

ASSISTED VOLUNTARY RETURN PROGRAM

IOM's Assisted Voluntary Return Program aims to achieve the voluntary, orderly and humane return of migrants who can not or do not want to stay in their countries of transit or destination and wish to return voluntarily to their country of origin.

Since November 4, 2018, IOM has provided Voluntary Return Assistance in Mexico City, Tapachula, Tijuana, Ciudad Juarez, Monterrey, San Luis Potosi, Piedras Negras, Celaya, Saltillo, Guadalajara and Guanajuato to those migrants in Mexico, and Tecun Uman in Guatemala. At September 19, 2019, IOM has provided Voluntary Return Assistance to 1,930 people, 107 of which are unaccompanied migrant children and adolescents, and 282 are accompanied migrant children and adolescents.

In addition, since July 1, 2019, IOM has opened the Voluntary Return Program for those who desist or withdraw from the United States' "Migrant Protection Protocols (MMP)" process. In Mexico, specifically in Ciudad Juárez, Tijuana and Matamoros, IOM has registered 650 Assisted Voluntary Return cases, of which 303 involved accompanied minors. However, operations in the north of the country (Mexicali, Nuevo Laredo, San Luis Río Colorado and Nogales) are increasing, to date without any assisted return made.

Summary chart

Program	Adults	Unaccompanied children	Accompanied children	Total
Assisted Voluntary Return program in Mexico and Guatemala	1,541	107	282	1,930
In MMP	347	0	303	650
Total	1,888	107	585	2,580

Operating locations



ASSISTED VOLUNTARY RETURN PROGRAM IN MEXICO AND GUATEMALA

In Mexico, most cases were registered in Mexico City (49%) and Tapachula (21%). The remaining cases were registered in Tijuana (19%), Juárez City (4%), Monterrey (3%), Piedras Negras (1%), Guanajuato (1%), San Luis Potosí (1%), Celaya, Guadalajara and Saltillo (<1%). The operations are increasing in Northern Mexico.

All unaccompanied migrant children and adolescents registered in Mexico have benefited from assisted voluntary returns through air transportation, considering their serious situation of vulnerability.

In Guatemala, the Voluntary Return Program has operated from the border with Mexico, in Tecún Umán, and by land only. The 84 per cent of migrants registered in Guatemala returned to Honduras and 16 per cent to El Salvador.

Regarding means of transportation, 80 per cent of migrants have been returned by ground transportation, 7 per cent by air transportation (unaccompanied migrant children and adolescents) and 13 per cent have alternatively used air and ground transportation during their assisted return.

Total voluntary return assistances

1,930

Unaccompanied minors¹

107

Land



80%

Air/Land



13%

Air



7%

¹Already included in the total voluntary return assistances.



Profile of assisted people

Nationalities



Honduras
77%



El Salvador
18%



Guatemala
5%



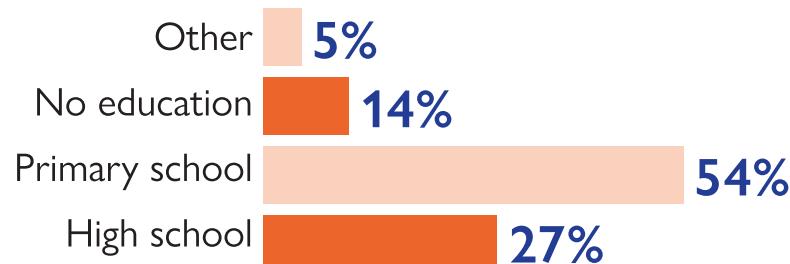
Nicaragua
<1%



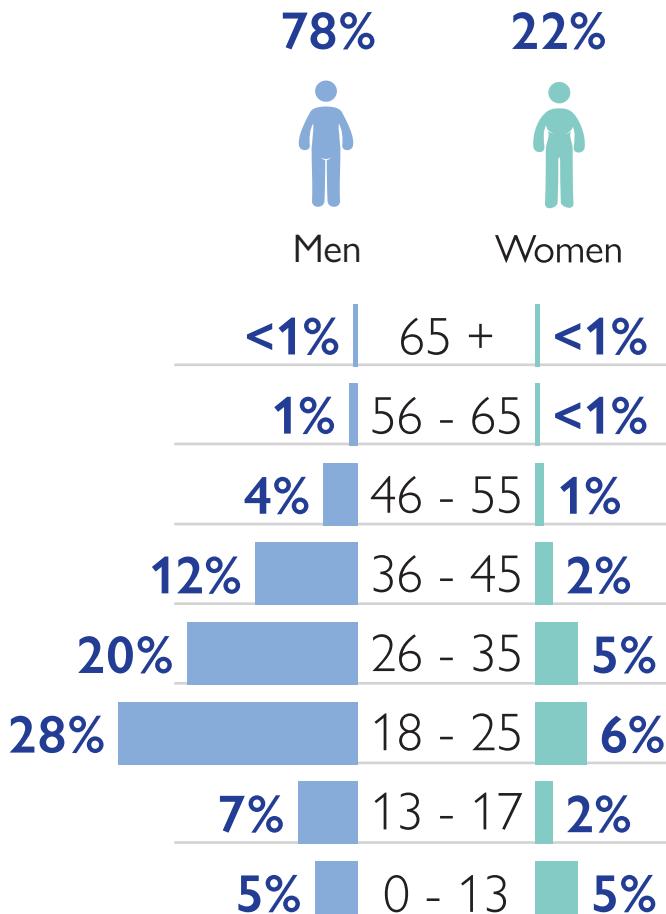
Mexico
<1%

Most of the people who have been assisted are of Honduran (77%) or Salvadoran nationality (18%). Of these migrants, 78 per cent of migrants are men and 22 per cent are women, 75 per cent are concentrated between 18 and 45 years of age.

Education



Gender and age



Migration status



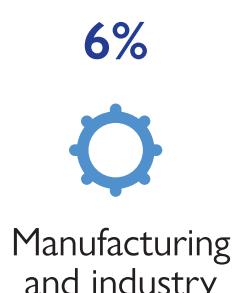
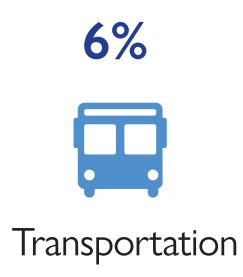
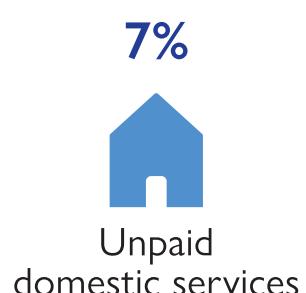
At the time of their voluntary return, most migrants had an irregular migration status (85%) of which 65 per cent were located in Mexico and 35 per cent in Guatemala.

The predominant educational level is primary level (54%), comprised 19 per cent women and 81 per cent men. At the secondary level (27%), 21 per cent are women and 79 per cent are men. Fourteen per cent has no education, 51 per cent of them are children under 5 years of age, while 49 per cent are adults who did not have access to basic education (13% women, 87% men).

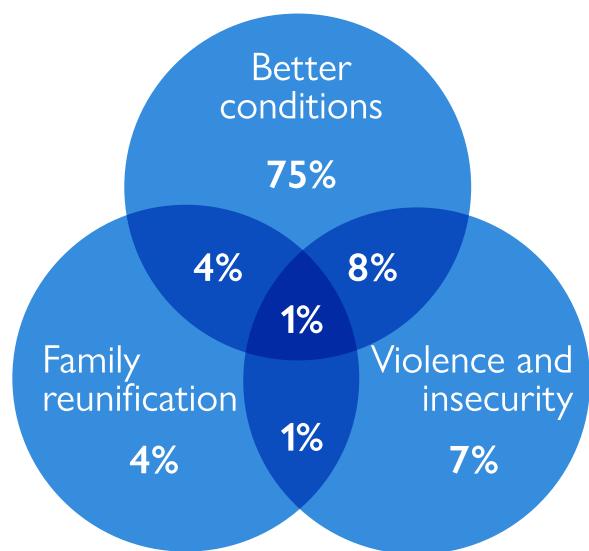
In addition, the agricultural sector is the area in which most people have worked in their countries of origin (25%), followed by various occupations (18%) and the construction sector (18%). The various occupations include activities related to tourism, mechanics, safety, forestry, mining, among others, are mentioned.

In the agricultural sector, those with primary education (69%) are followed by secondary education (17%). In the construction sector, people mainly have primary education (60%) and secondary education (25%). In the various occupations sector people mainly have primary education (46%) and secondary education (39%).

Occupation sector



Reasons for migrating



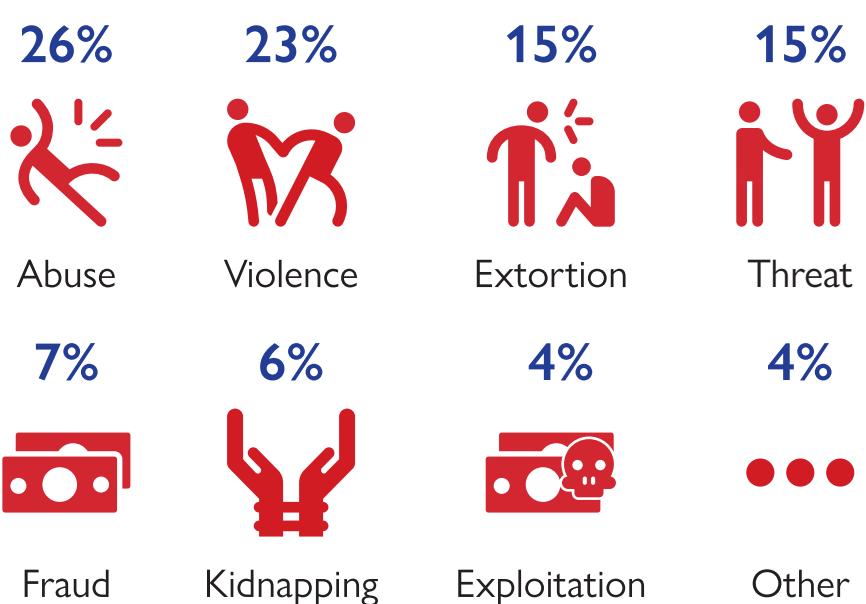
In the following graph, three categories are used to summarize the main reasons for migration.

The need for improving their living conditions has been identified as the main reason for the mobilization of these migrants, as many of them referred to conditions of unemployment and inequality in their countries of origin.

Secondly, violence and insecurity is another important cause for migration; many of them mentioned being threatened by gang members. Finally, some people specified that their reason for migrating is their desire to find relatives in the destination country.

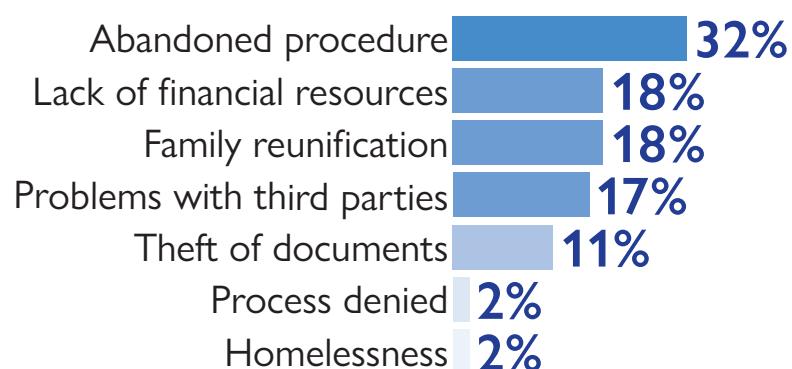
Challenges faced in transit and reasons for returning

From the total of migrants who reported having faced related insecurity situations during their journey, abuse and violence were the most common challenges reported (26 and 23 per cent respectively):

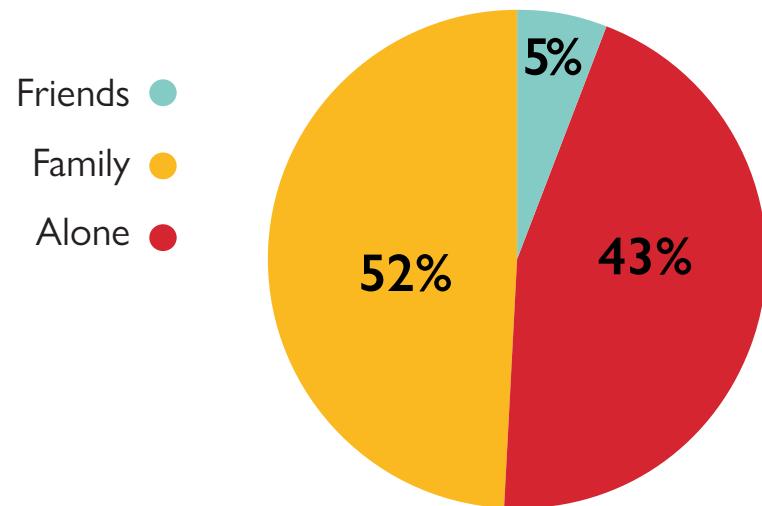


Five per cent of surveyed migrants in México had already requested or started an application for the regularization of their migratory status. However, all of them decided to return to their country of origin and reported the following reasons for leaving Mexico: (32%) abandonment of the application, (18%) scarcity of financial resources, (18%) family reunification, (17%) problems with third parties, (11%) identity document stolen, (2%) process denied, and (2%) homelessness².

Reasons for returning



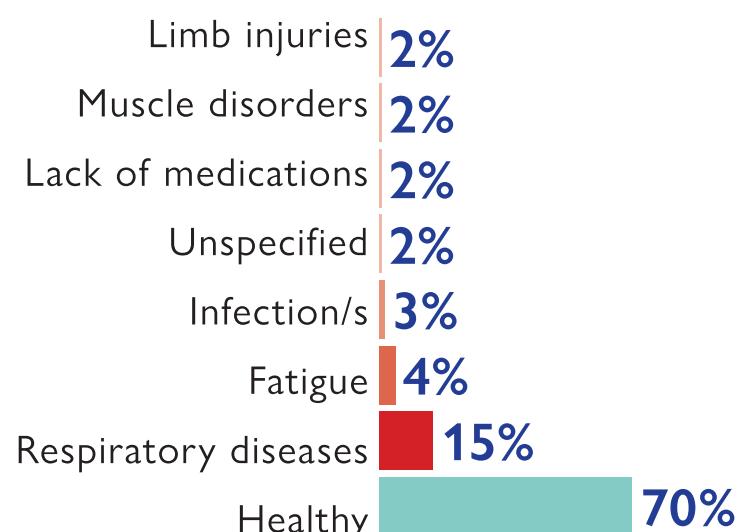
Relationship with those who travel



The following chart shows the kinship among the migrants. The data shows that most migrants are travelling with first-degree relatives, meaning parents, siblings and children (52%), followed by migrants that are travelling alone (43%), and a smaller percentage of migrants (5%) who reported to be traveling with friends or acquaintances.

Of migrants travelling with family members, 28 per cent are minors between 0 and 17 years of age, and 19 per cent are under 13 years of age.

Health condition



The majority of migrants self-identified as healthy, however, at the time of the screening process it was revealed that approximately 15 per cent suffered from respiratory diseases, as well as from infections and affectations in muscles and extremities.

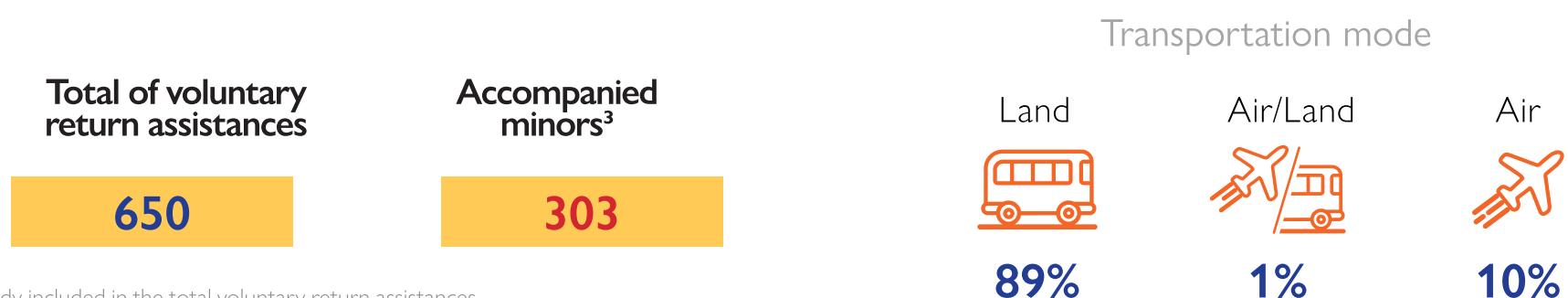
The survey allowed IOM staff to assess that migrants had suffered from specific health conditions during the journey, such as anxiety, nervousness, dehydration and burns.

² Considering that data has been collected starting from March 2019, the representativeness of the following information is equal to 10% of the total amount of registered returns.

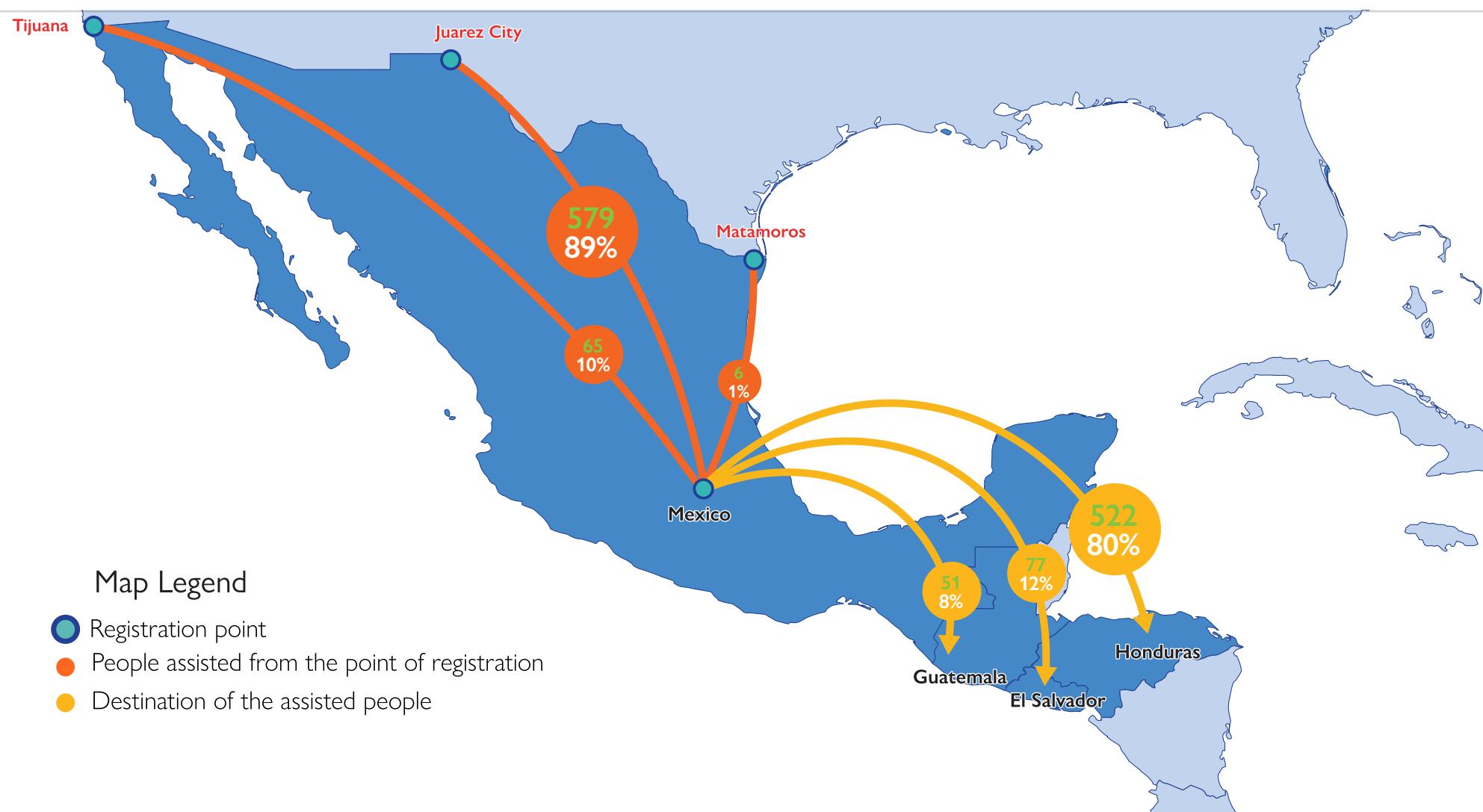
MIGRANTS WHO WITHDREW FROM THE “MIGRANT PROTECTION PROTOCOLS (MPP)” OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

The Assisted Voluntary Return Program implemented in the northern Mexico, aims at advising and assisting migrants who desist from adhering to the Migrant Protection Protocols (MPP) of the United

States. A pivotal component of the program is to provide participants with reliable information on the consequences of abandoning the MPP related process and to refer special cases to collaborating organizations and institutions.

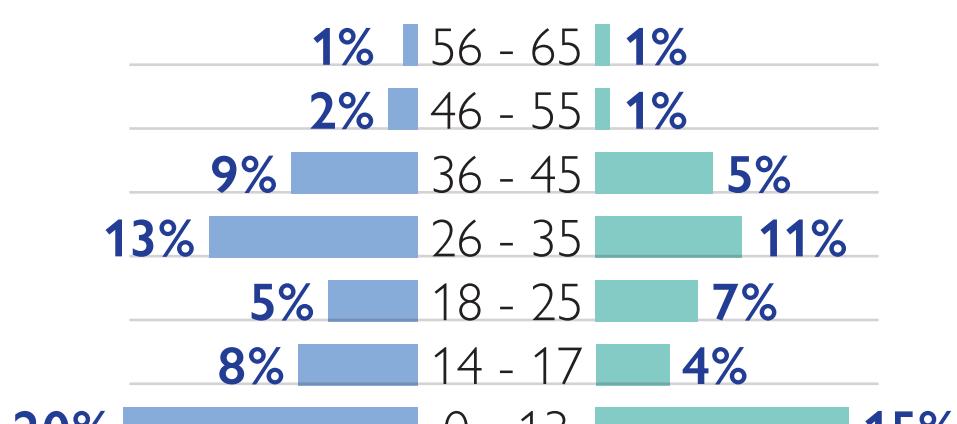


³Already included in the total voluntary return assistances.



Migratory profile

Gender and age

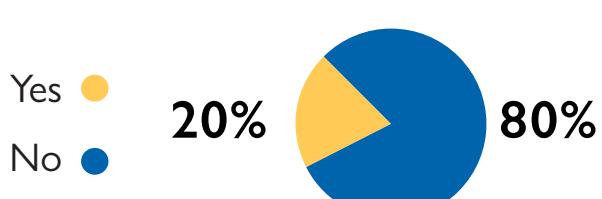


29 per cent of migrants applying and participating in the Assisted Voluntary Return program are Honduran children under the age of 12.

Migratory status

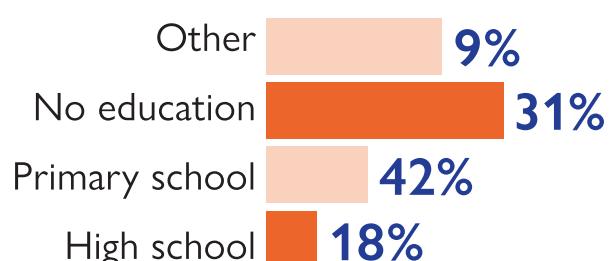


Application for regularization in Mexico



Most participants (68%) declared they are irregularly staying in Mexico. However, 20 per cent had already requested and obtained the regularization of their migratory status (9% were accompanied minors). The Multiple Migratory Form (Forma Migratoria Multiple), which allows recipients to stay in the country for 180 days, was the most requested permit.

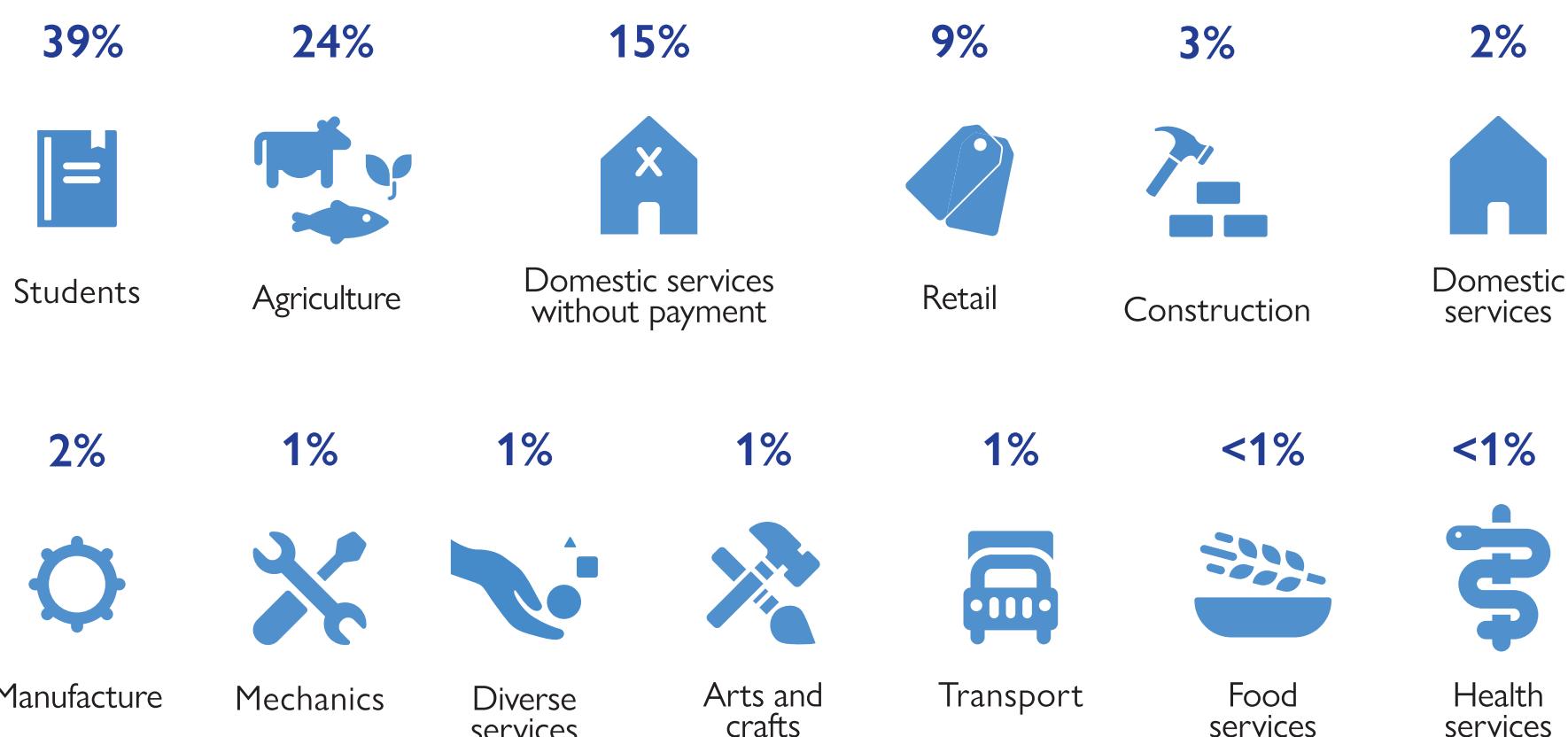
Level of education



Most of these migrants (42%) attended Primary school: 31 per cent of them completed. It should be noted that 7 per cent of migrants without formal education are children under the age of 5 who have not entered formal schooling, while 93 per cent are either children between the age of 8 and 12 (4%), or adults (89%) who never received formal education.

Occupational sector

Most migrants who applied for Assisted Voluntary Return declared to be students: 23 per cent were children under the age of 12, 10 per cent children aged 13 to 17, and 2 per cent were adults between 36 and 45 years old.



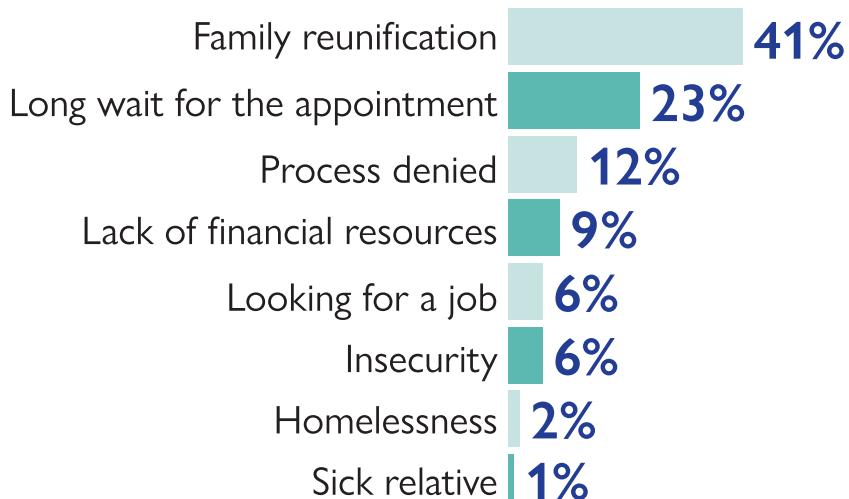
All migrants performing paid and unpaid domestic work, as well as migrants working in crafting and forestry are women. On the other hand, 100 per cent of people working in auto mechanics, construction and manufacturing are men. Among agricultural worker, 85 per cent were men and 15 per cent were women. In the retail sector, 75 per cent were female workers and 25 per cent male workers.

Reasons for migrating



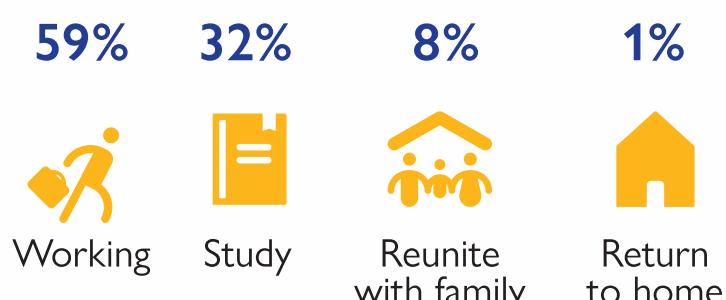
As reported in the graph, seeking better conditions (60%) especially looking for job opportunities (59%), and access to higher education (32%), were the main reasons for leaving the country of origin.

Reasons for returning



The main factors leading migrants to apply for Assisted Voluntary Return are: family reunification (41%), long waiting time for asylum cases resolution in the United States (23%), denied procedure (12%) and economic difficulties (19).

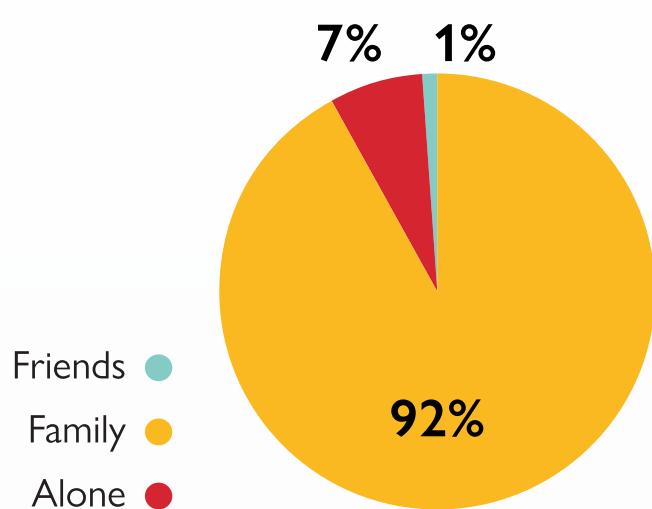
Intentions in the country of origin



All participants (100%) whose main purpose was to seek better living condition and job opportunities in the country of destination are planning to look for a job in the country of origin.

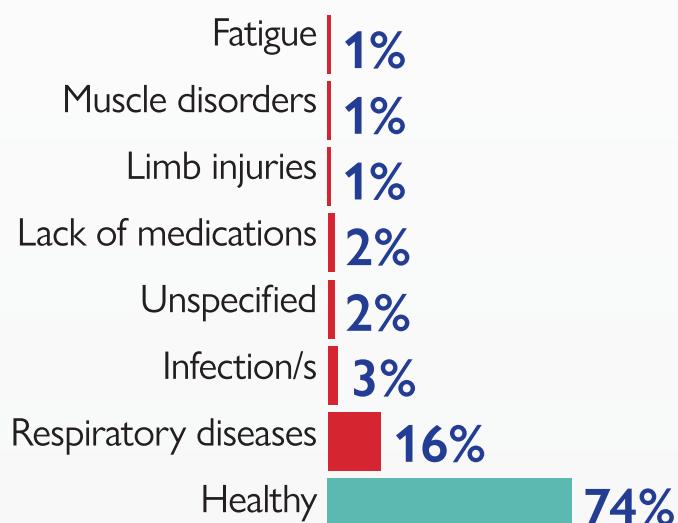
32 per cent of migrants whose main purpose was to pursue education are planning to go back to school once they reach the country of origin. Among them, 19 per cent are under the age of 12.

Relationship with those who travel



As displayed in the graph, 92 per cent of participants are traveling with at least one family member, which 48% are minors between 0 and 17 years old (notice that 35% are under 12 years old). Among migrants traveling alone (7%), only 6 per cent are women.

Health condition



Though most migrants reported to be in good health conditions, IOM staff could identify numerous cases of dehydration and sunburn, especially among children.

One hundred per cent of migrants suffering from infections and 5% of those suffering from respiratory conditions were children under the age of 13.

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