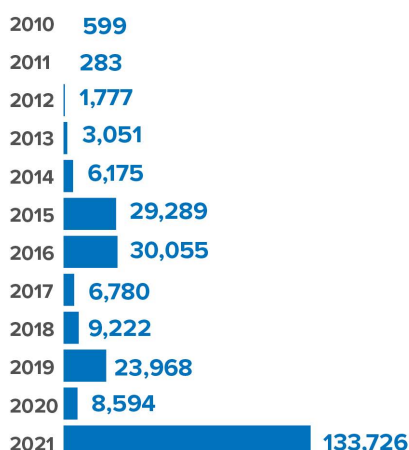


Mixed movements through Darien in 2021

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Context

Annual number of persons that entered through Darien (2010 - 2021)



With an area of more than 11,896 km² and a population of 46,951 inhabitants, Darién is the largest and least populated province in Panama. It is located in the east of the country, bordering Colombia and the Pacific Ocean.

The mixed movements that pass through the province of Darién are not a new trend. In addition to receiving people forced to flee, Panama is also a transit country for thousands of people from Haiti, Cuba, Venezuela, Africa, and South Asia mainly, who travel north each year in search of new opportunities, family reunification, or protection.

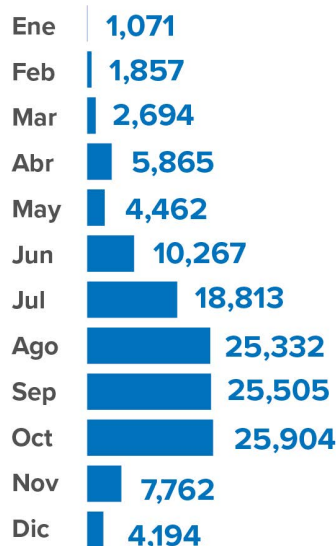
The origin of the people who use this route has varied over the years. Before 2010, the Darién crossing was used mostly by people from Asia and Africa and, as of 2010, by Cubans; in 2016, the first increase in Haitians using this route was recorded.

In this sense, the Darién has become one of the most important transit points in the region, and it is recognized as one of the most difficult parts of the journey. As of 31 December 2021, 133,720 people entered the country irregularly through this border. Of these, 22 percent were children, many between 0 and 5 years old.

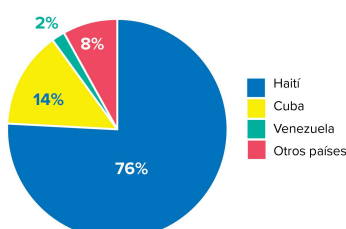
The year 2021 marked a before and after in relation to the transit of people through Darién. While in 2020 8,594 people crossed – a considerable decrease compared to the 23,968 who transited in 2019, mainly due to the COVID-19 situation and the closure of borders, in 2021, monthly numbers registered were similar to what in previous years had been the annual traffic. In this sense, from July 2021, flows began to increase with about 20,000 people arriving per month until they reached 26,000 people in October. However, the flows vary in an unpredictable way; in November 2021, the number of people decreased considerably to 7,000 entries that month.

At the end of the year, a sudden change in the routes used also began to be recorded. In this sense, the use of a new route on the Pacific side (arriving through the community of Jaqué) and the change of route to the community of Canaan Membrillo stand out. These changes might reflect the perception of more hospitable routes and apparently safer areas for transit, although they are also more expensive.

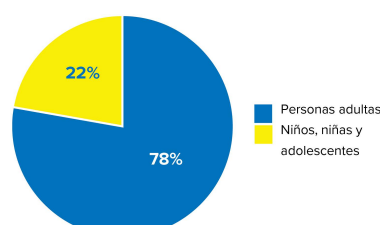
Monthly number of persons entering through Darien (2021)



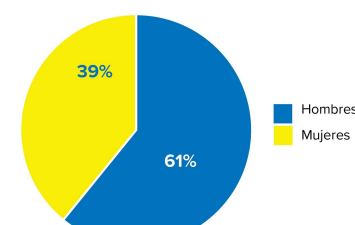
Main Nationalities (2021)



Age Breakdown (2021)



Gender Breakdown (2021)



The people who used the route in 2021 were mainly from Haiti, Cuba, Bangladesh, India, Burkina Faso, Sierra Leone, Nepal, Ghana, and Senegal, as well as Venezuela and Colombia. During 2021, the predominant presence of people of Haitian origin was observed, reaching almost 75% of the total number of people in transit through Panama. The vast majority correspond to secondary movements and come mainly from countries such as Chile and Brazil, where they had temporarily resided.



UNHCR's Response

PROTECTION

- During the COVID-19 pandemic and while national borders remained closed, UNHCR advocated with authorities, including the Electoral Tribunal, for the birth registration of 90 newborn children of people within mixed movements to prevent statelessness.
- UNHCR continued to strengthen protection actions within its mandate by providing information, legal assistance, and monitoring of refugee status applications filed by people who entered Panamanian territory through mixed movements. In this sense, UNHCR supported the reception of 51 applications* for refugee status from the different Migratory Reception Centre (ERM, as per its acronym in Spanish), providing legal assistance to 46 cases through our partner NRC. Likewise, information and counselling on the asylum system in Panama was provided to 750 people.
- UNHCR carried out monitoring of and visits to ERMs, as well as to transit and host communities.
- The Ombudsman Office of the province of Darién was strengthened, through one staff, supporting the team for the monitoring of protection and attention to the refugee and migrant populations in the province.

*ONPAR, provisional figure



HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE

UNHCR has supported the ERMs as part of an inter-agency response and complementary to the response of the Panamanian State. The support was provided in different locations, including in:

ERM San Vicente | ERM Lajas Blancas | ERM Los Planes de Gualaca (Chiriquí)

ERM San Vicente

- 48 Housing Units (RHU) for ERM in San Vicente as part of the response to the pandemic. In addition, fire prevention equipment was delivered, as well as support for signaling evacuation routes and other supplies for the improvement of these spaces. 12,000 garbage bags and 5,000 pairs of gloves for waste collection were delivered to the National Migration Service.
- PPE (masks and face shields), as well as cleaning supplies (soaps, alcohol) were delivered to SENAFRONT.
- 14 covers were installed over the RHUs to reduce the temperature inside each of them. The installation of 17 awnings to cover the rest of the RHUs is still pending.
- Necessary supplies were purchased to rehabilitate the floors of the RHUs (in the process of being installed), tools, as well as gravel to renovate and improve the walkways/roads within the ERMs (pending implementation by the SENAFRONT infrastructure department in 2022).
- Through our partner, the Panamanian Red Cross (CRP), the respective equipment for disinfection and cleaning was purchased to ensure regular cleaning of the ERM facilities.

ERM Lajas Blancas:

- Through the agreement with our partner CRP, a container – along with the necessary supplies – was purchased to serve as a safe space to provide primary health care and first aid, and a health technician was hired to attend the post (to continue in 2022).
- People with protection needs and isolated cases of covid, as well as people who have stayed longer in ERMs were supported with solar lamps, to improve the protection environment within the site, but also to make it easier for them to charge their cell phones and access communication means (through the solar lamp).



ERM Los Planes de Gualaca (Chiriquí):

- 2,000 blankets to cope with low temperatures and 250 hygiene kits were delivered (the latter through an agreement with our partner HIAS)
- Psychosocial support and recreational activities are carried out within the framework of the child protection strategy through our partner in the field, HIAS. A safe space has been installed for this purpose, which is supported through the agreement with UNHCR.

CAPACITY BUILDING AND TECHNICAL SUPPORT

- UNHCR has facilitated training sessions on International Protection and Statelessness for approximately 300 officials from various security forces assigned mainly to border points and ERMs. It is worth mentioning that the training is conducted under an inter-agency approach to ensure complementarity between the different agencies with presence and operations in the area.
- UNHCR provided inputs for the mental health support guide for refugees and migrants, together with partners and various other entities (a guide that is currently being disseminated among health workers in Chiriquí, Darien and at central level).



SUPPORT FOR HOST AND TRANSIT COMMUNITIES

Considering the impact that the mixed movements have had on the communities over the years due to the transit of people, different activities were developed to recover community spaces, as well as workshops to strengthen the integration capacities of the residents and youth of host communities. The workshops focused on topics such as information technology, leadership, gender equality, drug use prevention, alcohol and early pregnancy, managing emotions, and the rights of boys and girls. 160 people participated between young people and adults.

Likewise, other activities were developed in each community, namely:

Lajas Blancas

- Through our partner RET, a water pump was purchased and installed to supply the community. 1,527 inhabitants benefit from the distribution of water, as well as the institutions and the SENAFRONT post that are located in the community. In addition to the installation of the pump, community leaders will be trained to operate the water distribution mechanism.
- Installation of handwashing stations, through portable sinks located in the Community House and in the Health Center, these places being frequently visited by the adult population, youth, and children.
- Construction of a support for the water reserve tank and its purchase; it will be located in the Casa Comunal, a place that is the main meeting point for local assemblies and congresses in the region.

Canglón:

- Enhancement of the health post with the delivery of a donation of three months of medicines to the Canglón Health Sub Center. This delivery was made together with the CRP, as part of the agreement with UNHCR. An additional donation of a stretcher, a computer, a wheelchair, medical care and biosafety equipment, and furniture was made for the Sub Center.



Bajo Chiquito:

- Support was provided for the improvement of the health post with the purchase of solar panels (to guarantee the supply of electricity) and two refrigerators for the storage of medicines. Cleanup days were also held in community areas.

Canaan Membrillo:

- Supply of water pump in coordination with the CRP for water supply for the population in the community (currently in installation for use).
- Delivery of 200 solar lamps and 200 mosquito nets for the community, which were of great importance, especially since some cases of malaria have been detected. In addition, 5,000 garbage bags have been delivered for waste collection.

La Peñita:

- Within the agreement with our partner RET, we worked on the recovery of community spaces and improvement of the infrastructure of the school and its electric system, benefiting a total of 30 students.

Alto Playona:

- Rehabilitation of the playground and construction of the pier for the entrance of the community to improve its access, in alliance with RET and NRC.



To achieve the responses mentioned above and taking into account the mixed nature of the movements, UNHCR has invested heavily in inter-agency coordination and co-leads with IOM the Human Mobility group, subscribed to the Panama UNCT.

Main achievements:

预览已结束，完整报告链接和二维码如下：

https://www.yunbaogao.cn/report/index/report?reportId=5_16618

