Caribbean migrants have arrived in their cities and communities and for a number of reasons have had to remain there indefinitely. The need to provide basic services to this population sometimes exceeds the ability of local government agencies to do so.

In Honduras, the most affected border communities are Guasaule, Choluteca, and El Triunfo, since they are transit areas. Cities such as Tegucigalpa, Ocotepeque, and San Pedro Sula have also received a substantial number of migrants, who have been provided with basic services, as resources permit.

In Mexico, the greatest flow of extracontinental migrants is found in Tapachula, Chiapas. To a lesser extent, Cuban migrant flows are observed in the state of Quintana Roo.

In the case of Costa Rica, the communities most affected by these flows are located in the country's border areas – in Paso Canoas in the south and Peñas Blancas, La Cruz, and Los Chiles in the north. More recently, communities that have set up shelters for migrants have also been heavily impacted.

## 5.4 Data and analysis by country



### » COLOMBIA

From January 2012 to August 2016, the entry of 35,241 undocumented migrants was detected (Table 13).

**Table 13.** Colombia - Entries (detection) of irregular migrants by continent / region / country of nationality, 2012-August 2016

Continent / region / country of nationality	2012	2013	2014	2015	Jan - Aug 2016	TOTAL 2011-Aug. 2016
<b>CARIBBEAN</b>	363	199	1,012	6,361	19,739	27,674
CUBA	333	191	940	6,259	4,969	12,692
HAITI	7	6	14	35	14,755	14,817
DOMINICAN REPUBLIC	23	2	58	67	15	165
<b>AFRICA</b>	17	80	205	938	2,304	3,544
SOMALIA	2	47	118	397	205	769
GHANA		13	32	292	425	762
CONGO	1		5	3	559	568
SENEGAL			4	29	361	394
CAMEROON	1	1	4	43	156	205
GUINEA			1	32	112	145
MALI		1		12	112	125
Other	13	18	41	130	374	576
<b>ASIA</b>	294	289	711	1,499	1,230	4,023
NEPAL	49	55	247	720	358	1,429
BANGLADESH	30	82	162	223	304	801
INDIA	24	33	136	282	286	761
PAKISTAN	2	3	17	167	191	380
CHINA	125	95	63	10	30	323
SIRIA	2	11	27	41	12	93
Other	62	10	59	56	49	236
<b>GRAND TOTAL</b>	674	568	1,928	8,798	23,273	35,241

Source: Sub-Division for Migrant Verification, Colombia.

Some 91% of the cases detected in the period examined were registered very recently, between 2015 and August 2016. The vast majority of the undocumented migrants who entered Colombia are of Haitian and Cuban origin: these two nationalities account for 78% of all migrants.

The number of cases of Cuban origin began to increase sharply in 2015, representing 71% of all cases that year; this figure fell to 21% in 2016. In the case of Haitians, very few cases were reported up to 2015; however, since January 2016, the increase has been extraordinary, accounting for 63% of all cases registered between January and August 2016 (Table 14).

**Table 14. Colombia -**  
Distribution of irregular migrantes by continent / region / country of nationality, 2012-August 2016

Continent/ region / country of nationality	2012		2013		2014		2015		Jan - Aug 2016		TOTAL 2011-Aug2016	
	Subtotal	%	Subtotal	%	Subtotal	%	Subtotal	%	Subtotal	%	TOTAL	%
CARIBBEAN	363	53.86	199	35.04	1,012	52.49	6,361	72.30	19,739	84.82	27,674	78.53
HAITI	7	1.04	6	1.06	14	0.73	35	0.40	14,755	63.40	14,817	42.04
CUBA	333	49.41	191	33.63	940	48.76	6,259	71.14	4,969	21.35	12,692	36.01
DOMINICAN REPUBLIC	23	3.41	2	0.35	58	3.01	67	0.76	15	0.06	165	0.47
AFRICA	17	2.52	80	14.08	205	10.63	938	10.66	2,304	9.90	3,544	10.06
SOMALIA	2	0.30	47	8.27	118	6.12	397	4.51	205	0.88	769	2.18
GHANA	0	0.00	13	2.29	32	1.66	292	3.32	425	1.83	762	2.16
CONGO	1	0.15	0	0.00	5	0.26	3	0.03	559	2.40	568	1.61
SENEGAL	0	0.00	0	0.00	4	0.21	29	0.33	361	1.55	394	1.12
CAMEROON	1	0.15	1	0.18	4	0.21	43	0.49	156	0.67	205	0.58
GUINEA	0	0.00	0	0.00	1	0.05	32	0.36	112	0.48	145	0.41
MALI	0	0.00	1	0.18	0	0.00	12	0.14	112	0.48	125	0.35
Other	13	1.93	18	3.17	41	2.13	130	1.48	374	1.61	576	1.63
ASIA	294	43.62	289	50.88	711	36.88	1,499	17.04	1,230	5.29	4,023	11.42
NEPAL	49	7.27	55	9.68	247	12.81	720	8.18	358	1.54	1,429	4.05
BANGLA- DESH	30	4.45	82	14.44	162	8.40	223	2.53	304	1.31	801	2.27
INDIA	24	3.56	33	5.81	136	7.05	282	3.21	286	1.23	761	2.16
PAKISTAN	2	0.30	3	0.53	17	0.88	167	1.90	191	0.82	380	1.08
CHINA	125	18.55	95	16.73	63	3.27	10	0.11	30	0.13	323	0.92
SIRIA	2	0.30	11	1.94	27	1.40	41	0.47	12	0.05	93	0.26
Other	62	9.20	10	1.76	59	3.06	56	0.64	49	0.21	236	0.67
GRAND TOTAL	674	100.00	568	100.00	1,928	100.00	8,798	100.00	23,273	100.00	35,241	100.00

Source: Sub-Division for Migrant Verification, Colombia.

Up to 2015, there were more of cases Asian than of African origin; however, this trend began to reverse itself in January 2016. The undocumented Asian migrants detected in Colombia are mainly from Nepal, Bangladesh, India, and Pakistan, while the majority of African migrants are from Somalia, Ghana, Congo, and Senegal.

Irregular migration cases largely involve men of all origins. The proportion is higher in the case of Asian and African migrants (with ratios of 60 and 6, respectively, with 13 men for every woman) than for Cuban and Haitian migrants (with ratios of 2 and 3 men, respectively, for every woman).

In the period 2012 to August 2016, the number of deportations was directly related to the increase in cases of irregular migration (Table 15).

**Table 15.** Colombia - Deportation of irregular migrants by continent / region / country of nationality, 2012 - Aug. 2016

Continent / region / country of nationality	2012	2013	2014	2015	Jan - Aug 2016	TOTAL 2012-Aug.2016
<b>CARIBBEAN</b>	681	493	1,212	6,888	12,269	21,543
CUBA	660	489	1,193	6,834	5,704	14,880
DOMINICAN REPUBLIC	15	0	8	12	32	67
HAITI	6	4	11	42	6,533	6,596
<b>ASIA</b>	196	62	257	1,417	1,308	3,240
NEPAL	35	12	75	698	409	1,229
BANGLADESH	22	20	42	233	321	638
INDIA	15	16	67	210	219	527
PAKISTÁN	1	0	8	149	209	367
CHINA	69	10	35	69	83	266
Other	54	4	30	58	67	213
<b>AFRICA</b>	17	40	116	925	2,072	3,170
GHANA	1	13	24	282	372	692
SOMALIA	2	8	60	404	169	643
CONGO (Democratic Republic of the)	0	0	0	1	366	367
SENEGAL	0	0	0	24	303	327
CAMEROON	0	1	3	40	118	162
CONGO	0	0	0	3	146	149
MALI	0	0	0	13	122	135
GUINEA	0	0	0	31	95	126
GAMBIA	4	0	0	6	81	91
CÔTE D'IVOIRE	0	0	3	16	64	83
Other	10	18	26	105	236	395
<b>GRAND TOTAL</b>	894	595	1,585	9,230	15,649	27,953

Source: Sub-Division for Migrant Verification and Platinum System, Colombia.


**» COSTA RICA**

From January 2013 to July 2016, the entry of 36,081 undocumented migrants from the Caribbean, Haiti, Asia, and Africa was detected by the police in Paso Canoas (the main southern land border) (Table 16).

**Table 16. Costa Rica -**  
Entries of irregular migrants detected by the Police of Paso Canoas, by continent / region / country of nationality and gender, 2013 - July 2016

Continent / region / country of nationality	2013			2014			2015			Jan - Jul 2016			TOTAL 2013-jul 2016		
	♀	♂	Subtotal	♀	♂	Subtotal	♀	♂	Subtotal	♀	♂	Subtotal	♀	♂	TOTAL
<b>CARIBBEAN</b>	722	1,835	2,557	1,248	4,005	5,253	5,254	12,675	17,929	16	23	39	7,240	18,538	25,778
CUBA	717	1,831	2,548	1,242	4,000	5,242	5,246	12,670	17,916	3	2	5	7,208	18,503	25,711
HAITI	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	2	5	1	2	3	4	4	8
Other	5	4	9	6	5	11	5	3	8	12	19	31	28	31	59
<b>AFRICA</b>	13	214	227	28	512	540	58	1,241	1,299	1,515	4,113	5,628	1,614	6,080	7,694
CONGO	0	2	2	0	0	0	0	5	5	794	1,946	2,740	794	1,953	2,747
CONGO (Democratic Republic of the)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	613	1,597	2,210	613	1,597	2,210
SOMALIA	4	127	131	18	337	355	19	502	521	4	38	42	45	1,004	1,049
GHANA	1	35	36	2	100	102	7	462	469	14	136	150	24	733	757
ERITREA	4	11	15	1	36	37	7	86	93	9	18	27	21	151	172
SENEGAL	0	0	0	0	1	1	1	28	29	17	104	121	18	133	151
CAMEROON	2	4	6	1	4	5	15	42	57	18	44	62	36	94	130
GUINEA	0	1	1	0	3	3	2	31	33	9	58	67	11	93	104
Other	2	34	36	6	31	37	7	85	92	37	172	209	52	322	374
<b>ASIA</b>	0	22	22	6	353	359	10	1,949	1,959	19	250	269	35	2,574	2,609
NEPAL	0	0	0	5	187	192	9	1,436	1,445	12	146	158	26	1,769	1,795
BANGLADESH	0	10	10	0	149	149	0	400	400	2	53	55	2	612	614
PAKISTAN	0	1	1	0	13	13	0	73	73	4	47	51	4	134	138
Other	0	11	11	1	4	5	1	40	41	1	4	5	3	59	62
<b>GRAND TOTAL</b>	<b>735</b>	<b>2,071</b>	<b>2,806</b>	<b>1,282</b>	<b>4,870</b>	<b>6,152</b>	<b>5,322</b>	<b>15,865</b>	<b>21,187</b>	<b>1,550</b>	<b>4,386</b>	<b>5,936</b>	<b>8,889</b>	<b>27,192</b>	<b>36,081</b>

Source: General Directorate for Migration and Foreigners, Institutional Planning, with data provided by the Regional Police Coordination of Paso Canoas.

Some 75.1% of these entries were recent, occurring between 2015 and July 2016, resulting in significant growth caused basically by the presence of Cuban migrants, who in 2015 accounted for 84.6% of the irregular migration of all origins considered in this study (Table 17).

**Table 17. Costa Rica -**  
Distribution of irregular migrants detected by the Police of Paso Canoas, by continent / region / country of nationality, 2013 - July 2016

Continent / region / country of nationality	2013		2014		2015		Jan-jul 2016		TOTAL 2013 -jul 2016	
	Subtotal	%	Subtotal	%	Subtotal	%	Subtotal	%	TOTAL	%
<b>CARIBBEAN</b>	2,557	91.1	5,253	85.4	17,929	84.6	39	0.7	25,778	71.4
CUBA	2,548	90.8	5,242	85.2	17,916	84.6	5	0.1	25,711	71.3
HAITI	0	0.0	0	0.0	5	0.0	3	0.1	8	0.0
Other	9	0.3	11	0.2	8	0.0	31	0.5	59	0.2
<b>AFRICA</b>	227	8.1	540	8.8	1,299	6.1	5,628	94.8	7,694	21.3
CONGO	2	0.1	0	0.0	5	0.0	2,740	46.2	2,747	7.6
CONGO (Democratic Republic of the)	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	2,210	37.2	2,210	6.1
SOMALIA	131	4.7	355	5.8	521	2.5	42	0.7	1,049	2.9
GHANA	36	1.3	102	1.7	469	2.2	150	2.5	757	2.1
ERITREA	15	0.5	37	0.6	93	0.4	27	0.5	172	0.5
SENEGAL	0	0.0	1	0.0	29	0.1	121	2.0	151	0.4
CAMEROON	6	0.2	5	0.1	57	0.3	62	1.0	130	0.4
GUINEA	1	0.0	3	0.0	33	0.2	67	1.1	104	0.3
Other	36	1.3	37	0.6	92	0.4	209	3.5	374	1.0
<b>ASIA</b>	22	0.8	359	5.8	1,959	9.2	269	4.5	2,609	7.2
NEPAL	0	0.0	192	3.1	1,445	6.8	158	2.7	1,795	5.0
BANGLADESH	10	0.4	149	2.4	400	1.9	55	0.9	614	1.7
PAKISTAN	1	0.0	13	0.2	73	0.3	51	0.9	138	0.4
Other	11	0.4	5	0.1	41	0.2	5	0.1	62	0.2
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>2,806</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>6,152</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>21,187</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>5,936</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>36,081</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Source: General Directorate for Migration and Foreigners, Institutional Planning, with data provided by the Regional Police Coordination of Paso Canoas.

Although the sharp increase in Cuban migrants began to be observed in 2015, Cubans have been the majority in the irregular flows over time, accounting for 71.3% of irregular entries, compared to 21.3% for migrants from Africa and 7.2% from Asia during the 2013 to July 2016 period of analysis.

The number of Asian migrants quintupled in 2015 over 2014, with Nepal and Bangladesh the main countries of origin.

Between 2013 and 2015, migrants of African origin were predominantly from Somalia and Ghana; however, beginning in 2016, a massive presence of migrants from Congo and the Dominican Republic was observed.

Irregular migration of all origins is predominantly male, with a ratio of three men for every woman. This ratio is more accentuated in the case of Asian migrants, with 73 men for every woman.

In the period 2011 to July 2016, the ratio between deportees and entries of undocumented migrants indicates a low number of deportations among the origins studied (Table 18).

Table 18. Costa Rica - Deportations by country of origin, 2011- Aug. 2016

COUNTRY OF ORIGIN	YEAR												TOTAL		
	2011		2012		2013		2014		2015		2016		♀	♂	TOTAL
	♀	♂	♀	♂	♀	♂	♀	♂	♀	♂	♀	♂			
<b>CARIBBEAN</b>	5	15	17	23	9	28	13	38	96	310	2	13	142	427	569
CUBA	1	3	3	4	6	8	3	21	94	302	0	7	107	345	452
DOMINICA	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	2
GUYANA	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1
HAITI	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	2	2
JAMAICA	1	2	0	6	0	11	1	8	0	4	0	2	2	33	35
DOMINICAN REP.	3	9	13	13	3	9	7	9	2	4	2	3	30	47	77
<b>AFRICA</b>	1	0	2	4	4	9	1	3	2	5	0	0	10	21	31
CAMEROON	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1
CONGO BRAZZAVILLE	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
CÔTE D'IVOIRE	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1
GHANA	0	0	0	1	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	2	3
MALI	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	1	2
NIGERIA	0	0	0	2	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	4	4
CONGO (Democratic Republic of the)	0	0	1	0	2	0	0	1	0	4	0	0	3	5	8
SOMALIA	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	2	2
SOUTH AFRICA	0	0	0	0	1	5	0	1	2	0	0	0	3	6	9
<b>ASIA</b>	0	2	0	6	1	8	0	2	0	4	0	1	1	23	24
BANGLADESH	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
PHILIPPINES	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
INDONESIA	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
IRAQ	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	2
IRAN	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
ISRAEL	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	1	0	1	0	0	1	3	4
NEPAL	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
PAKISTAN	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	1
TAIWAN (Province of China)	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
CHINA	0	1	0	1	0	4	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	8	8
TURKEY	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	1
VIETNAM	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	2	2
<b>GRAND TOTAL</b>	6	17	19	33	14	45	14	43	98	319	2	14	153	471	624

Source: General Department of Migration and Immigration, Institutional Planning.

Note: Table prepared with data registered in the Deportation System of the Department of the Professional Migration Police

» **HONDURAS**

From January 2011 to August 2016, there were 39,819 entries of migrants in an irregular situation from Cuba, Haiti, Asia, and Africa (Table 19)

**Table 19.** Honduras -  
Entries of irregular migrants from Asia, Africa and the Caribbean, 2011- August 2016

Continent/ country of origin	2011		2012		2013		2014		2015		Jan - Aug 2016		Total 2011-Aug 2016	
		%		%		%		%		%		%		%
CUBA	269	91.8	1,327	98.6	2,484	90.9	5,427	93.3	18,652	47.1	3,205	34.2	31,364	53.0
HAITI	2	0.7	0	0.0	0	0.0	2	0.0	24	0.1	2,257	24.1	2,285	3.9
AFRICA	6	2.0	12	0.9	87	3.2	348	6.0	20,691	52.3	3,597	38.4	24,741	41.8
ASIA	16	5.5	7	0.5	163	6.0	42	0.7	197	0.5	309	3.3	734	1.2
<b>GRAND TOTAL</b>	<b>293</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>1,346</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>2,734</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>5819</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>39,564</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>9,368</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>59,124</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Source: National Institute for Migration, Honduras.

74% of this type of entries was reported very recently, between 2015 and August 2016, owing to the extraordinary increase in Cuban immigrants, which in 2015 accounted for 92.1% of the total undocumented migration from all origins considered in this study.

Although the greatest increase in the presence of Cuban immigrants was in 2015 (three times more than in 2014), the presence of irregular flows from this country has been an absolute majority over the entire period of analysis from 2011 to June 2016, accounting for 78.8% compared with 13.7% from Africa and 1.8% from Asia.

However, data from the first eight months of 2016 shows changes in the trends of previous years, with a marked decline in Cubans and a great increase in Haitians. For the other continents of origin, the trends remained constant, with a sustained increase in Africans and very limited presence of Asians.

In the period analyzed, there were twice as many entries as exits of migrants in an irregular situation (Table 20).



**Table 20. Honduras - Exits of irregular migrants from Asia, Africa and the Caribbean, 2011- August 2016**

Continent/ country of origin	2011		2012		2013		2014		2015		Jan - Aug 2016		Total 2011-Agu 2016	
		%		%		%		%		%		%		%
CUBA	269	91.8	1,327	98.6	2,484	90.9	5,427	93.3	18,652	47.1	3,205	34.2	31,364	53.0
HAITI	2	0.7	0	0.0	0	0.0	2	0.0	24	0.1	2,257	24.1	2,285	3.9
AFRICA	6	2.0	12	0.9	87	3.2	348	6.0	1,386	3.5	3,597	38.4	5,436	9.2
ASIA	16	5.5	7	0.5	163	6.0	42	0.7	197	0.5	309	3.3	734	1.2
<b>GRAND TOTAL</b>	<b>293</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>1,346</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>2,734</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>5,819</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>20,259</b>	<b>51.2</b>	<b>9,368</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>39,819</b>	<b>67.3</b>

Source: National Institute for Migration, Honduras.

Table 21 shows the number and breakdown by origin of undocumented migrants in custody, where since 2014 there was double the number of custody cases for migrants coming especially from Africa and Asia. In this category, there was marginal participation of Cubans and Haitians throughout the period in comparison with migrants of African and Asian origin

**Table 21. Honduras - Arrests, apprehensions and seizures of irregular migrants from Asia, Africa and the Caribbean (Custodians), 2011 - August 2016**

Continent/ country of origin	2011		2012		2013		2014		2015		Jan - Aug 2016		Total 2011-Agu 2016	
		%		%		%		%		%		%		%
CUBA	38	84.4	106	84.8	21	12.9	26	11.8	33	7.0	8	0.9	232	12.0
HAITI	2	4.4	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	9	1.0	11	0.6
AFRICA	4	8.9	15	12.0	48	29.4	174	79.1	359	76.2	581	64.0	1,181	61.1
ASIA	1	2.2	4	3.2	94	57.7	20	9.1	79	16.8	310	34.1	508	26.3
<b>GRAND TOTAL</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>125</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>163</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>220</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>471</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>908</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>1,932</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Source: National Institute for Migration, Honduras.

Finally, there were only 26 cases of deportations of undocumented migrants from Asia, Africa, and the Caribbean in the period analyzed, of whom more than half were from Asia.



## » EL SALVADOR

El Salvador reported limited presence of undocumented migrants from Cuba, Haiti, Asia, and Africa, with 183 entries between 2011 and June 2016 (Table 22).

**Table 22.** El Salvador -  
Distribution of irregular migrants by continent / region / country of nationality, 2011 - June 2016

Continent / region / country of nationality	2011		2012		2013		2014		2015		Jan - Jun 2016		TOTAL 2011-Jun 2016	
	Subtotal	%	Subtotal	%	Subtotal	%	Subtotal	%	Subtotal	%	Subtotal	%	TOTAL	%
CARIBBEAN	4	17.4	15	48.4	7	17.9	32	46.4	0	0.0	1	14.3	59	32.2
CUBA	4	17.4	11	35.5	0	0.0	22	31.9	0	0.0	1	14.3	38	20.8
DOMINICAN REPUBLIC	0	0.0	4	12.9	7	17.9	10	14.5	0	0.0	0	0.0	21	11.5
AFRICA	8	34.8	7	22.6	4	10.3	2	2.9	2	14.3	3	42.9	26	14.2
ALGERIA	1	4.3	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	0.5
ERITREA	7	30.4	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	1.4	0	0.0	0	0.0	8	4.4
GHANA	0	0.0	2	6.5	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	7.1	0	0.0	3	1.6
MALI	0	0.0	2	6.5	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	14.3	3	1.6
NAMIBIA	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	7.1	0	0.0	1	0.5
SOMALIA	0	0.0	3	9.7	4	10.3	1	1.4	0	0.0	2	28.6	10	5.5
ASIA	11	47.8	9	29.0	28	71.8	35	50.7	12	85.7	3	42.9	98	53.6
AFGHANISTAN	5	21.7	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	2	28.6	7	3.8
BANGLADESH	1	4.3	2	6.5	1	2.6	13	18.8	0	0.0	0	0.0	17	9.3
INDIA	5	21.7	0	0.0	23	59.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	28	15.3
IRAQ	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	5	35.7	0	0.0	5	2.7
NEPAL	0	0.0	7	22.6	4	10.3	22	31.9	0	0.0	0	0.0	33	18.0
PALESTINE	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	7.1	0	0.0	1	0.5
SYRIA	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	6	42.9	0	0.0	6	3.3
TAIWAN	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	14.3	1	0.5
GRAND TOTAL	23	100.0	31	100.0	39	100.0	69	100.0	14	100.0	7	100.0	183	100.0

Source: Integrated Migration Management System, consolidated by the Information Planning and Analysis Unit.

After a peak recorded in 2014, there was a marked decrease as of 2015. Most reported were of Asian origin (53.6%), coming mainly from India, Nepal, and Bangladesh. Men accounted for 87% of the cases, which correlates with the characteristic of over-representation of men in migration of Asian origin (See Table B in the Appendix).

Table 23 shows the returns of undocumented migrants by continent/region/country of origin between 2011 and June 2016, also showing a small number of cases, the vast majority of which were of Asian origin.

**Table 23. El Salvador - Returns of irregular migrants by continent, region and/or country of nationality, 2011 - Jun 2016**

COUNTRY OF ORIGIN	YEAR										TOTAL		
	2011	2012	2013		2014		2015		2016		♀*	♂*	TOTAL
			♀	♂	♀	♂	♀	♂	♀	♂			
CARIBBEAN	30	49	33	17	130	48	117	62	14	10	294	137	510
CUBA	9	19	13	4	69	26	94	55	8	4	184	89	301
HAITI	5	4	1	0	10	3	2	3	6	3	19	9	37
Other	16	26	19	13	51	19	21	4	0	3	91	39	172
AFRICA**	16	23	18	3	38	11	10	2	31	14	97	30	166
ASIA	74	169	184	48	220	56	142	23	75	13	621	140	1,004
INDIA	34	56	80	7	68	5	92	3	39	5	279	20	389
CHINA	11	18	33	19	34	13	11	9	26	3	104	44	177
Other	29	95	71	22	118	38	39	11	10	5	238	76	438
GRAND TOTAL	120	241	235	68	388	115	269	87	120	37	1,012	307	1,680

Source: Integrated Migration Management System and the International Airport of El Salvador "Monseñor Oscar Arnulfo Romero y Galdámez", consolidated by the Information Planning and Analysis Unit.

Notes: \* There is not disaggregated data by gender for 2011 and 2012.

\*\*It corresponds to 24 African nationalities.

For the period 2011 to June 2016, the number of deportations was directly related to the increase in the cases and characteristics of irregular migration (Table 24).

**Table 24. El Salvador - Deportations of irregular migrants by continent, region and/or country of nationality, 2011 - Jun 2016**

Continent / region / country of nationality	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	TOTAL
CARIBE	11	13	2	40	0	0	66
CUBA	11	9	1	22	0	0	43
DOMINICAN REPUBLIC	0	4	1	18	0	0	23
AFRICA	8	3	4	2	1	2	20
ERITREA	8	0	0	0	0	0	8
ETIOPIA	0	0	0	1	0	0	1
GHANA	0	1	0	0	1	0	2
SOMALIA	0	2	4	1	0	2	9
ASIA	6	9	20	37	0	0	72
BANGLADESH	1	2	1	15	0	0	19
INDIA	5	0	15	0	0	0	20
NEPAL	0	7	4	22	0	0	33
TOTAL	25	25	26	79	1	2	158

Source: Integrated Migration Management System and consolidated by the Information Planning and Analysis Unit.

From January 2011 to August 2016, there were 54,516 entries of migrants in an irregular situation from Cuba, Haiti, Asia, and Africa (Table 25).

**Table 25. Panama -**  
Entry of irregular migrants via Darién province from Asia, Africa and the Caribbean, 2011 - Aug 2016

Continent / region / country of nationality	2011		2012		2013		2014		2015		Jan-Aug 2016		Total 2011-Aug 2016	
	Subtotal	%	Subtotal	%	Subtotal	%	Subtotal	%	Subtotal	%	Subtotal	%	TOTAL	%
CARRIBEAN	19	11.9	1,156	66.8	2,012	67.2	5,027	81.7	24,630	84.3	5,259	36.9	38,103	69.9
CUBA	18	11.3	1,154	66.7	2,010	67.1	5,026	81.6	24,623	84.3	5,228	36.7	38,059	69.8
HAITI	1	0.6	2	0.1	2	0.1	1	0.0	7	0.0	31	0.2	44	0.1
AFRICA	62	38.8	172	9.9	251	8.4	257	4.2	1326	4.5	7442	52.2	9510	17.4
CONGO	-		-		-		1		5		5702		5708	
SOMALIA	20		112		174		161		527		122		1116	
GHANA	1		7		8		38		498		327		879	
SENEGAL	-		-		-		-		44		323		367	
ERITREA	15		31		10		23		80		89		248	
GUINEA	1		-		2		2		27		164		196	
MALI	-		-		-		1		14		175		190	
CAMEROON	1		-		-		6		39		109		155	
ETIOPIA	5		3		52		19		24		20		123	
Other	19		19		5		6		68		411		528	
ASIA	79	49.4	402	23.2	732	24.4	872	14.2	3260	11.2	1558	10.9	6903	12.7
NEPAL	9		213		297		468		2426		976		4389	
BANGLADESH	45		89		398		377		559		404		1872	
PAKISTAN	3		10		6		19		188		144		370	
SIRI LANKA	-		22		22		5		58		4		111	
Other	22		68		9		3		29		30		161	
GRAND TOTAL	160	100.0	1,730	100.0	2,995	100.0	6,156	100.0	29,216	100.0	14,259	100.0	54,516	100.0

Source: Department of Statistics of the National Migration Service, based on information from the Liaison Office and subject to change.

80% of these entries were reported very recently, between 2015 and August 2016, resulting in substantial growth caused primarily by the presence of Cuban migrants, who in 2015 accounted for 84.3% of the irregular migration from all origins considered in this study.

Although the greatest increase in the presence of Cuban migrants was in 2015 (five times greater than in 2014), the presence of irregular flows from this origin has accounted for an ample majority throughout the period of analysis from 2011 to June 2016, representing 69.8% compared with 17.4% from Africa and 12.7% from Asia.

The presence and most significant increases of the Asian migrants were concentrated in two countries of origin, Nepal and Bangladesh, accounting for 91% of all cases and they have been the principal countries of origin since 2011.

The presence of undocumented African migrants was lower than the Asians in the period, but as of 2016 there was a massive and spontaneous surge of Congolese migrants, accounting in January-August 2016 for 77% of the irregular African migration and 40% of the total from all origins included in this study. This increase may be directly related to the internal conflict in the Democratic Republic of Congo, where according to statistics of the UNHCR in August 2016 there were more than 400,000 persons in refugee camps within its borders.

Most of the migrants in shelters are Asians and Africans, with a sharp decline after a peak reported in 2013 (Table 26).

**Table 26.** Panama -  
Distribution of migrants, by origin, retained in shelters, 2011-2016 [1]

Continent/ country of nationality	2011		2012		2013		2014		2015		2016		Total 2011-Ago 2016	
Cuba	225	63.0	328	36.2	9	0.7	21	2.3	-	-	16	34.0	599	16.7
Haiti	3	0.8	2	0.2	11	0.9	17	1.9	11	11.2	2	4.3	46	1.3
Africa	49	13.7	172	19.0	323	25.3	176	19.6	24	24.5	1	2.1	745	20.8
Asia	80	22.4	403	44.5	933	73.1	683	76.1	63	64.3	28	59.6	2,190	61.2
<b>GRAND TOTAL</b>	<b>357</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>905</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>1,276</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>897</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>98</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>47</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>3,580</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Source: Department of Statistics of the National Migration Service.

[1] The Department of Statistics of the National Migration Service only retains migrants in order to verify his/her migratory status, complying with the migration laws.

Note: (-) means zero.

Finally, for the period from 2011 to August 2016 there were few deportations, with most of them for migrants of Asian origin (Table 27).

**Table 27. Panama -**

Deportation of irregular migrants by continent / region / country of nationality, 2011 - Aug 2016

Continent / region / country of nationality	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	TOTAL
<b>CARIBBEAN</b>	11	13	2	40	0	0	47
CUBA	2	4	1	-	-	4	11
HAITI	-	-	4	10	11	11	36
<b>AFRICA</b>	8	3	4	2	1	2	5
GHANA	-	-	-	1	1	-	2
CAMEROON	-	1	-	-	-	-	1
GUINEA	1	-	-	-	-	-	1
SOUTH AFRICA	-	-	-	1	-	-	1
<b>ASIA</b>	-	-	-	1	-	-	99
INDIA	-	20	10	3	-	-	33
BANGLADESH	23	2	-	-	-	-	25
CHINA	3	-	2	2	4	3	14
PAKISTAN	6	-	1	-	-	6	13
NEPAL	6	-	-	-	-	-	6
IRAN	4	-	-	-	-	-	4
SIRIA	-	-	2	-	-	-	2
LEBANON	-	-	1	-	-	-	1
SOUTH KOREA	1	-	-	-	-	-	1
<b>GRAND TOTAL</b>	25	25	26	79	1	2	151

Source: Center for Integral Attention to Migrants and data consolidated by the Information Planning and Analysis Unit.



» **MEXICO**

From January 2011 to June 2016, there were 36,806 events of migrants entering the migration stations of the National Migration Institute, which occurred under the administrative procedure of presentation that did not recognize their migratory situation. They are from Cuba, Haiti, Asia, and Africa (Table 28).

**Table 28. Mexico -**

Foreigners submitted to the immigration authorities by continent, country of nationality and gender, 2011 - June 2016 1 /

Continent / country of nationality	2011			2012			2013			2014			2015			Jan-Jun 2016 p/		
	♂	♀	Subtotal	♂	♀	Subtotal	♂	♀	Subtotal	♂	♀	Subtotal	♂	♀	Subtotal	♂	♀	Subtotal
<b>CARIBBEAN ISLANDS</b>	726	193	919	2,449	1,016	3,465	1,101	423	1,524	1,771	559	2,330	6,765	3,117	9,882	1,360	613	1,973
Cuba	590	172	762	2,263	984	3,247	970	396	1,366	1,572	525	2,097	6,568	3,055	9,623	1,281	599	1,880
Haiti	54	7	61	94	18	112	21	7	28	47	13	60	53	24	77	37	10	47
Other	82	14	96	92	14	106	110	20	130	152	21	173	144	38	182	42	4	46
<b>AFRICA</b>	287	45	332	344	37	381	538	52	590	806	60	866	2,017	237	2,254	3,294	720	4,014
Somalia	75	8	83	169	7	176	316	23	339	375	28	403	799	65	864	174	34	208
Congo, (Democratic Republic of the)	1	-	1	-	-	-	3	-	3	2	-	2	6	2	8	1,598	384	1,982
Ghana	12	1	13	22	-	22	62	3	65	165	4	169	581	50	631	353	43	396
Eritrea	108	28	136	49	12	61	58	11	69	72	11	83	135	20	155	130	10	140
Senegal	1	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	4	-	4	44	2	46	202	35	237
Guinea	1	-	1	-	-	-	8	-	8	17	-	17	68	11	79	115	14	129
Mali	3	-	3	-	-	-	2	-	2	5	-	5	22	4	26	146	50	196
Cameroon	4	-	4	4	2	6	11	3	14	18	3	21	66	27	93	62	14	76
Other	41	4	45	50	8	58	39	6	45	74	7	81	148	28	176	257	68	325
<b>ASIA</b>	724	106	830	297	51	348	851	95	946	1,056	55	1,111	2,172	151	2,323	2,531	187	2,718
India	430	21	451	50	1	51	586	15	601	134	6	140	538	36	574	1,366	33	1,399
Bangladesh	37	-	37	29	-	29	83	1	84	632	-	632	693	9	702	394	32	426
Nepal	38	4	42	32	5	37	38	2	40	65	7	72	468	39	507	489	63	552
China	117	61	178	74	30	104	70	31	101	74	24	98	43	25	68	31	9	40
Pakistan	15	-	15	21	-	21	7	-	7	33	-	33	227	6	233	151	16	167
Sri Lanka	34	8	42	15	1	16	7	2	9	6	-	6	37	4	41	2	2	4
Other				38	7	45	30	22	52	56	9	65	83	16	99	49	16	65
<b>GRAND TOTAL</b>	<b>1,737</b>	<b>344</b>	<b>2,081</b>	<b>3,090</b>	<b>1,104</b>	<b>4,194</b>	<b>2,490</b>	<b>570</b>	<b>3,060</b>	<b>3,633</b>	<b>674</b>	<b>4,307</b>	<b>10,954</b>	<b>3,505</b>	<b>14,459</b>	<b>7,185</b>	<b>1,520</b>	<b>8,705</b>

(-) means zero.

Source: Migration Policy Unit, SEGOB, based on information registered in migratory stations, central and local offices of the INM.

1/Up to 2012, the information includes foreigners admitted to the migratory stations of the National Institute of Migration (INM) under the administrative procedure of insurance stated under the "Memorandum of Understanding between the governments of Mexico, El Salvador, Guatemala, and Honduras and Nicaragua, for the dignified, orderly, expeditious and safe repatriation of Central American migrants by land" (signed on May 5, 2006), and its annex, dated April 26 2007; which are then returned to their countries of origin. From 2013, the information includes migrants registered by the INM under the administrative procedure of presentation for not accrediting their migratory situation, as foreseen in the arts. 99, 112 and 113 of the Law on Migration and Art. 222 of its Rules of Procedure.

p/ Preliminary information.

The figures may differ from those published in the Government and Labor reports due to the validation process of the information.

Source: Migration Policy Unit, SEGOB, based on information registered in migratory stations, central and local offices of the INM.

Sixty-three percent of these events were reported very recently, between 2015 and June 2016, with a significant increase caused primarily by the presence of Cuban migrants, who in 2015 accounted for 66.6% of the undocumented migration from all origins included in this study (Table 29).

**Table 29. Mexico -**  
Distribution of foreigners submitted to the immigration authorities by continent / country of origin, 2011 - June

Continent / country of origin	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016 (jan-jun)	Total 2011-Jun 2016
Cuba	36.6	77.4	44.6	48.7	66.6	21.6	51.6
Haiti	7.5	5.2	5.2	5.4	1.8	1.1	3.0
Africa	16.0	9.1	19.3	20.1	15.6	46.1	22.9
Asia	39.9	8.3	30.9	25.8	16.1	31.2	22.5
<b>GRAND TOTAL</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Source: Migration Policy Unit, SEGOB, based on information registered in migratory stations, central and local offices of the INM.

Note: Statistics distribution presented relate to events, not people, because such people will be counted multiple times in the government numbers that year and reflect counts of the number of entries or entry attempts.

Although the greatest increase in the presence of Cuban migrants occurred as of 2015, the presence of irregular flows from this origin has accounted for an ample majority representing 52% of the events reported, compared with 22% of Asians and 23% of Africans, for the period of analysis from 2011 to June 2016.

The presence of Asian migrants was twice as great in 2015 as it was in 2014, and in January-June 2016 it already surpassed the total for 2015. The increases were significant for the six principal nationalities of origin: India, Bangladesh, Nepal, China, Pakistan, and Sri Lanka; the increase was especially large for the Indian migrants, whose presence in the short period from January to June 2016 was nearly three times greater than in 2015 and 10 times greater than in 2014.

In relative terms, the presence of African migrants increased more than that of the Asians, almost tripling their presence in 2015 compared with 2014, and for the period from January to June 2016, their presence was 78% more than in all of 2015.

The eight principal nationalities of origin reported during the period are: Somalia, Democratic Republic of Congo, Ghana, Eritrea, Senegal, Guinea, Mali, and Cameroun, with a big surge in Congolese migrants in the first half of 2016.

Irregular migration mostly involves men from all origins. The percentage is higher for those from Asia and Africa (a ratio that varies from five to 20 men for every woman during the period) than it is for those from Cuba (a ratio that varies between two and three men for every woman).



For the period of 2011 to June 2016, a total of 2,409 foreigners were deported by the Mexican migration authority (Table 30), with the greatest increase starting in 2015. There are significant differences with respect to origin: 57.7% Cubans, 17.8% Asians, 5.7% Haitians, and 1.9% Africans. For the Africans, the very low percentage of deportations could be due, among other things, to greater difficulties in implementing administrative procedures because of the lack of consular or diplomatic representation.

**Table 30. Mexico -**  
Foreigners returned by the immigration authorities, by continent, country of nationality and gender, 2011 - June

Continent / Country of nationality	2011			2012			2013			2014			2015			Jan-Jun 2016 p/			Total 2011 -Jun. 2016 p/	% Total by origin
	♂	♀	Sub-total	♂	♀	Sub-total	♂	♀	Sub-total	♂	♀	Sub-total	♂	♀	Sub-total	♂	♀	Sub-total		
<b>CARIBBEAN ISLANDS</b>	174	27	201	386	102	488	268	59	327	242	57	299	464	155	619	224	69	293	1,934	80.3
Cuba	116	19	135	256	87	343	192	52	244	154	49	203	341	125	466	174	62	236	1,391	57.7
Haiti	6	1	7	66	7	73	12	1	13	14	-	14	23	7	30	11	3	14	137	5.7
Other	52	7	59	64	8	72	64	6	70	74	8	82	100	23	123	39	4	43	406	16.9
<b>ASIA</b>	140	29	169	33	8	41	84	13	97	52	9	61	52	10	62	94	8	102	430	17.8
South Arabia	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	1	2	-	2	-	-	-	3	0.1
Armenia	1	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	0.0
Azerbaijan	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	0.0
Bangladesh	1	-	1	-	-	-	5	-	5	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	6	0.2
China	62	26	88	22	8	30	24	10	34	18	6	24	10	7	17	20	4	24	193	8.0
Korea, (Republic of)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	1	-	-	-	1	0.0
Korea, (Democratic People's Republic of)	3	-	3	-	-	-	2	-	2	7	1	8	2	1	3	-	-	-	16	0.7
Philippines	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	1	-	1	1	-	1	1	-	-	-	3	0.1
India	69	1	70	4	-	4	44	-	44	-	-	-	3	-	3	-	-	-	121	5.0
Indonesia	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	1	-	-	-	1	0.0
Iran	2	-	2	-	-	-	1	-	1	2	-	2	2	-	2	1	-	1	7	0.3

Continent / Country of nationality	2011			2012			2013			2014			2015			Jan-Jun 2016 p/			Total 2011-Jun. 2016 p/	% Total by origin
	♂	♀	Sub-total	♂	♀	Sub-total	♂	♀	Sub-total	♂	♀	Sub-total	♂	♀	Sub-total	♂	♀	Sub-total		
Japan	1	-	1	-	-	-	3	1	4	4	-	4	1	-	1	1	-	1	10	0.4
Kyrgyzstan	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	0.0
Lebanon	1	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	1	1	0.0
Nepal	-	-	-	1	-	1	3	-	3	14	-	14	18	-	18	57	2	59	36	1.5
Pakistan	-	-	-	3	-	3	-	-	-	3	-	3	1	-	1	14	1	15	7	0.3
Singapur	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	1	-	-	-	1	0.0
Sri Lanka	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	0.0
Thailand	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	1	-	-	-	-	1	1	-	-	-	2	0.1
Taiwan (Province of China)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	1	-	-	-	1	0.0
Turkey	-	-	-	2	-	2	-	-	-	-	1	1	2	-	2	-	-	-	5	0.2
Yemén	-	-	-	1	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	0.0

Africa	11	-	11	8	2	10	8	3	11	5	1	6	7	-	7	19	9	28	45	1.9
Cameroon	-	-	-	1	-	1	3	1	4	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	5	0.2
Côte d'Ivoire	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	1	2	-	2	1	1	2	3	0.1
Egypt	1	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	-	2	2	-	2	-	-	-	5	0.2
Ethiopia	-	-	-	2	-	2	1	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	3	0.1
Gambia	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	1	2	-	-	-	1	-	1	-	-	-	3	0.1
Ghana	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	0.0
Kenya	-	-	-	-	1	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	0.0
Morocco	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	0.0
Nigeria	8	-	8	5	1	6	-	-	-	2	-	2	1	-	1	-	-	-	17	0.7
Mali	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	15	6	21	1	0.0
South Africa	2	-	2	-	-	-	-	1	1	-	-	-	1	-	1	1	1	2	4	0.2
Togo	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	1	3	-	-
Zimbabwe	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	0.0
<b>GRAND TOTAL</b>	<b>325</b>	<b>56</b>	<b>381</b>	<b>427</b>	<b>112</b>	<b>539</b>	<b>360</b>	<b>75</b>	<b>435</b>	<b>299</b>	<b>67</b>	<b>366</b>	<b>523</b>	<b>165</b>	<b>688</b>	<b>337</b>	<b>86</b>	<b>423</b>	<b>2,409</b>	<b>100.0</b>

(-) means zero.

Notes: Statistics presented relate to events, not people, because such people will be counted multiple times. in the government numbers that year and reflect counts of the number of returns.

Deportation: Refers to the return of migrants to their country of origin who did not observe the provisions contained under the Migration Law and its Regulations (arts. 242 and 243), as provided in arts. 111, 115 and 122, following an administrative filing process, as established in art. 99 of the same Law.

Assisted return: Refers to migrants aged 18 and over, who requested to be returned to their home country, as provided in arts. 111, 115, 118 and 119 of the Migration Law and art. 193 of its Regulations, following an administrative filing process as established in art. 99 of the same Law.

p/ Preliminary information.

The figures may differ from those published in the Government and Labor reports due to the validation process of the information.

Source: Migration Policy Unit, SEGOB, based on information registered in migratory stations, central and local offices of the INM.

## 5.5 Summary of findings in country reports based on data from Colombia, Costa Rica, Honduras, El Salvador, Panama, and Mexico

Between 2012 and 2016,<sup>21</sup> irregular migratory flows from Africa, Asia, Cuba, and Haiti occurred in Colombia, Costa Rica, Honduras, El Salvador, Panama, and Mexico with the following characteristics:

- a) Between 2012 and 2014, irregular flows from all origins increased every year. With respect to the breakdown by origin each year, the Cubans had an ample majority (varying between approximately 50% and 90%), followed by the Asians (varying between approximately 15% and 25%) and Africans (varying between approximately 3% and 20%). However, although in absolute terms the number of Asians in an irregular situation is greater than the Africans, in proportion to their authorized immigration the relationship is reversed. Until 2014 there were very few Haitians in this group of countries analyzed.
- b) Starting in 2015, there was an exceptional increase in the irregular flows of Cubans, which grew from three to six times their 2014 levels (depending on the country analyzed). Flows of African and Asian origin also increased to two to five times their 2014 levels, but from a lower baseline than the Cubans. In the case of the Asians, the irregular situations concerned mainly the Nepalese, perhaps as a result of the devastating earthquakes of March and April 2015.
- c) In the first six months of 2016 there were some changes in the trends: (a) a reduction in the number of cases of Cubans, especially in Costa Rica, Honduras, El Salvador, Panama, and Mexico, to levels well below 2015, especially considering that 2016 was not yet over; (b) a great increase in Haitians in Colombia and Honduras; and (c) a sharp increase in the number of Africans, especially those from the Democratic Republic of Congo, in all the countries.
- d) The principal nationalities of origin are repeated in all the countries analyzed during this period. In the case of Africa they are the Republic of the Congo, Somalia, Ghana, Senegal, Cameroun, and Guinea. In the case of Asia they are Nepal, Bangladesh, Pakistan, and Sri Lanka.
- e) With respect to gender, migration of men is much greater than migration of women from all origins, but the differences are more notable for Africans and Asians than for Cubans.

Note: On January 12, 2017, the U.S. Government annulled the “dry foot, wet foot” policy, although the Cuban Adjustment Act, which grants Cubans permanent residence after one year in the country, is still in force and can only be rescinded by Congress. However, up to now the Cubans were given a special status of “conditional parole” while they waited for their year to be up. With the annulment of the “dry foot, wet foot” policy this parole will not be granted and Cuban citizens will be denied entry upon arrival and subjected to the same treatment given to migrants from other countries.

Although this will have implications for the migratory flows from Cuba, it does not alter the general conclusions of the analysis.

## 6 Situation of vulnerability of the migrants

### 6.1 Smuggling of migrants and trafficking in persons: Concepts

Communities around the world, both in the Americas and outside the Western Hemisphere, see immigration as a synonym for economic, political, cultural, or social opportunities, which are not always easy to find in their communities, cities, states, and countries of origin.

When migrating, men, women, and children generally have two alternatives: first, migrate in accordance with the laws and regulations of the countries; and second, risk migrating illegally, a situation that opens them up to crimes such as smuggling of migrants or trafficking in persons.

It is very difficult to obtain precise information on the routes and number of cases of smuggling of migrants and trafficking in persons, because of the challenge in getting an official record of that information, considering the frequent changes in these routes and methods and the difficulty of reconstructing the migration history of persons subjected to that crime, who frequently do not reveal the means used. However, recent data reveal the existence of at least 510 corridors for trafficking in persons in the world, of which 37% are international, 34% national, 26% between regions, and the remaining 3% between neighboring subregions.<sup>22</sup> Smuggling of migrants is always transnational.

As of 2000, with the approval of the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime and its protocols, among them the Protocol against the Smuggling of Migrants by Land, Sea, and Air and the Protocol to Prevent, Suppress, and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children,<sup>23</sup> more than 90% of the countries of the world have begun to criminalize trafficking in persons.

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22. UNODC. Global Report on Trafficking in Persons (2014). Available at: [http://www.unodc.org/documents/data-and-analysis/glotip/GLOTIP\\_2014\\_full\\_report.pdf](http://www.unodc.org/documents/data-and-analysis/glotip/GLOTIP_2014_full_report.pdf).

23. Available at: [http://www.cinu.mx/minisitio/Trafico\\_migrantes/Conv\\_Delincuencia\\_Org.pdf](http://www.cinu.mx/minisitio/Trafico_migrantes/Conv_Delincuencia_Org.pdf).

In practice, although they are different concepts, the definitions used in those protocols are often confused, and the terms “smuggling of migrants” and “trafficking in persons” are considered synonymous. According to the Protocol against the Smuggling of Migrants, “smuggling” is procurement of illegal entry of a person into a State of which the person is not a national or permanent resident, in order to obtain a financial or material benefit. The Protocol on Trafficking in Persons defines it as “the recruitment, transportation, transfer, harboring or receipt of persons, by means of the threat or use of force or other forms of coercion, of abduction, of fraud, of deception, of the abuse of power or of a position of vulnerability or of the giving or receiving of payments or benefits to achieve the consent of a person having control over another person, for the purpose of exploitation.”<sup>24</sup>

In the case of smuggling of migrants, they consent to the transfer although this often takes place in dangerous or degrading conditions. In the case of trafficking in persons, consent is irrelevant when the ultimate purpose is exploitation. To be considered a victim of trafficking, a person need not be transferred and/or transported; exploitation can occur within the same community, state, or country. Smuggling of migrants always involves a border crossing.

Finally, smuggling of migrants ends with the arrival of the undocumented migrants at their destination, whereas trafficking implies the exploitation of victims to generate illegal profits for traffickers after their arrival at the destination, at which time the crime occurs.

With respect to the geographic location of the crimes, both smuggling of migrants and trafficking in persons affect every country in the world in one way or another. In the case of the Americas, although the contexts differ, the profiles of victims of trafficking in persons tend to be similar. According to the Global Report on Trafficking in Persons (UNODC, 2014),<sup>25</sup> 70% of the victims exploited are adults and 30% are children. The majority of the adults exploited are women (80%) and two-thirds of the minors who are trafficking victims are girls. With respect to the purposes of the exploitation in North America and the Caribbean, 54% of the cases are for labor and 42% are for sexual purposes. In South America, the numbers are reversed, with 54% of the victims exploited for sexual purposes and 41% for labor.

**24.** For complete text see: <http://www.ohchr.org/EN/ProfessionalInterest/Pages/ProtocolTraffickingInPersons.aspx>.

**25.** UNODC. Global Report on Trafficking in Persons (2014). Available at: [http://www.unodc.org/documents/data-and-analysis/glotip/GLOTIP\\_2014\\_full\\_report.pdf](http://www.unodc.org/documents/data-and-analysis/glotip/GLOTIP_2014_full_report.pdf).

**26.** Ibid.

The migratory flows in an irregular situation addressed in this study occur in the context of vulnerability, where criminal bands find room for action and crimes related to illegal migration become potential risks. In 80% of the cases of trafficking in persons,<sup>26</sup> the trafficker is of the same nationality as the victim. The traffickers take advantage of the fragile and vulnerable situation of the citizens owing to the lack of work, education, gender equity, and cultural standards, and seduce them with promises of a better life full of luxury.

## 6.2 The migrants' perspective

According to interviews conducted with migrants and refugees from other continents,<sup>27</sup> they have experienced serious deterioration of their physical and emotional health because of the process of uprooting, the long journey, the daily confrontation with national authorities and other agents who do not know the reasons for their migration, and in some cases the long periods of detention and the uncertainty this entails.

The interviewees also report that often the smugglers abandon them near where they enter the transit countries, which potentially endangers their lives because of armed groups, gangs, common criminals, traffickers, etc.

When crossing the borders these persons face risk factors and vulnerability that threaten their security. Difficulties in entering can force them to change the point of entry or the smuggler, or remain longer in areas near the border, which increases the likelihood that they can become victims of agents involved in common crimes or transnational crime.<sup>28</sup>

## 6.3 Other aspects that contribute to the vulnerability of the irregular flows

**27.** IOM. Interviews conducted between July 1 and August 1, 2016 with several migrants in Paso Canoas, Río Claro, Buenos Aires, Quebrada Grande, Daidu, and Peñas Blancas (in Costa Rica). Interviews conducted by IOM, Mayvelline González, Sofía Arce, and Samantha Subías with various migrants whose names are confidential.

**28.** IOM 2013: “Migrantes extracontinentales en América del Sur: Estudios de caso” [Migrants from other continents in South America: Case Studies] Cuadernos Migratorios no. 5, Buenos Aires, Argentina.

IOM, UNHCR: “Diagnóstico sobre la situación actual, tendencias y necesidades de protección y asistencia de las personas migrantes y refugiadas extracontinentales en México y América Central” [Study on the current situation, trends, and needs for protection and assistance of migrants and refugees from other continents in Mexico and Central America] San José, Costa Rica, 2011.

The lack of access to information on their rights and the problems in getting legal assistance is another factor that increases the vulnerability of migrants transiting in an irregular manner through the region.

This is exacerbated by the limited consular presence from their countries of origin; one problem posed by these migrations for all the countries of the region is that often they come from countries that do not have diplomatic or consular representation in the region, so the ability for intergovernmental and inter-agency communication is practically nil.





## 7 Challenges for responding to the irregular flows of migrants from other continents, Cuba, and Haiti

### 7.1 Protection, assistance, and application of immigration law

Authorities of countries in the region face serious challenges in responding to these flows of migrants, especially in the case of large groups. The first challenge is to protect and assist them, and the second is to apply the immigration law. With respect to the former, the discovery of migrants from outside the region stranded on the border between Panama and Costa Rica demonstrated some of the problems both countries face in responding to this heavy flow of migrants.

#### An example of the situation encountered on the Costa Rica-Panama border (April 25, 2016)

Number and presumed nationality of migrants registered by Costa Rican authorities who are stranded at the border, according to information from the migrants:

- 289 Congo	- 51 Senegal	- 48 Mali
- 20 Burkina Faso	- 18 Côte d'Ivoire	- 15 Guinea Bissau
- 11 Ghana	- 1 Mozambique	- 1 Togo
- 1 Cameroon		

#### » Living conditions

Most of these people spend the night in formal or improvised accommodations and a few of them sleep on the street. Many spend the day on the street. They say they have been traveling for at least two months.

#### » Access to bathrooms

They have access to bathrooms in the places where they are staying. The Costa Rican Government placed 10 portable toilets on the street and a spigot for drinking water. There is water stagnation in some sites where they are concentrated. The Red Cross has installed a primary health care facility, and any case requiring medical attention is referred to the authorities. Persons requiring treatment for high blood pressure have been cared for.

The government has opened a service center for vulnerable migrants, such as pregnant women, the elderly, and families with young children. There have been attempts to relocate the facility in equipped centers, which have not been accepted by most of the group.

» **Food and drinking water**

Most of the migrants have resources to buy food. Several churches, businesses, people of the community, and the Red Cross give them food.

» **Communication with the migrants**

The authorities do not have a team of interpreters and are using volunteers to translate into French. A group of five migrants serves as intermediaries for the Spanish speakers. It is not certain that they represent the whole group, or that they transmit all of the information.

» **Intention of the migrants**

They say that they only want to continue migration to the United States, without stopping in any other country or returning to their countries of origin.

Source: Visits on April 25, 2016 to Paso Canoas (Costa Rica).

On the second challenge, the application of immigration law, the migration management model applicable to these cases is the model in force in all countries of the region, known as the 3Ds, which consists of the successive detection, detention, and deportation of undocumented migrants; this has not worked, given the characteristics of these groups of migrants. According to these findings, in most cases the model is inapplicable because these migrants are hard to deport for humanitarian, practical, and financial reasons. Moreover, in the context of respect for their human rights, they should not be in detention waiting for deportation which will be impossible to carry out given the governments' lack of conditions and resources (Gutiérrez, 2015).<sup>29</sup>

Other purely logistical factors that limit or preclude deportation of these migrants have been identified: the problem of proving nationality, the problem of obtaining passports and identity documents, the problem of getting authorization from transit countries, and the possible restrictions on return by some of the countries of origin. The experience on the ground of the IOM in various countries of the world makes it possible to affirm that for budgetary and technical reasons, voluntary assisted repatriation of this type of flows is extremely complicated, and is only applicable to a relatively limited number of cases.

Faced with this situation, the governments of the Americas are legally obligated to apply immigration laws that in most cases are unworkable and even inapplicable for managing this type of flow, yet they lack legal alternatives that would permit them to handle them differently.

29. Gutiérrez, S. (2015). El modelo de gestión migratoria de las 3Ds: dilemas de su aplicación para los gobiernos de Mesoamérica. [The migration management model of the 3Ds: dilemmas in their application for governments of Meso-America] Universidad Iberoamericana León. Colaboración para Revista Entretextos.

The increase in the number of illegal migrants from other continents, Cuba, and Haiti that are transiting the Americas shows that the strategies for prevention and control of smuggling that have been implemented so far have had limited success. Migration authorities have said on several occasions that they fear that the groups of migrants include their smugglers. Similarly, the authorities suspect that some of these migrants are victims of trafficking in persons and that the groups include their traffickers. They also recognize the great difficulties they face to identify the smugglers and traffickers, punish the crimes they commit, and, what is even more important, to identify and protect their victims.<sup>30</sup>

## 7.2 The humanitarian challenge<sup>31</sup>

The recent flows of migrants from Haiti, Cuba, and other continents are added to the “traditional” migration that seeks to enter the United States. This “traditional” migration involves mainly migrants from the countries of the Northern Triangle of Central America and Mexico, whose humanitarian needs are greater because of the heavy, consistent “traditional” flow and its connection with various situations of violence.

As mentioned above, the main challenges confronting these groups in their journey include the barriers to crossing some borders, so they are stranded for a long time or required to cross zones of difficult access; the lack of adequate housing and basic health care, especially for pregnant women and children, who are the most at-risk people in this migration flow, especially in the most dangerous zones of the journey (some of which have high crime rates with the potential for abuse by armed actors, or naturally isolated areas); lack of access to information on procedures for legal migration (in part because of the language barrier); lack of access to satisfactory means of communication to stay in contact with their families; and a systematic practice of detention of migrants has been identified in some countries. Detained migrants who suffer from illnesses or injuries, or are victims of violence, require proper medical care.

Another relevant factor is the States’ lack of experience in managing this type of care because of the “new” migratory routes (mainly for Costa Rica, Panama, and Nicaragua), where migrants are arriving in large groups, coming from countries where there has been little or no migration to the Americas. Formerly, these migratory flows, especially of Cubans and those from other continents, primarily, had their own means (financing, organization) and a degree of invisibility which

**30.** IOM. Interviews conducted between July 1 and August 1, 2016 with several migrants in Paso Canoas, Río Claro, Buenos Aires, Quebrada Grande, Daidu, and Peñas Blancas (in Costa Rica). Interviews conducted by IOM, Mayvelling González, Sofía Arce, and Samantha Subías with various migrants whose names are confidential.

**31.** This section was prepared with input from the International Committee of the Red Cross. For more information, please see: <https://www.icrc.org/es/document/personas-migrantes-y-sus-familias>.

called for limited involvement of migratory authorities. Today, however, persons comprising these new flows arrive in precarious conditions with serious basic needs owing to the difficulties of the route. So these flows pose a great challenge to the affected countries.

The main factors that contribute to exacerbating the humanitarian needs of these migrants from Haiti, Cuba, and other continents are:

- Prolonged stays of the migrants owing to the closure of the borders;
- The migrants' unfamiliarity with the complications of the route (they need longer time to reorganize, they have problems with the language and the lack of relevant information communicated by the migratory authorities);
- Lack of approval in the documentation systems of transit countries for these migrants;

Another factor is the lack of diplomatic representation for most of the persons from Africa, Asia, and the Middle East in the region, except in the United States, which also makes it difficult to identify and document the persons. For most of the Haitian migrants, although there is a diplomatic presence in Mexico, Panama, and the United States, the consular services are inaccessible. Some States in the region have developed a system to manage the migration flow that includes migrant service centers, and procedures for documenting migrants. However, these efforts need to be applied systematically to respond in a permanent way to these basic needs.

In spite of the challenges posed to the countries by the migratory flows of Haitians, Cubans, and migrants from other continents, it is essential not to neglect the “traditional” migrant population, whose needs for protection are usually more pressing and must be properly served by the authorities, since the number of persons attempting to enter the United States and being deported constitutes a humanitarian crisis in the current context of violence in the region.

## 8 Progress in the area of regional organizations - the Regional Conference on Migration

Regional organizations have addressed the issue in the search for consensual responses to the challenges that these irregular flows present for the countries. The Central American Integration System (SICA), the Central American Commission of Migration Directors (OCAM) and the Regional Conference on Migration (RCM) have convened their members in order to discuss and seek consensus on the approach of these flows.

Since 2010, in response to the growing trend of extra-regional flows in the region, in its Vice-minister's meeting, the RCM has decided to address the concern of the member countries of OCAM due to the increase of extra-regional migration flows and the challenges it poses; therefore, support was requested from the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and the International Organization for Migration (IOM) to implement the agreed actions. Also, the following year the RCM decided to form an ad-hoc Working Group to continue the dialogue and agreements on the subject. The group met for the first time in Panama in 2012.

Over the course of 2016, the RCM intensified its work on the subject. The ad-hoc Group has created a technical working group, composed of specialized focal points from each country, to define the tools and processes that will be applied in the region for the exchange of information related to extra-regional migration flows.

In compliance with this mandate, significant technical advances have been made in the development and implementation of these tools to collect and share information on extra-regional and Caribbean movements in the region. Specifically, during a meeting held on November 3rd and 4th, 2016, the participants of this ad-hoc Group reached the following agreements:

- Generate effective information exchange, between the RCM countries, the RCM countries and origin/destination countries, as well as between RCM and SCM.
- Generate real data on the quantity of migrants that have entered, transited or departed from each country, including data on the attention provided to them and what kind of attention was provided, especially regarding health.
- Act as a region from a shared responsibility point of view, while taking into account the need to ensure the sustainability of the actions taken and the necessary interinstitutional coordination.
- Achieve regional agreements, including with the SCM, which could be a starting point for the effective collaboration to identify unidentifiable migrants.
- The RCM Technical Secretariat has to play a role in the follow up and monitoring of agreements related to the exchange of information on extra-regional migrants.
- Lead efforts towards the recognition that many of these migrants are of Haitian origin, in order to develop a regional strategy in accordance with this fact. Hence, it is suggested that countries:
  - » Include in the statistical data they generate, the variable of unknown nationality and presumption of nationality. This should also apply to the data generated in the framework of the commitments previously established within the RCM for the exchange of information on these flows.
  - » Make efforts to identify accents and ask questions about history and culture of the country to which the migrants declare to belong, in order to establish such presumption of nationality or non-nationality.
  - » Request support from the Embassy of Haiti in Panama for the identification of Haitians.
  - » Undertake regional efforts to share biometric data of the migrants in order to identify them.
- Recognize that, at the moment, practically all of these migrants do not want international protection or a permit to stay and also, do not intend to stay in the countries of the region. Request IOM, UNHCR and other cooperation agencies to take into account this fact for the solutions they offer.
- Regarding the eventual return agreements with origin countries: make sure that these countries provide minimum guarantees for migrants, and that they don't give any penal sanction to those who have been the object of illicit trafficking.

- In order to prevent the abuse of the asylum status before the arrival of huge masses of migrants, the suggestions are:
  - » To collect information from the first countries of arrival of these migrants.
  - » To guarantee the availability of options other than the status of refugee.
  - » To apply, especially in destination countries, accelerated processes for the recognition of the asylum or the refuge in order to prevent crisis.

**Revision and precision of agreements previously generated within the framework of the RCM:**

- Regarding the creation of an integrated system for sharing information on migration flows, specifically for extra-regional persons, the difficulties in moving forward with this agreement are evident; generated by the incompatibility of systems, the sensitivity of the information, which cannot proceed without agreements authorizing to share the information, and technical criteria of IT units.
- Given this situation, it is suggested to proceed with the creation of an integrated information system, within the framework of the RCM, taking into account the obstacles identified, naming possible focal points for this and setting goals to generate such a system. This system could be administered by the TS, or by a country that would commit to it. In this regard, the Member Countries will verify in each capital the options of assuming this commitment and will communicate them to the other Member Countries for their consideration.
- Regarding the diplomatic cooperation with origin countries, the obstacles are the absence of consulates in these countries and the slow response to consultations made. The proposal is to reinforce the diplomatic communication with the Haitian representation in Panama.
- In terms of cooperation with transportation companies to regulate these flows, it was difficult to develop international or regional agreements with these companies. Therefore, it was only feasible to control at the national level, as a more effective mechanism. This reiterated the importance of calling on countries to strengthen their control systems in public transportations.
- With regard to obtaining cooperation from other international and regional organizations and platforms to address these flows, the opportunity for the RCM to have a common position on this issue is evident. One possible step would be the development of a common RCM policy statement or position

on the issue. It will also be important to formulate regional cooperation project initiatives, which can be addressed by donor countries, specifying what the requested assistance is, its objectives and scope. This could be initiated through the Pro-Tempore Presidency and the Technical Secretariat.

- Regarding cooperation as a region to identify vulnerable extra-regional migrants, it is suggested that the “Regional Guidelines for the preliminary identification of profiles and reference mechanisms of vulnerable migrant populations” approved in 2012 within the RCM is used and known at the regional level in order for countries to apply such regional guidelines until it becomes part of each country at the national level. Likewise, it is proposed that the focal points send to the TS their progress on the implementation of the approved guidelines and that the TS make the corresponding information request in this regard.
- The RCM focal points have been requested to suggest to the Vice-ministers the prompt organization of a workshop on practices for the identification of vulnerable extra-regional migrants, at a national or regional level within a year, assigning the responsibility of conducting this task to the Migration Directorates of each country.
- Regarding cooperation to prevent and combat illicit trafficking, it is suggested that registers of entries and exits of these migrants (if they exist) are shared. It is also recommended that information is collected in order to elaborate a brief monthly regional report on migration flows. The TS could be asked to collect or analyze this information. Countries could also assign specialists.
- In terms of regional collaboration to promote return agreements with countries of origin, transit and last residence, it should be pointed out that the return should be an additional mechanism, executed in parallel with other primary processes. It is suggested the creation of national or regional initiatives to assist migrants in the return process, or the establishment of funds at a regional level for these purposes. In addition, under the principle of co-responsibility, it is suggested to request greater financial cooperation from destination countries.
- Differentiated regional policies should be generated in order to manage the different nationalities of extra-regional migrants.



- It is suggested to request that the United States clarify whether they will continue with their migration policies, in order for the region to have clarity on the options regarding the management of extra-regional migration flows. This should be discussed in the Vice-ministerial meeting.
- Regarding regional collaboration to avoid the abuse of the refugee (asylum) status, it is suggested to begin by recognizing the lack of knowledge about the asylum processes and the alternatives to it. It is suggested to create, from the outset, in entry and transit countries, clear information tools on the possibilities of asylum and other refugee mechanisms available to these migrants which are valid in the legislations of the Member Countries.
- It is suggested to move forward in ongoing training processes on refuge and asylum for personnel who have direct contact with the population.
- It is suggested to invest in more accelerated and expedited processes to determine the condition of refugee in cases where migrations are not massive.
- It is suggested to develop a campaign focused on the risks of migration and the rights of migrants. To do this, each delegation will designate a focal point of communication to address the issues of the eventual campaign and this decision will be communicated to the TS to progress with the development of same. Such a campaign may also include information on migration options for extra-regional migrants in Member Countries.



## 9 Country Recommendations

The countries that responded the survey circulated to prepare this report generally stated that it is important to continue the work that has been done at the regional level in the different forums where agreements have been adopted to seek joint solutions, since these migrants are not intended to remain in the countries of the region, but to go to the United States. Among other things, they emphasize the importance of joint action to combat the smuggling of migrants and trafficking in persons, as it is a structural component of these extra-continental and Caribbean flows in the region.

In addition, some actions that can be taken jointly at the international level in the specific countries identified in the surveys, are:

1. To promote actions that generate permanent, systematized and periodic information on the subject. Make migration visible in order to make it secure.
2. To provide primary care to detected persons in order to proceed with the initiation of the immigration procedure.
3. To identify and promote actions that facilitate assisted return, as well as actions to provide international protection.
4. To ensure specialized treatment for the most vulnerable groups of this irregular migration, including children, the elderly, persons with disabilities and women.
5. To promote actions to discourage trafficking in persons; share information and joint actions globally, aimed at eradicating and cutting off any source that feeds trafficking and smuggling networks.

**32.** It includes, Colombia, Costa Rica, Honduras, El Salvador, Panama y Mexico.

6. To define standard criteria, - by elaborating proposals that consider national interests at the national security level, such as public security and human rights for example, - with the purpose of promoting regional policies that contribute to the eradication of irregular migration and that promote an orderly migration, in relation to migratory laws that legislate the different countries involved in these migratory issues.
7. To encourage actions that promote entrenchment and development in the countries of origin.

At the national level, the countries involved in the study highlight the following measures to better address the irregular migration of extra-continental and Caribbean origin, which include:

- Improving national legislation of the countries in order to facilitate the international mobility of persons in an orderly, safe and legal manner.
- Building infrastructure with sufficient capacity to house migrants detected in communities with greater presence of migrants.
- Training operational and administrative officers, so that they can detect any anomaly in these irregular flows.
- Coordinating with the different migratory entities to provide humanitarian assistance to prevent the arrival of irregular migrants through the use of lists.
- Strengthening border control and training border officials in the specificities of the management of these flows.

## 10 General conclusions

Analysis of irregular migration flows from Africa, Asia, and the Caribbean and the quest for durable solutions should be based on an approach comprising the Hemisphere as a whole. The empirical evidence analyzed from 2011 to mid- 2016 clearly indicates that the different issues posed by irregular migration transcend the bilateral or regional sphere, and involve a much wider spectrum of American countries that includes the origin, transit, and destination countries of those migration flows.

In a general context of increased migration in the Americas (from both within and outside the Americas), a number of factors have influenced an extraordinary increase in irregular migration flows from the origins analyzed, particularly from 2015.

Successive natural disasters in Haiti and in distant Nepal in Asia, situations of extreme violence in the Democratic Republic of the Congo in Africa, and other reasons, such as Cuban expectations that facilities for immigrating to the United States will be terminated owing to normalization of U.S.-Cuban diplomatic relations, have contributed to extraordinary increases of flows to the Americas of nationals of the above-mentioned origins.

The evidence gathered from information on settlement in the Americas by migrants from Africa, Asia, and the Caribbean using a historical series of censuses, annual migration flows (measured based on temporary and permanent permits issued), and asylum applications compared with existing information on irregular flows and their routes suggests that irregular flows should be analyzed by their origins and specific characteristics; otherwise States will be unable to develop adequate responses for attention, treatment, and protection. If effective responses are to be prepared, specific profiles of the migrants involved must be available, since, under both national and international norms, different care, treatment, and protection solutions are required in different situations.

In many cases, lack of documentation, language barriers, and the absence of consular and diplomatic representation make it difficult to deal with the wide array of national authorities and international and civil society organizations involved in migration.

The available evidence and independent analysis of the dynamics of each origin suggest a common element: the most likely final destination for Haitian, African, and Asian flows is the United States, followed to a lesser degree by Brazil. For Cubans, the most likely final destinations are Mexico and Ecuador. The remaining Latin American countries analyzed indicate that they are transit, not destination, countries for nationals of these origins.

Although it is not possible to measure the impact of diasporas of nationals of these origins established in the United States on their compatriots, encouraging them to emigrate to that destination, different data sources (censuses, flows, asylum applications) indicate that they are much more likely to find a figure that induces or facilitates their immigration to the United States rather than to Latin America and Caribbean countries.

The migration of these persons to the north has generated a great challenge for the countries of Central America and some countries of South America. However, since extraordinary increases in irregular migration are recorded as of 2015, it is still early to assess whether this trend is confirmed or new final destinations emerge of such flows.

In light of the above analysis, this report makes the following recommendations for action:<sup>33</sup>

1. Promote regional dialogue for the adoption of an approach for shared responsibility among the States in addressing new extraregional migration flows. Accord priority, in collaborative efforts, to migrant well-being, protection, and assistance.
2. Strengthen integrated information systems on migration flows, specifically for information on extracontinental migrants, establishing whether an application for refugee status has been made in a given country of the region.
3. Step up efforts for coordination among States and strengthen their exchange with humanitarian and assistance organizations in order to understand, expand, and improve migrant access to basic assistance and protection services, including respect for the principle of non-refoulement.

**33.** For this section, the International Committee of the Red Cross provided some inputs.

4. Respect the principle of non-refoulement and use screening mechanisms for identification of potential protection problems before deciding whether to return migrants to their country of origin. In the case of minors, respect the principle of the higher interest of the child at all stages of his or her migration process.
5. Ensure access to health services by all persons within the national territory, including the migrant population, especially, migrants in situations of vulnerability, such as injured and/or sick migrants and migrant victims of violence.
6. Given the high risk of disappearance of migrants along the migration route, authorities have a responsibility to prevent and investigate disappearances, among other threats to physical integrity, facilitating measures for maintaining family contact and preserving the family unit (especially during detention and deportation).
7. With regard to the detention of migrants due to their immigration status, this should be an exceptional measure and should not be treated as a criminal offense nor should it result in measures of a criminal nature. Freedom and alternatives to detention should always be considered first, that is, detention should be a measure of last resort.
8. In addition, detention may only be ordered on the basis of a decision taken in each individual case, without discrimination of any kind. The element of individual evaluation is crucial to allow a review of the particular circumstances of each person, avoiding detention decisions that are not necessary, reasonable and proportionate for a legitimate purpose of such a measure. The detention of migrants should also not be used as a deterrent or punishment for irregular entry and/or stay in the country, and should be limited in time.





## 11 Methodological notes

The present study encompasses the analysis of several countries in the Americas that are transit or destination of irregular migratory flows originating in Africa, Asia and the Caribbean (Cuba and Haiti), which includes: Brazil, United States, Colombia, Costa Rica, Ecuador, Honduras, Mexico and Panama.

The purpose of the quantitative analysis is to determine some characteristics of the settlement in the Americas of migrants originating from Africa, Asia and the Caribbean (Cuba and Haiti), and thus provide evidence to confirm historical trends about the possible final destination of those flows or detect recent trends towards new destinations.

For the quantitative analysis of the settlement in the Americas of migrants originating from Africa, Asia and the Caribbean (Cuba and Haiti), it was taken into account census information (regular and irregular migration) and asylum-seekers, prepared for the III International Migration Report in the Americas (OAS / OECD) and based on information from the United Nations Population Division and the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR). For regular migratory flows (defined on the basis of temporary and permanent permits), the information comes from the database of the Continuous Reporting System on International Migration in the Americas (SICREMI, OAS / OECD) on official data provided by States. In all these cases, the information is standardized and comparable internationally.

The quantitative information on irregular flows is based on official information provided by the States to IOM and the OAS, is processed individually for each country, since it does not allow international comparison, and it is based on different definitions and counting mechanisms.

The qualitative information included in various sections of this study includes information compiled by IOM / OAS from various official sources of information, which are cited in each case.



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## Annex I. Priority measures to address extra-continental migration, International Organization for Migration.

Priority Measures to Be Taken in South America, Central America, North America, Other Transit Countries, and Countries of Origin	South America	Central America	North America	Non-American Transit Countries	Countries of Origin
<b>Immediate Measures (to be taken as soon as possible)</b>					
Cover basic needs of the migrants, especially food, water and sanitation, lodging, and healthcare.	√	√	√		
Build rescue and contingency-plan capacities in overland and maritime border zones to enable response to situations involving large numbers of migrants.	√	√	√		
Map capacities for tending to extra-continental migrants at border crossings, and prepare a plan to strengthen local services.	√	√			
Design strategy for bolstering basic services for migrants with an inter-cultural focus.	√	√	√		
Strengthen capacities for recording, detecting, and referring the most vulnerable migrants to specialized public services.	√	√	√	√	
Provide psychosocial support services to persons who have suffered stress or trauma during the migratory process.	√	√	√	√	√
<b>Highly Urgent Measures (to be taken during the next six months)</b>					
Provide legal advice to migrants, including the development of instruments and mechanisms to inform them regarding rights, services, alternatives, and criminal complaints.	√	√	√		
Create mobile inter-institutional teams to inform and tend to extra-continental migrants.	√	√	√	√	√
Develop information system focused on migrant protection and assistance needs.	√	√	√	√	√
Develop information system focused on services and assistance available to migrants.	√	√	√	√	
Diagnóstico sobre mecanismos existentes en la legislación vigente que puedan representar alternativas de estancia o de viaje para los migrantes extracontinentales.	√	√	√	√	√
<b>Urgent Measures (to be taken during the next twelve months)</b>					
Design strategy to prevent conflicts among migrant groups.	√	√			
Design awareness-raising and information strategy to prevent conflicts between migrants and communities.	√	√	√	√	
Develop alternatives to detention: diagnoses, implementation, and program monitoring and evaluation.	√	√	√	√	
Perform diagnosis of existing mechanisms established by law that could represent residency or travel alternatives for extra-continental migrants.	√	√	√	√	√
Strengthen coordination between national actors.	√	√	√	√	√
Strengthen binational coordination, especially cross-border coordination.	√	√	√	√	√
Strengthen humanitarian visa programs.	√	√	√	√	
Establish third-country resettlement programs.	√	√	√	√	√
Establish temporary employment programs in conjunction with private sector.	√	√	√		
Support assisted voluntary return and reintegration programs.	√	√	√	√	√

	South America	Central America	North America	Non-American	Transit Countries	Countries of Origin
<b>Short-Term and Medium-Term Measures (to be taken during the next twenty four months)</b>						
Develop system for generating and sharing information for development of public policies.	√	√	√	√	√	√
Design strategy to inform potential migrants of alternatives to irregular migration, including requisites for obtaining visas and work permits.	√	√	√	√	√	√
Disseminate information and raise awareness regarding the rights to international protection, non-refoulement, and family reunification, and regarding travel and residency permits in the region.	√	√	√	√	√	√
Provide legal advice to migrants regarding existing mechanisms for migrating legally to the desired destination countries, including options for applying for refugee status from their countries of origin.	√	√	√	√	√	√
Carry out information campaigns in origin and destination countries (aimed at diaspora communities) regarding alternatives to irregular migration to the destination countries most sought by extra-continental migrants.	√	√	√	√	√	√
Design strategy to coordinate with countries of origin and countries of first arrival on the continent for purposes of combatting migrant smuggling and human trafficking networks.	√	√				√
Design strategy to harmonize visa regimes in the region's countries to facilitate regular migration.	√	√	√			√
Build capacities of migration authorities and airline personnel for identifying falsified and altered documents.	√	√				√
Establish and strengthen permanent migration intelligence programs to improve the effectiveness of efforts to combat migrant smuggling and trafficking in persons.	√	√	√	√	√	√
Build capacities of national authorities for identifying migrant smugglers and traffickers and their victims among the groups of extra-continental migrants.	√	√	√	√	√	√
Build capacities of national authorities for identifying continental migrants among the groups of extra-continental migrants, in order to prevent migrant smuggling and human trafficking.	√	√	√	√		
Build capacities of national authorities for prosecuting and punishing the crimes of migrant smuggling and trafficking in persons committed against extra-continental migrants.	√	√	√	√		
Design a strategy to facilitate the obtaining of visas to enter destination countries.			√			
Gather information on the labor profile of extra-continental migrants, and design labor-market insertion programs for them.	√	√	√	√	√	√
Develop labor migration programs in transit and destination countries.	√	√	√	√	√	√
Develop programs for humanitarian admission and re-admission and resettlement of migrants.	√	√	√			
Establish programs that offer a second legal migration option for migrants who can not remain in a given country.	√	√	√	√	√	√
Develop programs for assisted voluntary return and reintegration.	√	√	√	√	√	√

Priority Measures to Be Taken in South America, Central America, North America, Other Transit Countries, and Countries of Origin

	South America	Central America	North America	Non-American Transit Countries	Countries of Origin
<b>Short-Term and Medium-Term Measures (to be taken during the next twenty four months)</b>					
Design a strategy to favor legal migration by identifying and eliminating the obstacles that limit the rights to family reunification, international protection, and non-refoulement, among others.		√	√		
Establish human security and community stability programs in the countries of origin.			√	√	√
Design a strategy to reinforce the humanitarian commitment of countries in Mesoamerica for nationals of countries in crisis.	√	√	√		
Mobilize the extra-continental diaspora communities in transit and destination countries to promote their involvement with the development of their communities of origin.	√	√	√	√	√
Design an awareness-raising and rapprochement strategy aimed at the authorities of the countries of origin of these migrants.	√	√	√	√	√
Design an awareness-raising and rapprochement strategy aimed at the authorities of the countries of first arrival of these migrants in Mesoamerica.	√	√	√	√	√
Design a strategy to position this issue on the inter-regional agenda.	√	√	√	√	√
Design a strategy to position this issue on the regional agenda.	√	√	√	√	√
Design a strategy to position this issue on the sub-regional agenda.	√	√			
Design a strategy to position this issue on the national agenda, including the private sector and civil society actors.	√	√	√	√	√
Design a strategy to position this issue within the framework of the UN country teams.	√	√	√	√	√



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