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Unidad para la atención
y reparación integral
a las víctimas

VICTIMS OF THE COLOMBIAN ARMED CONFLICT ABROAD:

A PROFILE



NORWEGIAN
REFUGEE COUNCIL



VICTIMS OF THE COLOMBIAN ARMED

CONFLICT ABROAD: A PROFILE

Unit for Victims, Government of Colombia
Norwegian Refugee Council, Colombia

February 2021

Acknowledgements:

Gratitude and recognition are extended to all Colombians who had to leave the country as a consequence of or for reasons related to the internal armed conflict, as well as to victims'

organizations who chose to be a part of this project; thanks to their participation, today we present this **profile** of the survivors of the internal armed conflict who emigrated from Colombia.

VICTIMS OF THE COLOMBIAN ARMED CONFLICT ABROAD: A PROFILE

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English edition

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Spanish edition

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ISBN: 978-958-5409-38-5

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INTRODUCTION

Colombian history has been marked by social and political violence stemming from an internal armed conflict that has affected the country for more than half a century. This violence caused by different armed factions within the country has resulted in individual and mass displacement, massacres, selective killings and threats against different communities, as well as other victimizing events.

The Victims and Land Restitution Law,¹ founded on the principles of International Humanitarian Law² and International Human Rights Law,³ and strengthened by the Final Agreement to End the Armed Conflict and Build a Stable and Lasting Peace,⁴ recognized the existence of an internal armed conflict and of victims from this

conflict and from specific events derived from it, which amounted to serious human rights violations.

The victims of the armed conflict are not only found in Colombia: some victims had to migrate abroad. Although they have been recognized through actions taken by the Colombian government, by governments of other countries and by humanitarian organizations, their rights are still far from being fully redressed.

Why is this profiling exercise relevant?

Since 2017, the Unit for Support and Comprehensive Reparation of Victims (Unit for Victims) and the Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC) have been preparing a profile to identify the most pressing needs of victims of the Colombian internal armed conflict who are now located abroad.

The information presented in this document is a result of the first and only quantitative study carried out by the Colombian government in an attempt to obtain first-hand information about the vic-



tims who have had to leave the country because of the internal armed conflict.

What are the expected results?

Based on surveys carried out in eight of the countries with the highest concentrations of victims, this analysis aims to shed light on the reasons why people have left the country, their migration routes, their living conditions in the host countries, their access to the reparations of Law 1448 of 2011—Victims and Land Restitution Law—, and their intention to return to Colombia.

How is it structured?

This document presents the background and reasoning behind the characterization exercise to prepare a profile of victims abroad, its objectives and considerations, as well as the methodology applied since 2017, when the analysis tool (a survey) was developed and the first pilot exercises were carried out.

It then presents the main survey findings in **Ecuador, Venezuela, Canada, United States, Spain, Panama, Costa Rica and Chile** between 2018 and 2019. Based on these findings, conclusions are drawn to guide actions that will enable victims abroad to have greater access to comprehensive reparation and to improve their quality of life.

The profile was developed over two years during which 2,612 people who considered themselves victims of the Colombian armed conflict were surveyed in eight countries, as shown in Figure 1. When discussing people who consider themselves victims, this document will be referring both to individuals included in the Single Registry of Victims (or RUV for its acronym in Spanish), the government's official record of the conflict's victims, as well as those not included in the RUV.

- 1 Ley de Víctimas y Restitución de Tierras, Law 1448 of 2011 “on the support, assistance and comprehensive reparation to the victims of the internal armed conflict and other provisions”.
- 2 Refers to the rules contained in the four Geneva Conventions of 1949, particularly to Common Article 3 to these Conventions and Additional Protocol II relating to the Protection of Victims of Non-International Armed Conflicts. Protocol II was incorporated into Colombian legislation through Law No. 171 of 1994, which was declared enforceable under Decision C/225/95 of the Colombian Constitutional Court.
- 3 Concerns the set of instruments (Treaties, Conventions, Resolutions and Declarations) under which Member States agree to protect human rights.
- 4 Refers to the peace process between the government of Colombia and the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia, Army of the People (FARC-EP) that officially begun on August 26, 2012 in Havana, Cuba, and which resulted in the Final Agreement signed in Bogotá, D.C., Colombia, on November 24, 2016.

Figure 1. Fact Sheet - Profile of Victims Abroad



2,612
people who consider
themselves victims

Total sample size

People of legal age, located abroad, who consider themselves victims of the Colombian armed conflict as defined by Article 3 of Law 1448 of 2011.

Description of the target population



The sampling design is casual or incidental, based on information from victims' organizations, international organizations, Colombian consulates and the Colombian Government's Single Registry of Victims (RUV).

Sampling Design



Total sample size

714
PEOPLE



ECUADOR

425
PEOPLE



PANAMA

302
PEOPLE



UNITED STATES

296
PEOPLE



VENEZUELA

152
PEOPLE



CANADA

221
PEOPLE



SPAIN

223
PEOPLE



CHILE

279
PEOPLE



COSTA RICA



Date of fieldwork

Years 2018 (May, June, October, November and December) and 2019 (January, February, March, May, June, August, September, October, November and December)



Methodology of fieldwork

Structured surveys conducted in person and by telephone

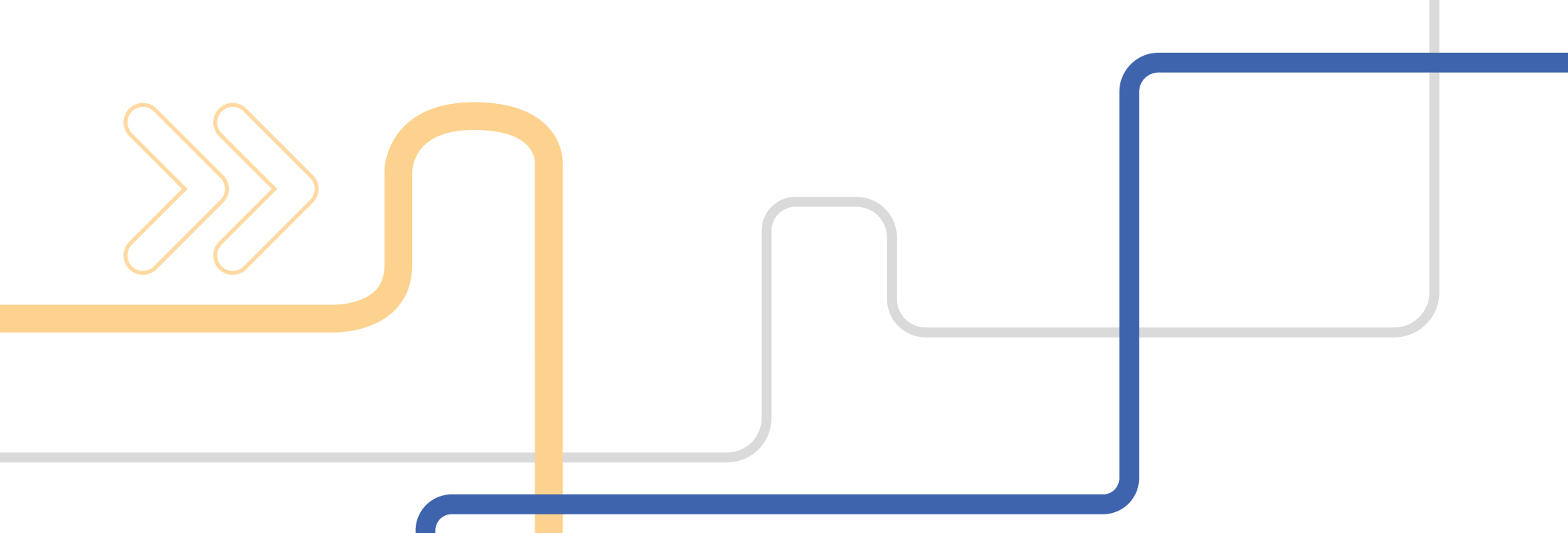






Chapter 1





CONTEXT



1. BACKGROUND AND JUSTIFICATION

There is a lack of awareness surrounding the victims of the Colombian armed conflict who emigrated from the country. Although there are many factors that contribute to this lack of awareness,⁵ the main consequence has been that this population faces limitations in accessing support, assistance, and comprehensive reparation measures, as stipulated in Law 1448 of 2011—Victims and Land Restitution Law—.

The Final Agreement to End the Armed Conflict and Build a Stable and Lasting Peace, signed in 2016, is one of the legal documents that recognizes victims who migrated abroad. It urges strengthening reparation measures and even addresses supporting individuals,

should they choose to return to the country. **This sheds a clear light on the need to adapt mechanisms that are aimed at guaranteeing the full rights of individuals as victims of the armed conflict and as central figures in peace-building efforts.**

As stated by the Consultancy for Human Rights and Displacement - CODHES (2017):

The Peace Agreement explicitly recognizes victims abroad as subjects of reparation. However, in Colombia there is no legal framework, institution or socio-cultural context that enables the regulation and effective implementation of the aforementioned reparation.

One factor that has contributed to the existence of the gaps mentioned above is precisely emigration. Colombian institutions face challenges related to their jurisdiction, to respecting migration rules which are tied to national sovereignty, to the cautious approach to refugees under International Law, and to International protection in general. In addition to these, there is an added challenge in the vulnerability faced by individuals who are both victims and migrants.

For all the above reasons, it becomes necessary to carry out a characterization study. Once more precise knowledge is available regarding



the characteristics and general profile of this population spread throughout at least 43 countries around the world,⁶ the National System for Support and Comprehensive Reparation of Victims (or SNARIV for its acronym in Spanish) will have better tools to adopt measures and draw up

plans that will provide support and comprehensive reparation for victims living abroad. Furthermore, such a profile can help guide the programs of non-governmental organizations working with victims of the armed conflict and with refugees. Indeed, these organizations are often key actors in helping individuals fulfil basic needs, and lead dignified lives by enabling greater access to various rights, such as identity, health, housing, education and employment.

Objectives

The general objective is to **have a better understanding of the main characteristics and needs of victims of the Colombian armed conflict who have migrated abroad**. The sample population was drawn from the countries with the highest number of victims registered in the Single Registry of Victims (or RUV for its acronym in Spanish).⁷ Subsequently, the specific objectives are:

1. To obtain demographic information on the victims of the internal armed conflict who migrated abroad.
2. To identify the victimization dynamics suffered by these individuals.
3. To explore the migratory dynamics of victims of the internal armed conflict and the reasons for their emigration to the host countries.
4. To determine their migration status, living conditions and access to rights in the host country.
5. To define whether there is an intention to return to Colombia.

⁵ This includes not having registered victims abroad under regulatory frameworks prior to Law 1448 of 2011, such as Law 418 of 1997 or Decree 1290 of 2008.

⁶ Number of countries from which the Single Registry of Victims has received statements.

⁷ According to information recorded in the Single Registry of Victims, 94 % of the victims abroad are located in ten countries: Ecuador, Venezuela, Canada, Spain, United States, Panama, Costa Rica, Chile, France and Sweden. This study was carried out through surveys conducted in the first eight countries listed above.

2. CONCEPTS AND METHODOLOGY

Victims of the internal armed conflict who emigrated from Colombia are subject to the complexities involved in forced migration. Taking into account the objective of the characterization survey and the purpose of public policies designed to redress victims, this complexity brings methodological and conceptual challenges, which will be discussed below.

Magnitude of the universe of victims

Although the Single Registry of Victims allows registration from abroad, **the total number of victims living abroad is unknown. This is due to multiple challenges** including the fact that some individuals choose not to make statements⁸ in official registries

outside the country or formally request protection in host countries. Some academic studies and official reports explain this behavior as a result of:

Reasons related to an individual's condition as victim:

- » Emigration occurred prior to the issuance of Law 1448 of 2011, therefore there was no registry in place for victims outside the national territory;
- » Individuals were unaware of the existence of Law 1448 of 2011;
- » Individuals had little or no knowledge of their rights as victims;⁹
- » Fear of being identified, located and persecuted in the host country.

Reasons related to an individual's status as migrant refugee:

- » Fear of being deported;
- » Systems at their disposal that offer permits and visas other than those for refugees or asylum seekers;
- » Lack of knowledge of international protection mechanisms for victims of the armed conflict;
- » Access barriers regarding procedures and documentation required to apply for asylum;
- » Discriminatory practices against the refugee and asylum-seeking population.

Geographical dispersion

People who migrate beyond the borders of their country choose different destinations depending on various factors. For example, some countries promote resettlement or asylum programs while others harden their legal systems, close their borders or impose entry barriers and restrictions on staying within the territory.¹⁰ Other determining factors include proximity to the country of origin, networks of friends or family members, and global or domestic economic dynamics, which shape labor markets and offer favorable contexts for new migrants.¹¹

Victims of the Colombian internal armed conflict are distributed throughout the world. **According to the RUV, victims living abroad are located in 43 countries** throughout North America, Latin America and the Caribbean, Europe, Asia, Africa and Oceania.¹² However, **94% of the population is concentrated primarily in ten countries.**

This dispersion makes it difficult to map out the entire universe of victims and any attempt at doing so through a characterization survey is unlikely to cover the entire range of destinations. Therefore, certain criteria must be set to select a specific group of countries where it will be possible to draw up a profile of the heterogeneous universe of victims.

Factors that influence the decision to migrate

The Colombian socio-economic and political contexts contain variables that come into play when deciding whether or not to migrate. These variables can limit the voluntary side of migration, particularly in contexts of poverty or threats to people's lives, freedom or integrity.

- 8 To file a statement refers to an individual's process of submitting an application to the Colombian government to be registered as a victim.
- 9 Colombian Commission of Jurists (2012). *Refugiados y Ley de víctimas. Impactos de la Ley de víctimas en la situación de las personas que se encuentran en necesidad de protección internacional*. Bogotá: CCJ, page 12. (In Spanish)
- 10 Ortiz, Diana and Kaminker, Sergio. *Suramérica y el refugio colombiano*. In *REMHU - Rev. Interdisciplinaria de Movilidad Humana*. Brasília, Ano XXII, n. 43, p. 35-51, jul./dez. 2014.
- 11 Guarnizo, Luis Eduardo. *La migración transnacional colombiana: Implicaciones teóricas y prácticas*. Memorias. Seminario sobre migración internacional colombiana y la conformación de comunidades transnacionales. Bogotá: Programa Colombia Nos Une/Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Colombia, 2003. See also: Guarnizo, Luis Eduardo. El Estado y la migración global colombiana in *Revista Migración y Desarrollo*, No. 6, first semester, 2006, pp. 79-101. Zacatecas, Mexico: Red Internacional de Migración y Desarrollo. Available at (<http://www.redalyc.org/articulo.oa?id=66000603>).
- 12 The official record of Colombian migrants began in 2012 with statements taken from victims located outside the country, at Colombian consulates and embassies.

The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) recognized this complexity by identifying multiple causes for migratory movements:

In our continent as in other parts of the world there are increasing migratory movements of people who move from one country to another for different reasons. In most cases, these migratory movements are due to socio-economic pressures linked to poverty, unemployment and social exclusion. Notwithstanding the above, in some cases these migratory movements are linked to persecution, armed conflict and human rights violations.¹³

According to the Cartagena Declaration of 1984,¹⁴ there are many factors that drive people to decide to migrate from their places of birth or residence, that fall under the categories of “generalized violence,” “massive violation of human rights,” or “circumstances which have seriously disturbed public order.” These factors must be taken into account by host States when characterizing migrants as Persons in Need of International Protection (PNIP).

In Colombia, generalized violence and the armed conflict have had a social, political and economic impact, which in turn has compromised the effective access to civil, political, economic, social or cultural rights for part of the population. Referring specifically to forced displacement, the Colombian Constitutional Court has stated:

(...) the Court has considered broader circumstances such as generalized violence, (...) as a scenario that due to its inherent nature is sufficient to ascertain the condition of a person displaced by violence. In the opinion of this Court, the generalized fear or anxiety felt by people in a situation of violence, which leads them to abandon their place of residence

or habitual economic activities, is sufficient reason to recognize their condition as persons displaced by violence (...) The Court considered that the mere feeling of widespread fear that torments the population in such a situation and which causes uprooting, is sufficient to justify such a condition.¹⁵

The decision to emigrate by a population that has been a victim of the Colombian internal armed conflict is framed by circumstances that are typical of the dynamics of the conflict. From a human rights perspective, these circumstances include difficulties in meeting basic needs or guaranteeing safety and security.

Implications

Bearing in mind the challenges mentioned above, the characterization survey was designed to inquire about the motivations for leaving the country, the living conditions prior to departure, the living conditions abroad, and the victimizing events suffered in relation to the internal armed conflict.¹⁶ It was also important to include questions about migra-

tory dynamics¹⁷ and the paths taken to reach a “final destination” which in some cases include transit countries. Indeed, depending on safety and security conditions and other local inclusion and integration factors, the search for a third country in which to settle may be a more desirable option than returning to the country of origin.¹⁸

Additionally, it was important to consider that family units are held together by kinship and solidarity ties that go beyond territories. These ties materialize in regular exchanges of different kinds between individuals in the destination country and those in the country of origin. This complexity requires looking at the concept of “reparation” under a broader perspective which takes into account the entire family unit.¹⁹

- 13 UNHCR. *Programa Interamericano para la promoción y protección de los derechos humanos de los migrantes*, Washington D.C, February 13, 2007. [Date accessed: 2/10/2017].
- 14 Cartagena Declaration on Refugees, Adopted by the “Colloquium on the International Protection of Refugees in Central America, Mexico and Panama: Legal and Humanitarian Problems”, held in Cartagena, Colombia from 19 - 22 November 1984.
- 15 Constitutional Court of Colombia. Decision 119 of 2013. Following Decision T-025 of 2004.
- 16 According to public policy and to Article 3 of Law 1448 of 2011, the victimizing events in the context of the conflict represent human rights violations and breaches of international humanitarian law.
- 17 Colombian migration is marked by transnational dynamics under which different family members and friends are involved in a process of constant movement between origin and destinations; this implies frequent travel or relationships in stages that move between the country of origin and the country of destination as well as between destinations, thus creating routes that ultimately lead to permanent change (Cavalcanti Leonardo and Sònia Parella. *El Retorno desde una perspectiva transnacional*. Dossiê: Retorno e circularidade en REMHU - Rev. Interdiscipl. Mobil. Hum., Brasília, Ano XXI, n. 41, p. 9- 20, jul./dez. 2013).
- 18 Codhes (2017a) Op. Cit. See also Aliaga Sáez, Felipe Andrés; Uribe Mendoza, Cristhian; Blanco García, Jorge Enrique [et al.] (2017) *Imaginarios del retorno a Colombia posconflicto*. Discursos de colombianos refugiados en Ecuador. In: Memoria e imaginación. Digithum, n.º 20, pgs. 1-13. UOC and UdeA. [Date accessed: 2/10/2017] {<http://dx.doi.org/107238/d.v0i20.3097>.
- 19 As Guarnizo points out, the massive emigration of Colombians has transformed the social, economic, political and cultural fabric of the country and, as a consequence, Colombia now has “a transnational social configuration. This means that the political, economic, and social power structures of society, as well as the production, reproduction and transformation of the culture that models national identity, transcends national territorial jurisdiction and takes place in a transnational space. Individuals who live ‘here’ (the residents within the national territory) interact with, influence, and are influenced by those who live ‘there’ (Colombians living in multiple foreign destinations). Meanwhile, those who live ‘there’ build dynamic relationships that connect various Colombian settlement locations abroad” (2006, p.81 - in Spanish).

3. CONSTRUCTION OF THE CHARACTERIZATION SURVEY

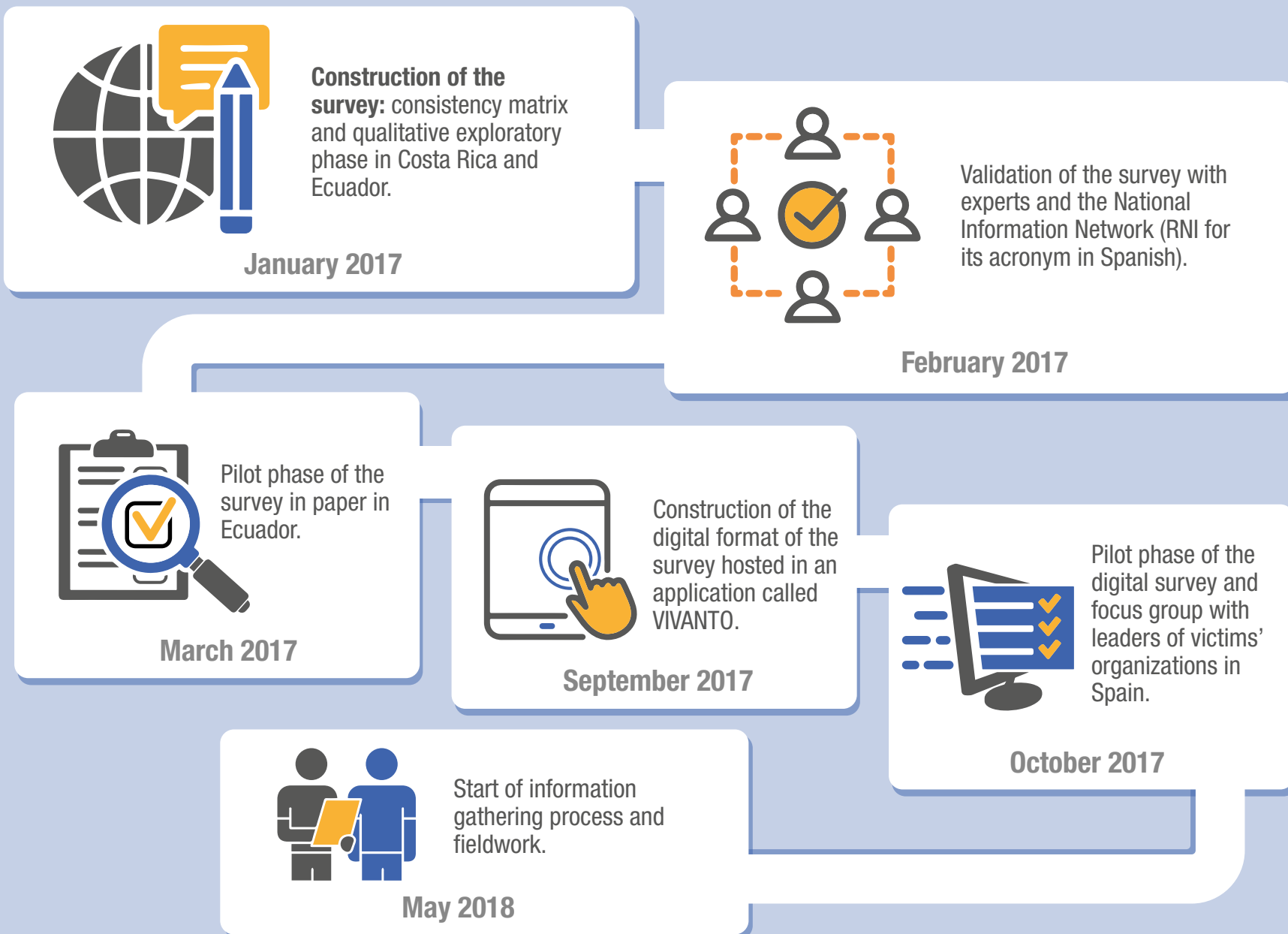
Review of primary and secondary sources

The first exercise of the exploratory phase for the construction of the characterization survey was carried out in Costa Rica and Ecuador with two focus groups. The first consisted of nine victims of the armed conflict in San José de Costa Rica (Costa Rica) and the second consisted of twelve victims in Esmeraldas (Ecuador). Each group was asked about migration dynamics, migration status, quality of life, socio-economic conditions, psychosocial characteristics, intention to return, the situation of victimization and access to Colombian State institutions.

The exercise in Costa Rica corroborated that the population is heterogeneous, that it was located in different and remote parts of the Costa Rican territory, that the distance from their location to the consulates had made it difficult to submit requests for inclusion in the RUV and that there was a general lack of knowledge of Law 1448 of 2011.



Figure 2. Stages of the design and revision of the characterization survey



The exercise in Ecuador indicated that the victims who were in San Lorenzo and Esmeraldas had a negative perception of the Colombian State, mainly because they considered that they had not received comprehensive reparation. Although only a few people indicated an intention to return to Colombia, a significant proportion expressed that they would be willing to return under certain conditions.²⁰

Additionally, the pilot survey found that **communities are interested in the Colombian State having information on their characteristics, provided, however, that it leads to the recognition of their social realities and to more assertive policies of comprehensive reparation.**

Once the information that resulted from the focus groups was analyzed, a consistency matrix was developed to set the variables that would later be incorporated in the definitive characterization survey.²¹

This stage included reviewing verified secondary sources to use elements that would inform the construction of the survey. These sources included the characterization questionnaire on the effective enjoyment of rights prepared by the National Information Network (RNI) of the Unit for Victims; various surveys prepared by the National Administrative Department of Statistics (DANE) of the Colombian government; a study titled *Dinámicas y flujos migratorios Colombia - Panamá: estado actual y perspectivas futuras* (Colombia - Panama Migration Flows and Dynamics: current status and future perspectives) prepared by the National Planning Department (DNP) of the Colombian government and the International Organization for Migration (IOM); the Unit for Victims' Operational Manual for the Implementation of Actions with a Gender and

Differential Approach in Support and Guidance Processes; and Law 1448 of 2011 - Victims and Land Restitution Law.

Validation of the Survey with Experts

Once the consistency matrix and the first version of the characterization form had been prepared, and they had both been validated by the Unit for Victims and the Norwegian Refugee Council, the survey and the conceptual framework were presented to a table of experts made up of two statisticians and a lawyer. Based on their observations, the instrument was modified and sent to the National Information Network (RNI) for final adjustments, after which the pilot phase began in

three cities in Ecuador. The interviewer and supervisor manuals were also prepared in advance, along with a dictionary of variables.

Pilot exercise using the paper survey

A pilot exercise was carried out in Ecuador between March 6 and 11, 2017 to test the survey and make improvements. To this end, a sample consisting of 165 Colombian victims of the armed conflict living in Esmeraldas, San Lorenzo and Quito²² was chosen. The variables of the survey questions that were assessed were: pertinence (whether they were located in the right section and in the right order), relevance (whether they correspond to any of the four objectives of the characterization exercise), and clarity (wording and understanding).

Pilot exercise for the digital survey

In order to adapt the survey to the digital application VIVANTO of the Unit for Victims,²³ a second test was carried out in October 2017. This test was included among the activities of a victim support session²⁴ in Spain, a country with migration dynamics and victim profiles that differ

- 20** The conditions defined by the focus group were access to housing, work and livelihood that would allow income generation, often in cities or towns different from the ones they left.
- 21** The matrix included objectives, sources from which the questions were obtained, survey categories, variables and questions for each variable; after this step, the survey was constructed with the questions and response options for each of the chapters.
- 22** In Esmeraldas and San Lorenzo, the paper-based survey was made through face-to-face interviewers. Meanwhile, a group interview led by a migration expert was conducted in Quito with ten victims. In addition to the above, the survey team had their first training session, from which suggestions for improving the form/survey were also collected.
- 23** This was a necessary step, considering that the Colombian government requires standardizing the capture of information on victims of the armed conflict. This is also why the parameters previously established by the National Information Network (RNI) were followed for the characterization of victims within the national territory. Once all the questions and answer options were presented with the relevant filters in Word format, a validation grid in Excel format was prepared for the subsequent structuring of these questions in a mobile application, available for Tablet-type devices.
- 24** This refers to a victim open access support session abroad with the joint participation of Colombian government entities and non-governmental (mostly humanitarian) organizations.

from those in Ecuador. The exercise consisted of nine surveys of victims living in Madrid (including one victim leader) and a focus group with ten leaders of victims' organizations in Valencia. These activities resulted in new suggestions regarding the form, content and methodology of the survey.

First characterization stage

After the pilot tests, the first characterization stage began in five countries (Costa Rica, Chile, Ecuador, Spain and Panama).²⁵ These activities shed light on new ways of improving the instrument²⁶ before launching the large-scale characterization survey in 2018 and 2019.

This phase also included selecting and training interviewers²⁷ from the Unit for Victims and the Norwegian Refugee Council, as well as the issuance of user accounts to access the application VIVANTO, which would enable controlling the number of surveys and countries where they were carried out. A Survey Application Handbook was also prepared, which emphasized the importance of listening and not interrupting the stories of the victims and highlighted empathy as a fundamental psychosocial component. The procedure for filling out the informed consent form used in the pilot tests in Ecuador and Spain was also adjusted.²⁸



The survey chapters

After making the necessary adjustments, the final version of **the survey was structured in six chapters containing a total 122 questions**. The survey contains questions that allow multiple or single answers, and some survey questions include filters. The conceptual framework of the survey was designed to allow for a differential²⁹ and gender-based³⁰ approach to the situation of victims living abroad.

The survey includes questions that inquire about belonging to certain ethnic groups, disability status, gender, and sexual orientation of the respondents. The latter, taking into account various types of discrimination and violations of rights suffered not only by women but also by people from the LGBTIQ+ community in the host countries.

25 The test was conducted through 21 surveys in Costa Rica, 26 in Chile, 20 in Ecuador, 23 in Spain and 24 in Panama.

26 A suggestion was made in terms of recording the stories of the victims that participated in the survey, or organizing focus groups.

27 The interviewers were afforded a space to record their observations after conducting the survey which turned out to be essential to understand the behavior of the instrument in different countries.

28 The adjustment consisted of requesting the consent form signature at the beginning of the survey and taking a screen shot of the completed survey at the end in order to keep a record in VIVANTO.

29 Although victims are already part of a vulnerable group in society, there are important differences within this same population that have to be considered when constructing public policy aimed at finding solutions to their needs. The survey therefore included questions related to any disability, whether physical, sensory, cognitive or mental. Along this same line, victims were asked whether they belonged to specific ethnic groups, such as Raizales, Palenqueros, indigenous or black/mulatto/Afro-Colombian.

30 In the process of characterizing victims of the armed conflict abroad, the Unit for Victims took into account the following premise: the differential and gender-based approach refers to analyzing social relations based on the recognition of women's specific needs. This approach aims to guarantee real and effective equality between men and women. The State recognizes that women who have been victims of violations of international humanitarian law or have suffered serious human rights violations have sustained disproportionate and differential impacts in the context of the armed conflict (Unit for Victims, 2017).

Figure 3. Contents of the six chapters of the characterization survey to prepare a profile of victims abroad



A. Socio-demographic characteristics

Inquires into the demographic information of the respondent, such as: current residential address, age, ethnicity, occupation, gender, educational level and marital status, among others. Includes questions on the characteristics of the members of the respondent’s household, such as kinship, nationality, place of residence. The person is also asked whether they consider themselves a victim of the Colombian internal armed conflict.



B. Conditions of victimization

The questions focus on the victimization of the respondent (the victimizing events suffered and its effects), as well as on their knowledge of their rights under Law 1448 of 2011, the support, assistance and comprehensive reparation measures available to them, and the process to be followed for inclusion in the Single Registry of Victims. Questions also inquire about the number of internal displacements both between municipalities and between sectors or areas of the same municipality or district. Additionally, questions were asked about places through which individuals traveled as a result of the internal armed conflict.



C. Migration dynamics

Questions in this chapter focus on the respondent’s migration process, such as the period during which the person left Colombia, countries where they stayed after emigrating, people they left with, motivations for choosing a given destination country, type of transportation used, and questions related to language proficiency in the host country.



Questions that shed light on whether the respondent has any intention returning to Colombia, whether they intend to remain in the country where the survey is conducted, or whether they intend to resettle in a third country. The intention to return is also analyzed in greater depth based on the respondent's immigration status; this includes whether the respondent has refugee (asylum) status or some other protection measure, as well as the benefits received from this status, if any.



D. Conditions of local integration and intention to return



E. Conditions in the country of destination

The chapter includes questions related to the type and form of housing in which the respondent lives, with whom they live, their access to health services, education opportunities in the host country and participation in civil society, among others.



F. Social characteristics: risks associated to migration

Contains questions about changes within the family structure after migration, relationship with neighbors in the country where the survey is carried out and support received from recognized institutions or organizations.

4. THE UNIVERSE OF VICTIMS

As noted above, it is not possible to establish a deterministic model to describe the universe of victims abroad. They are affected by the dynamics of migration itself as well as by factors associated with personal choices, voluntariness in applying for inclusion in the Single Registry of Victims, mistrust of institutions and lack of knowledge of their rights as victims.

However, there are two markers that provide important guidance. First, within the scope of Law 1448 of 2011, as of December 31, 2019, the **Single Registry of Victims has recognized 25,386 victims abroad**,³¹ based on statements received from consulates around the world.

The taking of statements began in 2012 with a base of 45, and by 2019 this number had reached 13,129. This indicates that despite challenges in the registration of the victim population, the actions of the State and civil organizations between those years served to recognize and make this population more visible than it had ever been. Furthermore, it paved the way for the implementation of support, assistance, and reparation measures under the law.³²

Second, information has been drawn from the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) according to which, by 2019 (the most recent figures), **the number of Colombian refugees worldwide reached 189,454** (UNHCR, 2020, pg. 78 - In Spanish).³³

Although the population of victims of the armed conflict is not necessarily the same as the population of Colombian refugees, there is a strong link between these two groups, which is why both figures are taken as important population markers.³⁴

One area of this profile elucidated by the information drawn from both sources has to do with the countries of destination (or host countries) chosen by individuals. Despite some differences, both sources agree that Ecuador, Venezuela,³⁵ the United States, Canada, Panama, Chile and Costa Rica are the countries where the largest number of victims of the armed conflict and Colombian refugees are concentrated.³⁶

In the case of refugees, this reflects the prominence of cross-border displacement and of the Americas as the region with the highest numbers of de facto or officially recognized refugees or applicants. Ortiz and Kaminker (2014) explain that South American countries are common destinations for Colombian refugees since the 1990s, not only because

of their proximity and ease of access by land, but also because of the existence of long-standing family networks and the evolution of asylum and refugee legislation in these countries.

According to CODHES (2017), there are three variables that influence an individual's choice of host country, when emigrating in search of protection. These are the financial costs involved in relocation, the existence of social and cultural barriers to local insertion and integration, and restrictions imposed on access to protection measures under a country's legislation. Countries can therefore be classified under three categories,

based on these variables. The first group is made up of bordering countries (Ecuador, Venezuela and Panama), the second group is made up by close neighbors (Argentina, Chile and Brazil) and the third group is made up by distant countries (Canada, United States, Costa Rica and Spain).

Sampling design

Since the magnitude of the universe of victims abroad is unknown, any attempt at having a representative sample size would necessarily exclude part of the universe of victims that this profile intends to characterize. For example, if the universe of victims is limited to individuals registered in the RUV, then all the victims who made statements but were not registered (for administrative reasons that place limitations on the registry) would be excluded from this analysis, as well as other victims abroad who have not made statements, either because they are not aware of the existence of the RUV or because they simply do not intend to do so.

In this context, **the sampling design is based on a casual or incidental model, i.e. a non-probability sampling method in which individuals who consider themselves to be victims are included according to their availability**

- 31** The most recent available data (as of December 31, 2020) show that the number of victims abroad registered in the RUV had risen to 25,805.
- 32** This idea is further developed in *Law 1448 of 2011: Perspectives on the Satisfaction of the Rights of Victims Abroad* (2020), an assessment of the victim support, assistance and comprehensive reparation policy published as a complement to this profile by the Unit for Victims and the NRC.
- 33** Includes individuals with recognized refugee status by the host country, as well as individuals in a similar situation to refugees.
- 34** The registered figures for each group have been determined based on different conceptual frameworks: the assessment of applications for registration in the RUV is based on the definition of a victim of armed conflict as stipulated in Article 3 of Law 1448 of 2011; the UNHCR figures have a broader scope under international refugee law. Therefore, not all victims of the armed conflict living abroad are refugees and, at the same time, not all refugees are victims of the armed conflict.
- 35** The current situation in Venezuela posed an additional challenge when preparing the profile, namely, locating victims in that country. In communications with individuals who considered themselves victims, most reported that they were once again located in Colombian territory.
- 36** There were differences related to France, Sweden and Spain, which appear in the RUV among the top ten countries with the highest concentration of victims of the Colombian armed conflict; in contrast, when the survey was designed, Argentina, Peru and Brazil were among the top ten countries with the highest concentration of Colombian refugees.

and willingness to participate. The victims included in the characterization analysis were selected from information received from various organizations and sources in the countries analyzed.

Results obtained from casual or incidental sampling are not representative of the opinion of the whole population, but rather present an illustrative result, which is why a standard error calculation does not apply. The above does not invalidate the scope of the characterization analysis, which seeks to define the main characteristics and needs of the victims of the Colombian armed conflict living abroad; on the contrary, this methodology attempts to capture the opinion of victims who migrated to different countries.

» General description of the sampling design: non-probability convenience sampling. The individuals on whom the profile was based participated voluntarily in the characterization activities and were supported by victims' organizations, international organizations and consulates.

» Recruitment or selection of individuals for the characterization analysis: based on information collected from various sources, face-to-face or telephone contact was established with victims abroad. After confirming an individual's willingness to participate in the characterization, they were asked the following filter question: do you consider yourself a victim of the armed conflict in Colombia?

Methodological limitations of the sampling design for this profile

This characterization analysis was based on non-probability sampling. Participants were selected according to logistical convenience criteria, related to the concentration of the population in the selected countries as well as the willingness of individuals to participate in characterization activities; that is, the selection of the sample does not obey criteria of representativeness of the total universe of victims abroad.

A probabilistic and representative study would have required knowledge of the total universe of victims abroad and their characteristics. This would have allowed collecting a sample that reflected the characteristics of this population proportionally and allowed the application of random selection methods that mitigate selection bias.

Considering the reality of the universe of victims abroad, however, a statistically representative study of this population requires special logistical and operational efforts.

5. SELECTION CRITERIA RELATED TO HOST COUNTRIES AND MIGRANT POPULATION

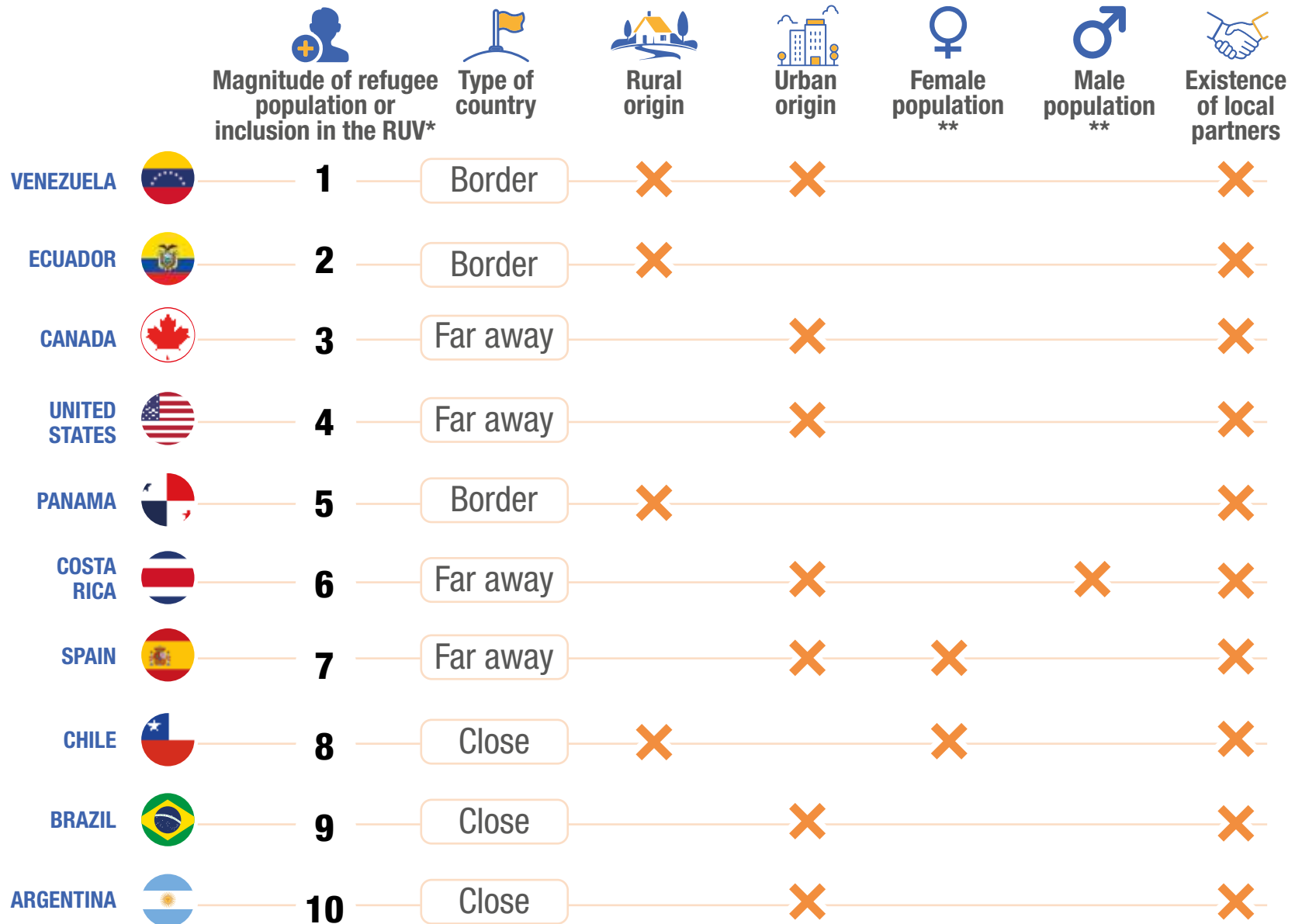
By looking at the emigration trends of members of the Colombian population who consider themselves victims of the armed conflict, the following criteria were analyzed in the selection of eight countries where the surveys were carried out:

- a. Magnitude:** an initial group of ten countries was selected based on the highest concentrations of Colombian refugees, asylum seekers and victims of the armed conflict, according to UNHCR and RUV figures.
- b. Categories according to CODHES:** the categories defined by CODHES allowed to identify different types of destinations according to diverse migration dynamics and profiles. At least one country of each of the CODHES categories (neighboring, close, and far away countries) was chosen for the profile.
- c. Places of origin:** based on the RUV, the place of origin in Colombia was identified. This criterion helps define whether individuals originated from rural areas or urban centers. These factors have an impact on the jobs sought by migrants in the host country as well as the locations in which they choose to settle (large cities, small rural areas or border areas).
- d. Migration profile based on gender:** whether the population of victims abroad was predominantly male or female.
- e. Dynamics of violence:** whether individuals were victims of systematic and targeted political persecution or whether they were victims of human rights and international humanitarian law violations in the context of widespread, and not targeted, political violence.
- f. Alliances:** alliances with local partners (victims' organizations, migrants' associations, human rights NGOs, research centers and cooperation agencies) were included as part of the methodological strategy to search for and contact the population for the profile.
- g. Documentation:** research on studies, diagnoses, censuses, and surveys that provided a contextual framework for the situation of the Colombian population under international protection.³⁷

³⁷ There are academic studies and surveys conducted by UNHCR in border countries, but the only country that has a refugee census is Ecuador.



Figure 4. Characterization criteria in country selection



*Countries are ranked by magnitude of the victim population, where 1 is highest and 10 is lowest magnitude.

**Refers to population mainly of one gender or the other.



The criteria mentioned above led to the selection of Panama, Ecuador and Venezuela as border countries in which an NRC team is present; Costa Rica, as a Central American country that, in addition to sharing a border with Panama (a pathway for many victims) also had the presence of a local partner; Chile, as one of the main host countries for victims of the conflict from the Colombian Pacific region; Spain, as the main transcontinental country with the largest number of Colombian victims (in addition to sharing the same language); and the United States and Canada, as non-Spanish speaking countries.

Process for conducting the survey in each country

Technical selection of survey sample (the way the survey is conducted, subject to the availability of logistic, financial and technological resources). The survey was conducted in strategic locations where a large number of people who met the survey criteria would be gathered, but also where there would be enough privacy and comfort for people to complete it.

Invitation extended to victims

The NRC and the Unit for Victims invited victims to complete the survey during victim support sessions or using their own databases and with the support of local strategic partners.³⁸ The survey was taken by people who freely chose to participate and who presented themselves at the designated location.³⁹ In 2019, in addition to the face-to-face activities, a team from the NRC also conducted surveys via telephone in the eight selected countries.⁴⁰ A total of 2,033 face-to-face and 733 telephone surveys were conducted.⁴¹

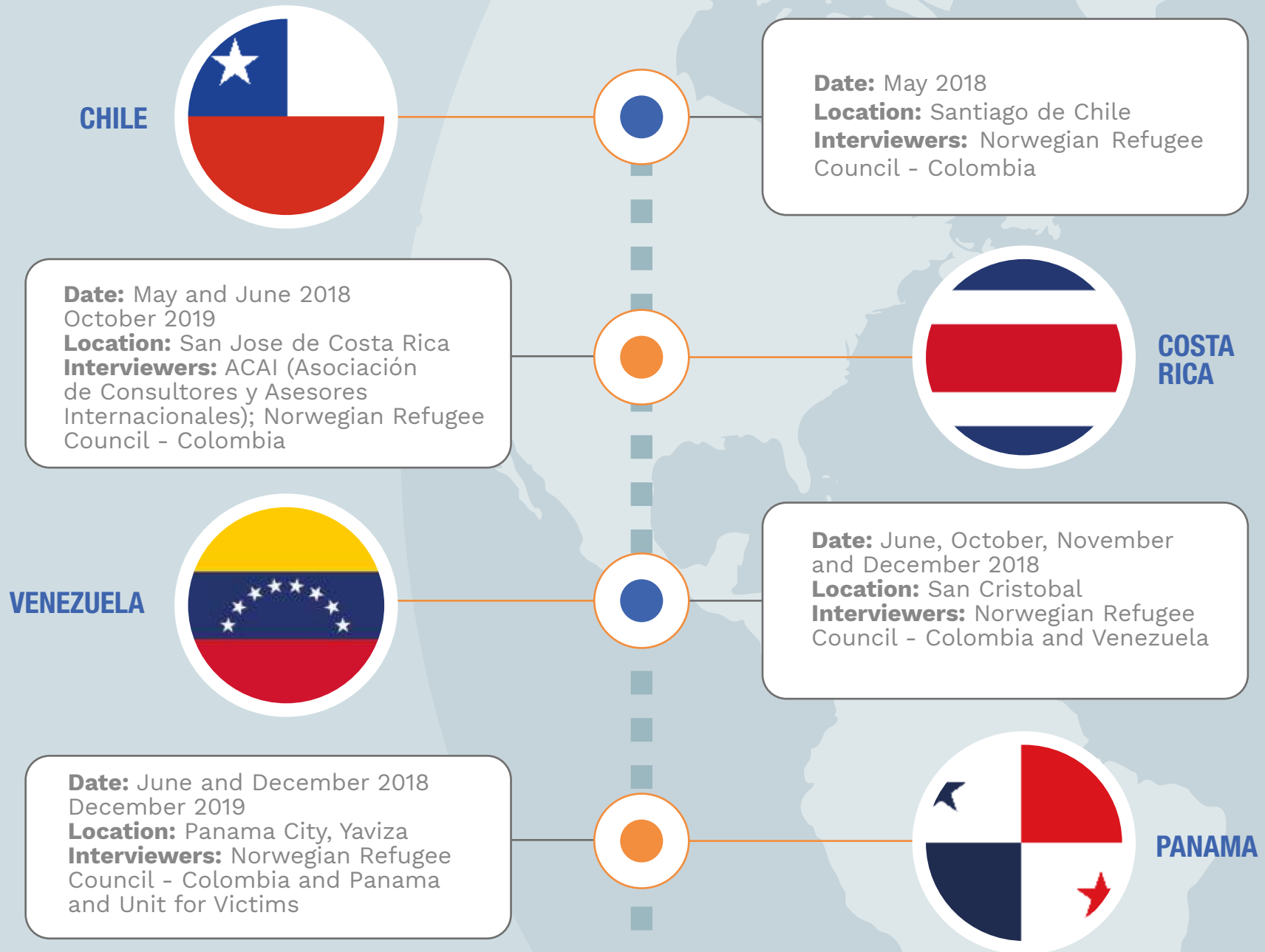
38 Other strategic organizations were UNHCR, the Jesuit Refugee Service, and civil society human rights organizations that completed the map of local partners. Colombian consulates and embassies also played an important role in this process.

39 In Spain, Ecuador, the United States and Chile, the surveys were conducted during the victim support sessions organized by the Unit for Victims and the NRC; in Panama, the invitation to complete the survey was made by the NRC through its work with asylum seekers and refugees in the field; in Costa Rica, it was made by the strategic partner, Asociación de Consultores y Asesores Internacionales (ACAI); in Venezuela, it was made by the NRC in San Cristóbal; and in Canada, by the Unit for Victims and the Colombian consulates.

40 This activity, while allowing for the collection of important information, highlighted challenges related to time zones, linguistic interpretation, and trust, which are all issues that are best addressed in face-to-face communication.

41 The characterization results are based on a smaller number of surveys (2,612) given that only those conducted during fieldwork between 2018 and 2019 were taken into account. Additionally, 33 surveys were eliminated due to errors.

Figure 5. Survey timetable in 2018 and 2019



UNITED STATES



Date: October 2018 and November 2019

Location: Miami, New York, New Jersey and Connecticut

Interviewers: Norwegian Refugee Council - Colombia and Unit for Victims

Date: October, November and December 2018 and December 2019

Location: Quito, Ibarra, San Lorenzo and Esmeraldas

Interviewers: Norwegian Refugee Council - Colombia and Ecuador

ECUADOR



SPAIN



Date: November 2018
December 2019

Location: Barcelona, Valencia, Castellon de la Plana and Torre Vieja

Interviewers: Norwegian Refugee Council - Colombia and Unit for Victims

Date: August and December 2019

Location: Via telephone

Interviewers: Norwegian Refugee Council - Colombia and Unit for Victims

CANADA



Focus Groups per Country

To conduct the exercise, focus groups were chosen in order to examine issues relevant to the characterization of victims abroad in depth, using a qualitative methodology. The aim of these focus groups was to gain insight that would supplement the analysis of the quantitative information collected. The focus groups were organized as follows:

Figure 6. Focus group timetable



ECUADOR

Date: October 25, 2018
Location: Esmeraldas
Participants: 10

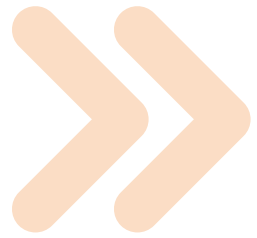


SPAIN

Date: November 15, 2018
Location: Barcelona
Participants: 8







Chapter



FINDINGS



 United States

302
Surveys

 Canada

152
Surveys

 Costa Rica

279
Surveys

 Ecuador

714
Surveys

 Chile

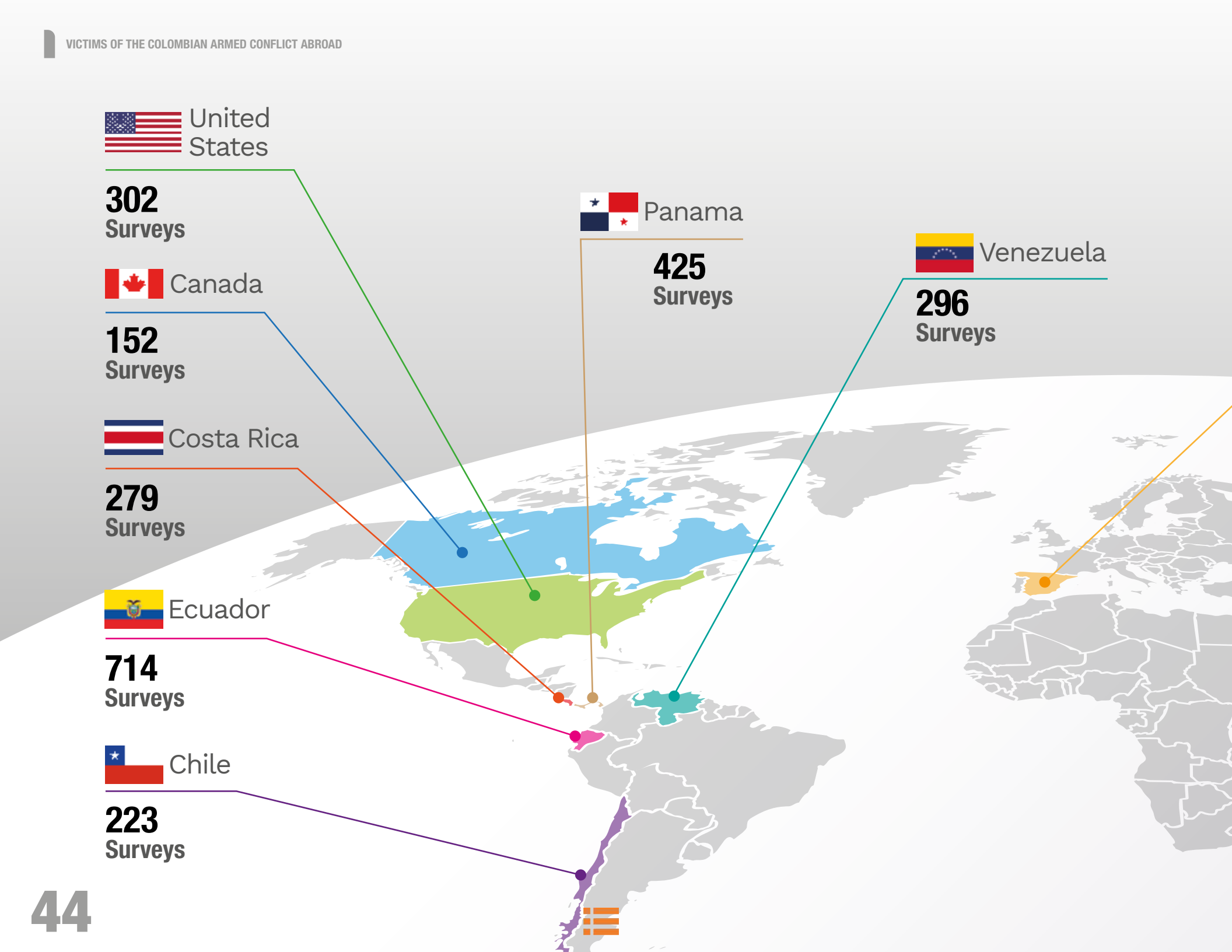
223
Surveys

 Panama

425
Surveys

 Venezuela

296
Surveys





Spain

221
Surveys

This chapter presents the information collected through the instrument (survey) for characterization of victims of the internal armed conflict who are outside Colombia, in the eight selected countries. The main findings are related to the socio-demographic composition of the victims, the dynamics of victimization, the migratory dynamics experienced, the immigration status and access to social, economic and cultural rights abroad, support networks, and intention to return to Colombia. All this based on the answers given by the 2,612 people surveyed who consider themselves victims of the armed conflict.



1. SOCIO-DEMOGRAPHIC CONTEXT

The victims of the armed conflict surveyed who emigrated **are currently, for the most part, adults between the ages of 29 and 60**, distributed as follows: 55 % women and 45 % men. Also, most do not identify with any ethnic group, and their level of education is mainly basic primary and secondary. Specific data on each of these aspects is presented below.

Figure 7. Number of surveys by gender

Base: 2,612 surveys.

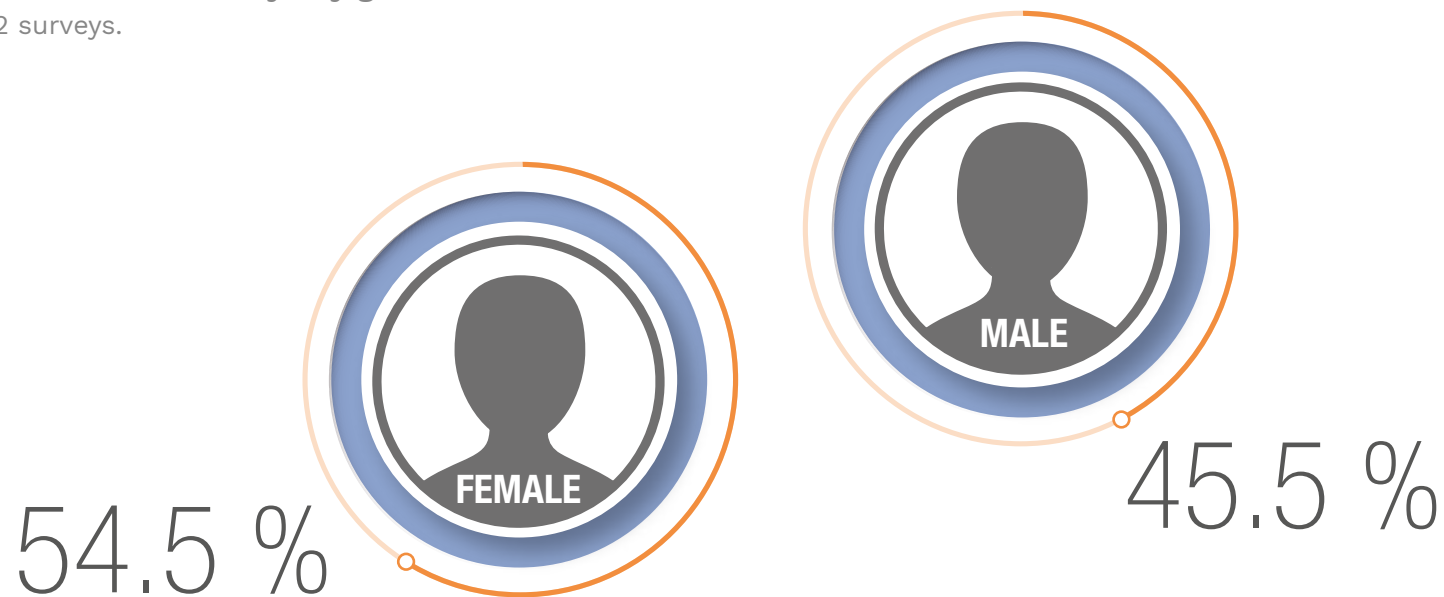
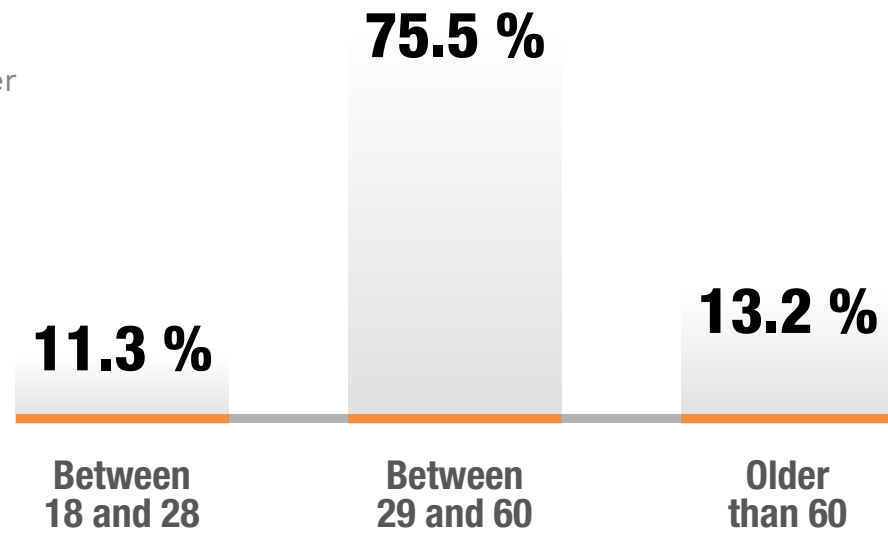


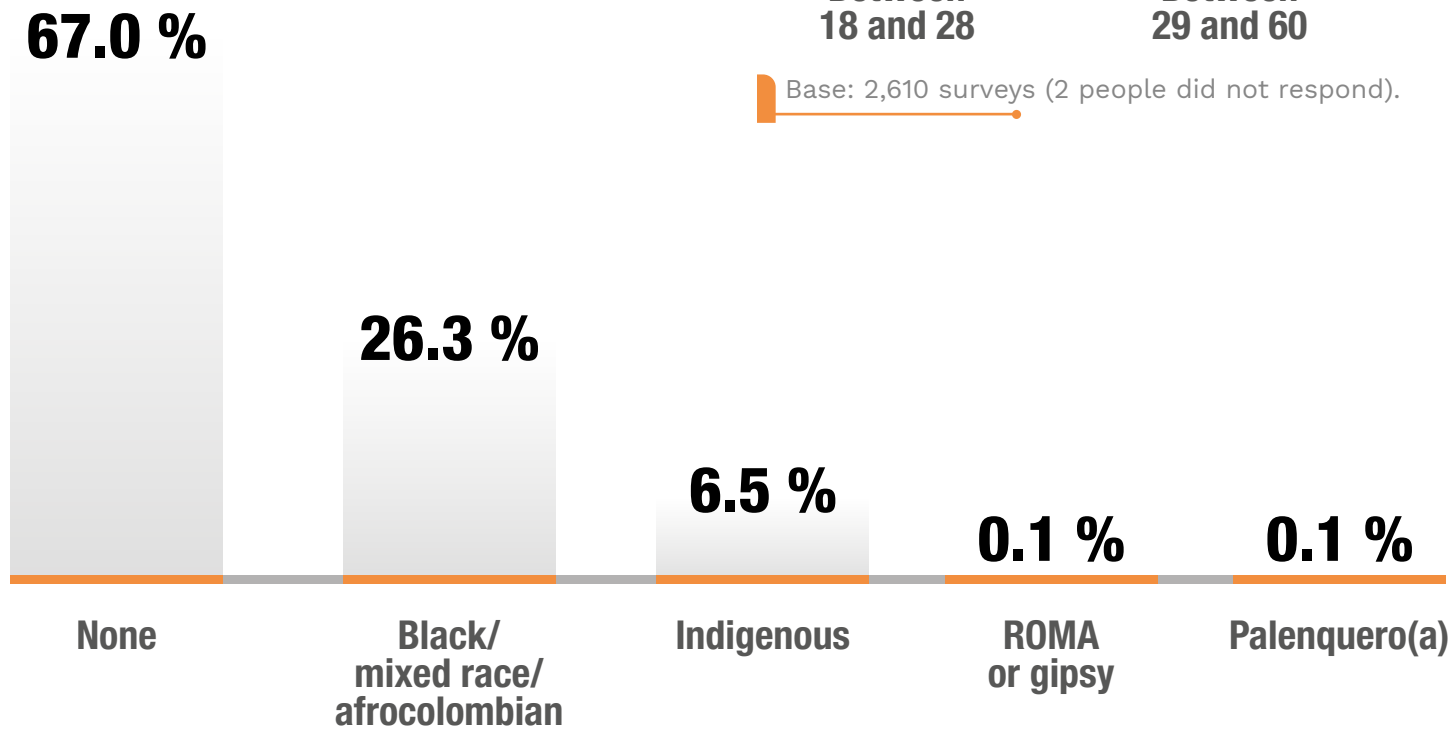
Figure 8. Life cycle of respondents

Reflects people's current age. Only people over 18 were surveyed.



Base: 2,610 surveys (2 people did not respond).

Figure 9. Ethnic group



Base: 2,612 surveys.



In terms of self-identification by ethnic group, 26.3 % of the people who identify themselves as black/mulatto/Afro-Colombian are located mainly in Ecuador, Chile and Panama, three of the eight host countries. On the other hand, 6.5 % of the population that identifies itself as indigenous is located mainly in Panama. Below is a breakdown by country.

Figure 10. Ethnic self-identification by host country

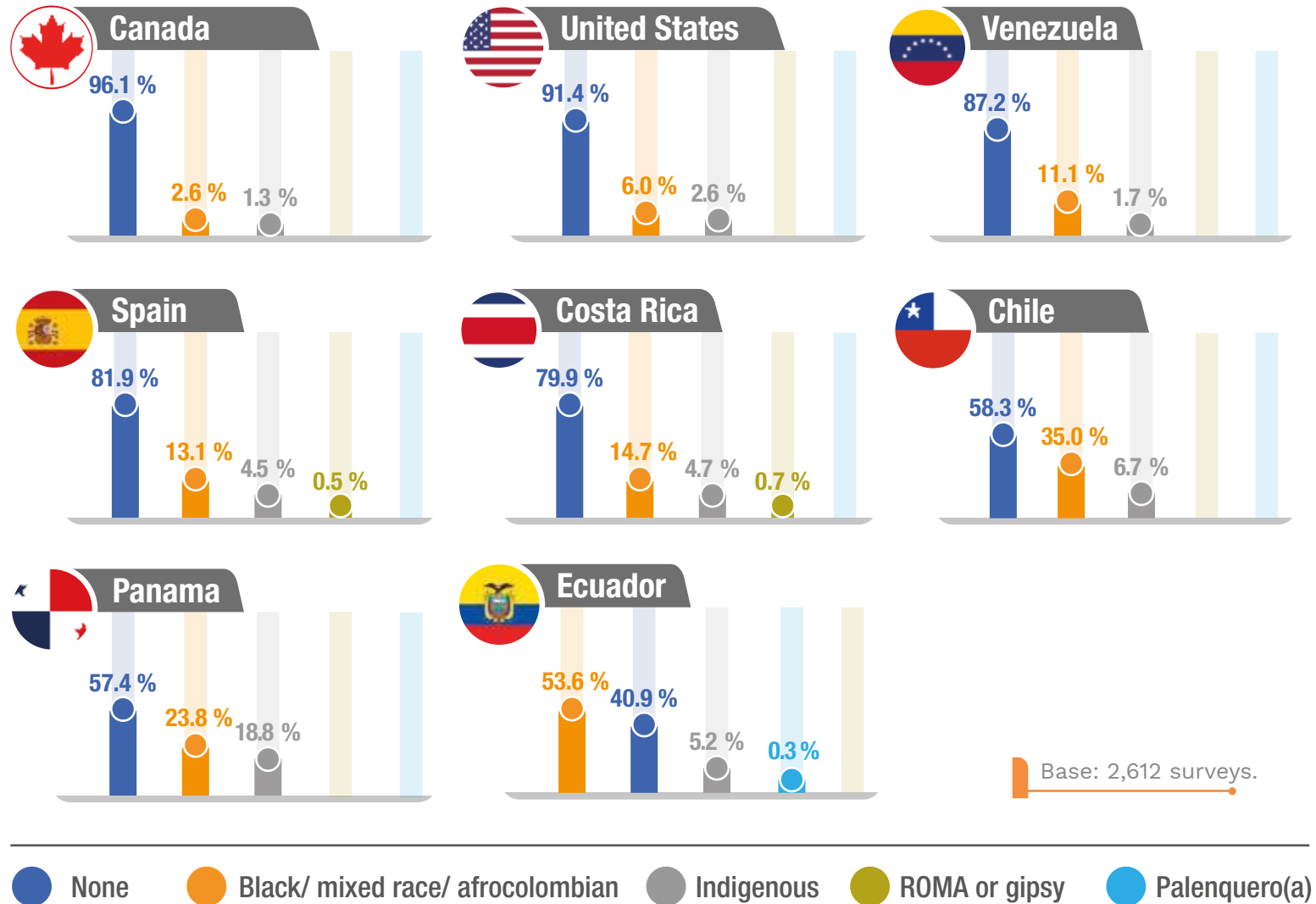
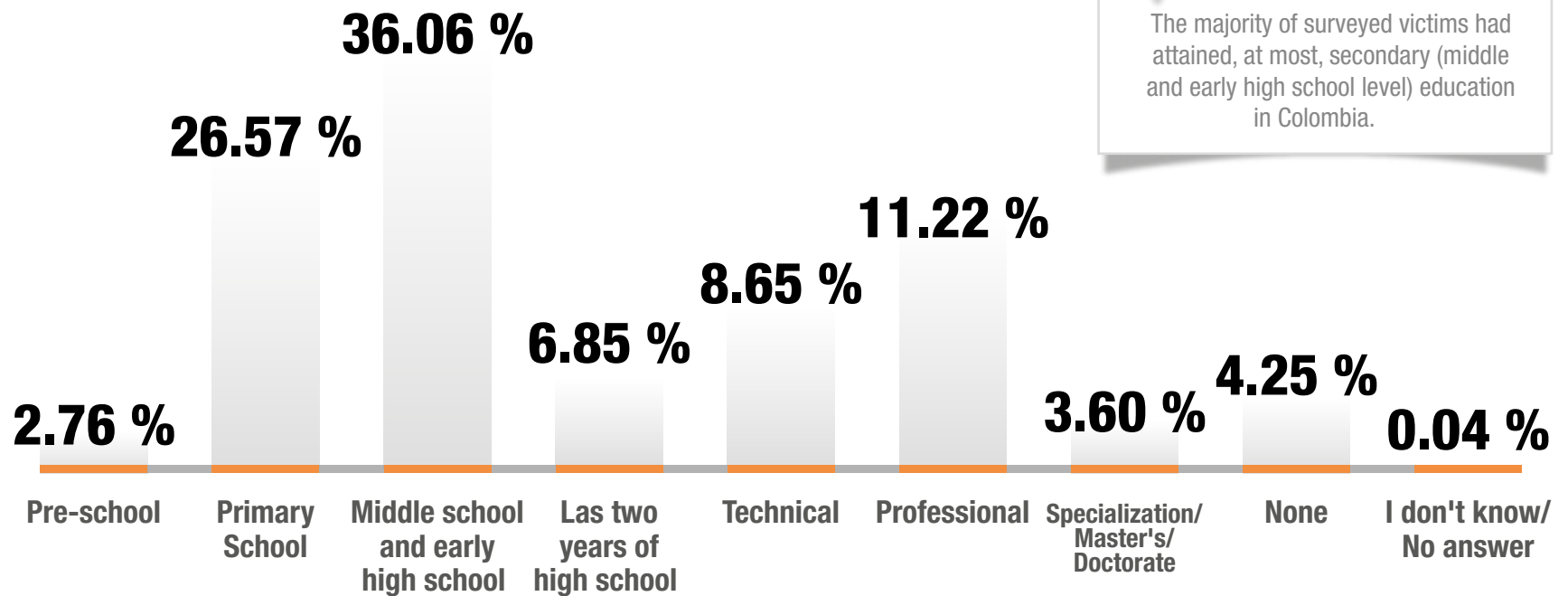


Figure 11. Level of education attained by respondents



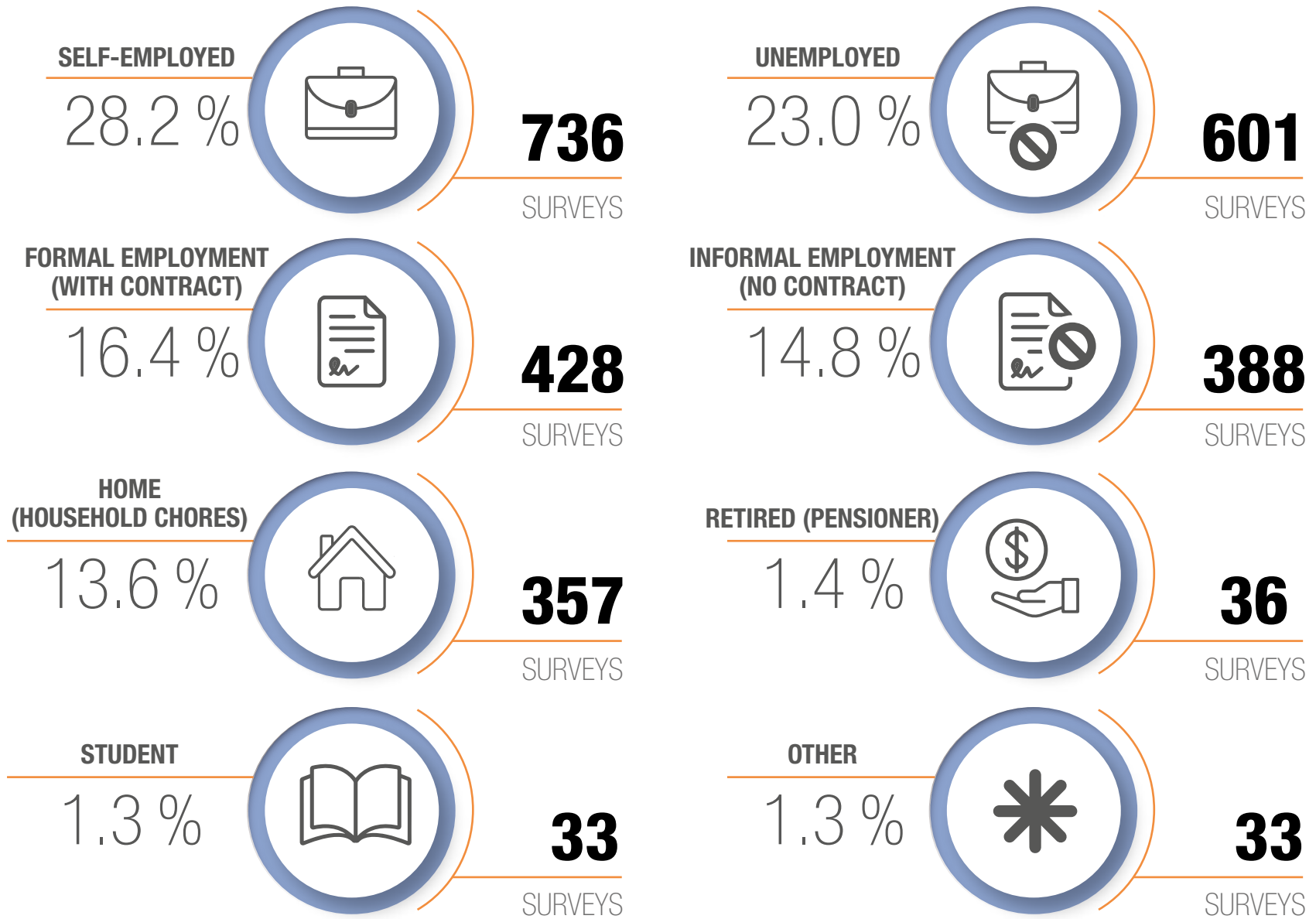
Base: 2,612 surveys.

In addition, according to their main economic activity, 28 % of all people surveyed are self-employed, followed by 23 % who are unemployed. At the same time, the sum of unemployed or informally employed people is equivalent to 38 % of the analyzed population. This indicates that nearly **four out of ten people face risks in terms of livelihood and job security in the host countries.**

The majority of surveyed victims had attained, at most, secondary (middle and early high school level) education in Colombia.

This contrasts with the information that respondents gave about their level of occupation before leaving Colombia, where 43 % were self-employed, followed by 24 % who had formal jobs.

Figure 12. Current occupation of respondents

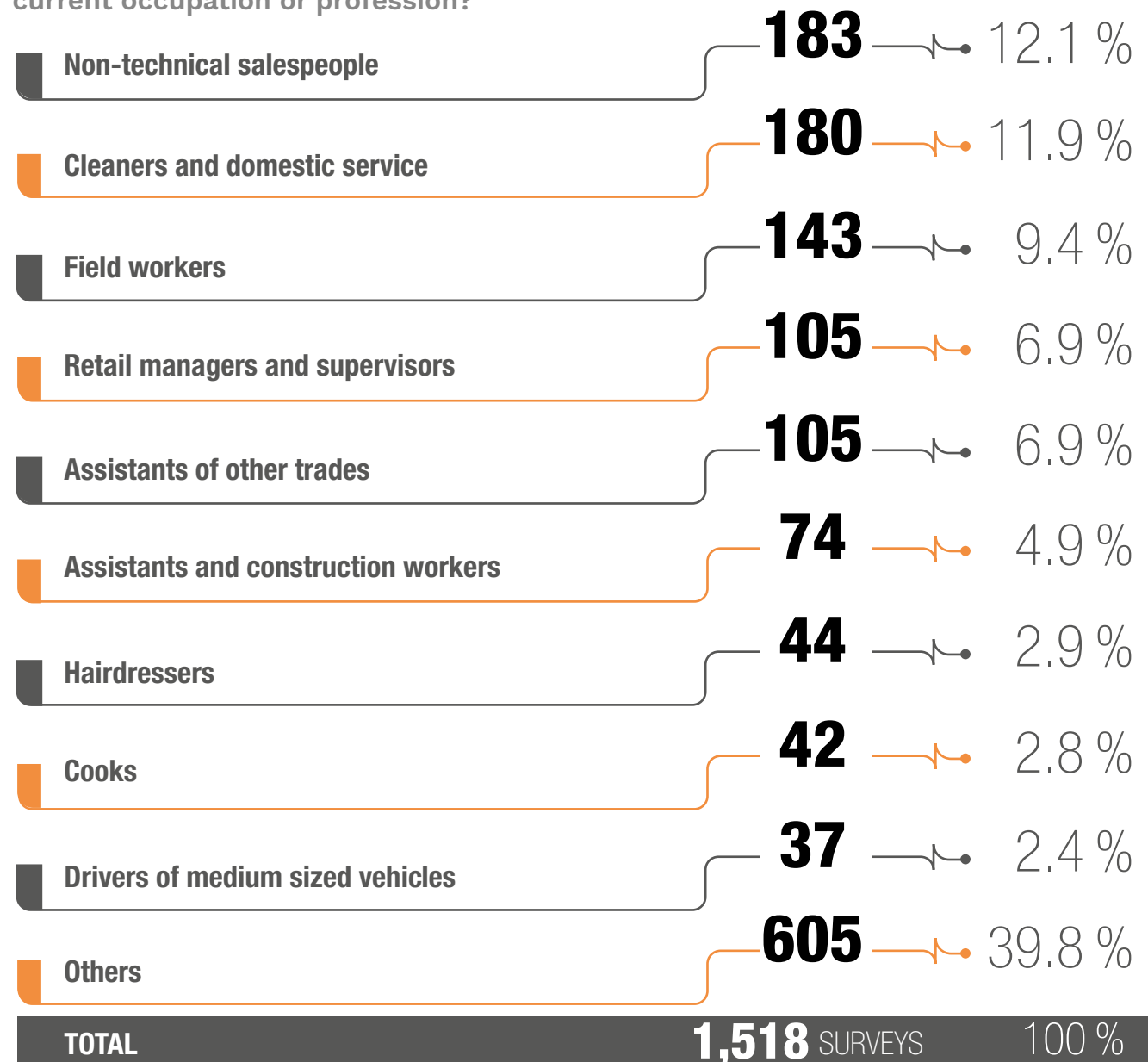


TOTAL **2,612** SURVEYS **100 %**



With respect to the type of trade or profession in which people are engaged, their answers indicate a wide range of activities, among which the main ones are **sales, cleaning and agriculture**.

Figure 13. What is your current occupation or profession?



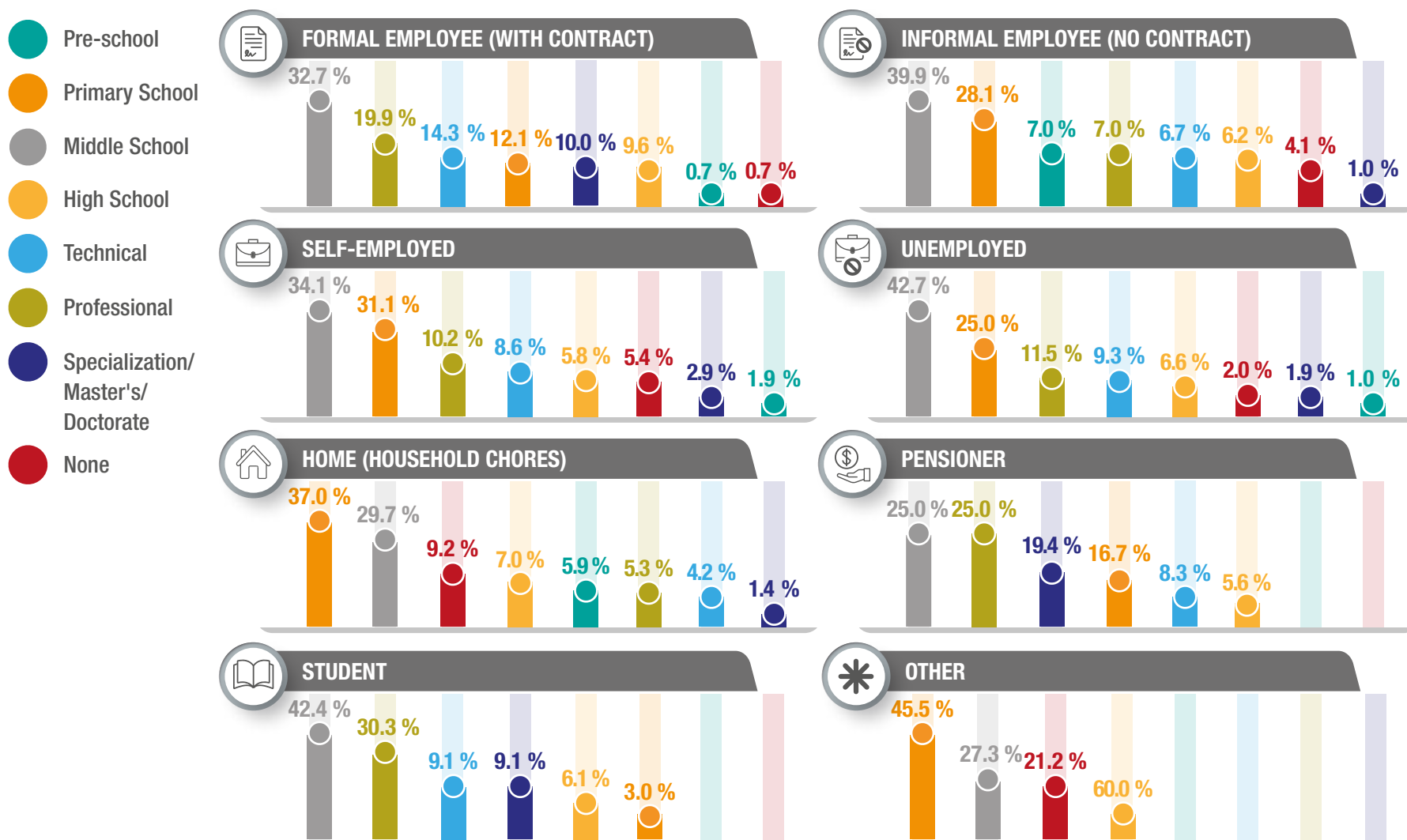
Base: 1,518 surveys.

The number of surveys is lower because this question is answered only by people who are working, although there were some who did not respond.



Regarding the relationship between education level and current occupation of the respondents, it is worth noting that **those who are unemployed or working in the informal sector are mainly people who have studied up to secondary or even just basic primary school.**

Figure 14. Educational level attained and current occupation



Base: 2,612 surveys (self-employed 736, unemployed 601, formally employed -with contract- 428, informally employed -without contract- 388, home -household chores- 357 (one person does not answer), pensioner 36, student 33 and other 33).





2. VICTIMIZATION

CONDITIONS AND STATEMENTS TO ENTER THE SINGLE REGISTRY OF VICTIMS (RUV)

The victims surveyed have suffered different victimizing events:⁴²

The percentages of the population surveyed by country that did make a statement are: Ecuador, 88 %; Panama, 73 %; United States, 95 %; Venezuela, 77 %, Costa Rica, 67 %; Chile, 94 %; Spain, 80% and Canada, 93 %.

- » It is worth highlighting that **most people surveyed have made statements to the Colombian government** (in Colombia or abroad, in this case through the consulates) and have identified themselves mainly as victims of forced displacement and threats.
- » Nearly **five out of ten people experienced two or more victimization events**, while three out of ten experienced three or more victimization events.
- » The impacts caused by the victimization were mainly psychological, followed by impacts associated with family and social ties and loss of income.

All the above is shown in the following graphs of this section.

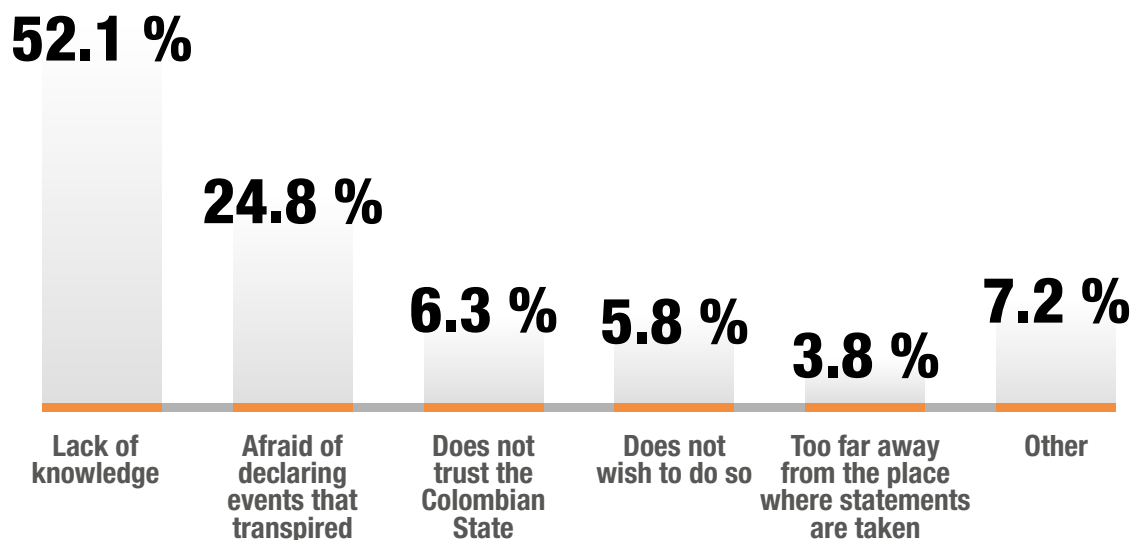


Of the 2,612 victims surveyed, 83 % have submitted applications for inclusion in the Single Registry of Victims (RUV), 17 % have not. A breakdown by country shows that, in each of them, a constant is that the majority have made statements. This indicates that

people are aware of the first step to access the measures for support, assistance, and reparation contemplated by the Colombian State under Law 1448 of 2011; however, as determined below, they do not know exactly what measures they are entitled to.

The 17 % of victims who have not filed a statement, have abstained from doing so mostly due to lack of knowledge, followed by fear of coming forward. In contrast, only a minority of people do not wish to do so.

Figure 15. Reasons for not filing a statement



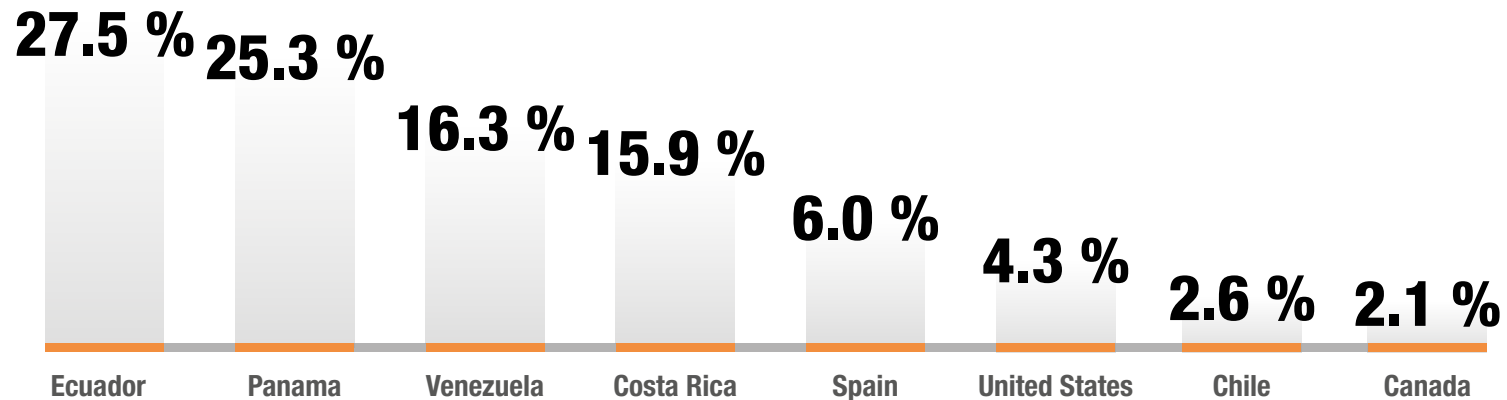
Lack of knowledge includes not knowing that they could state, not knowing what the statement procedures are, and not knowing where to file the statement.

Base: 447 surveys (corresponds to those who have not filed a statement).

42 “Victimizing events” is the way in which Human Rights violations, or violations of International Humanitarian Law, suffered by victims of the internal armed conflict are categorized in the Single Registry of Victims (RUV) of the Unit for Victims.

The countries with fewest recorded statements due to lack of knowledge are Ecuador, Panama, Venezuela and Costa Rica.

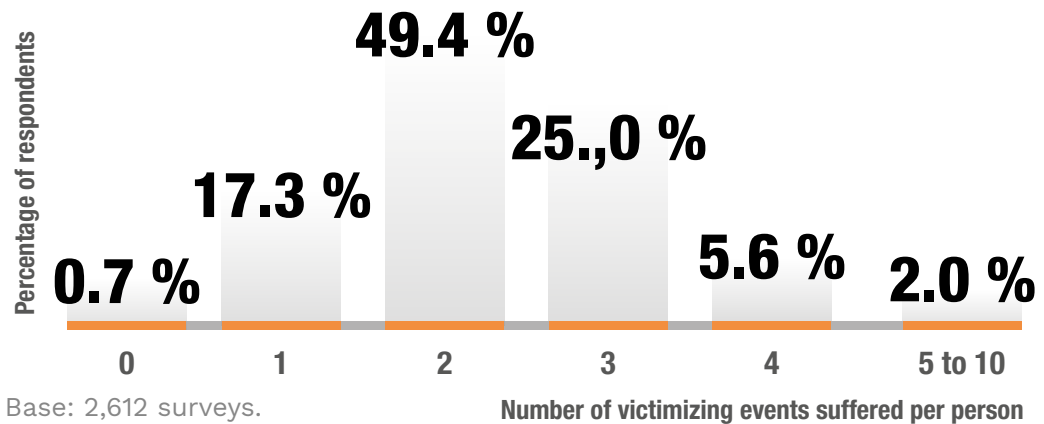
Figure 16. Percentage of people who have no knowledge of the process for filing statements, by country



Base: 233 respondents (corresponds to people who indicated that they were unaware of the possibility of filing a statement).

Regardless of whether or not they have filed a statement, five out of ten people indicate that they have suffered at least two victimization events. Out of a total of 2,946 occurrences of the different events mentioned, [the greatest growth took place between 1995 and 2000.](#)

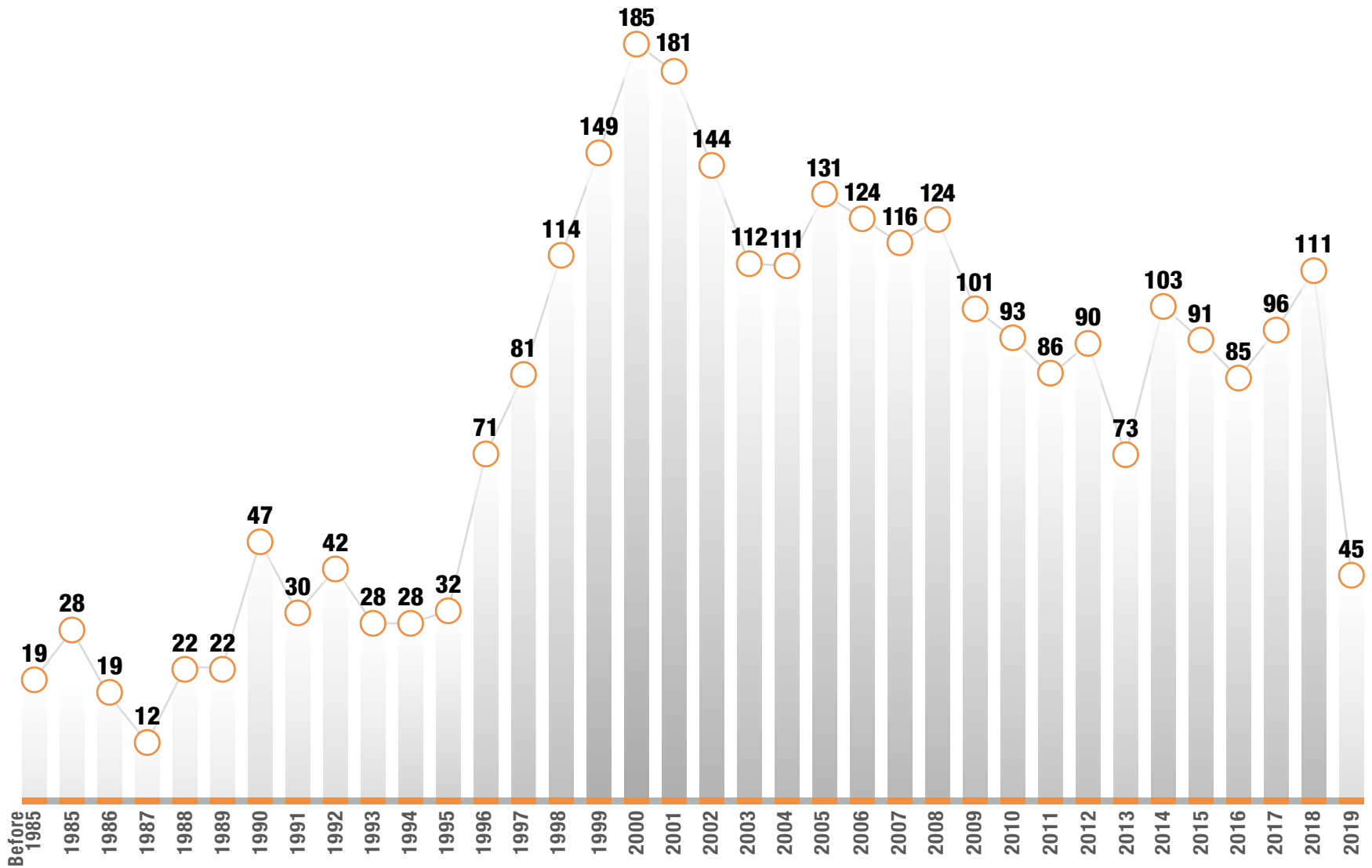
Figure 17. Number of events suffered by respondents



Base: 2,612 surveys.



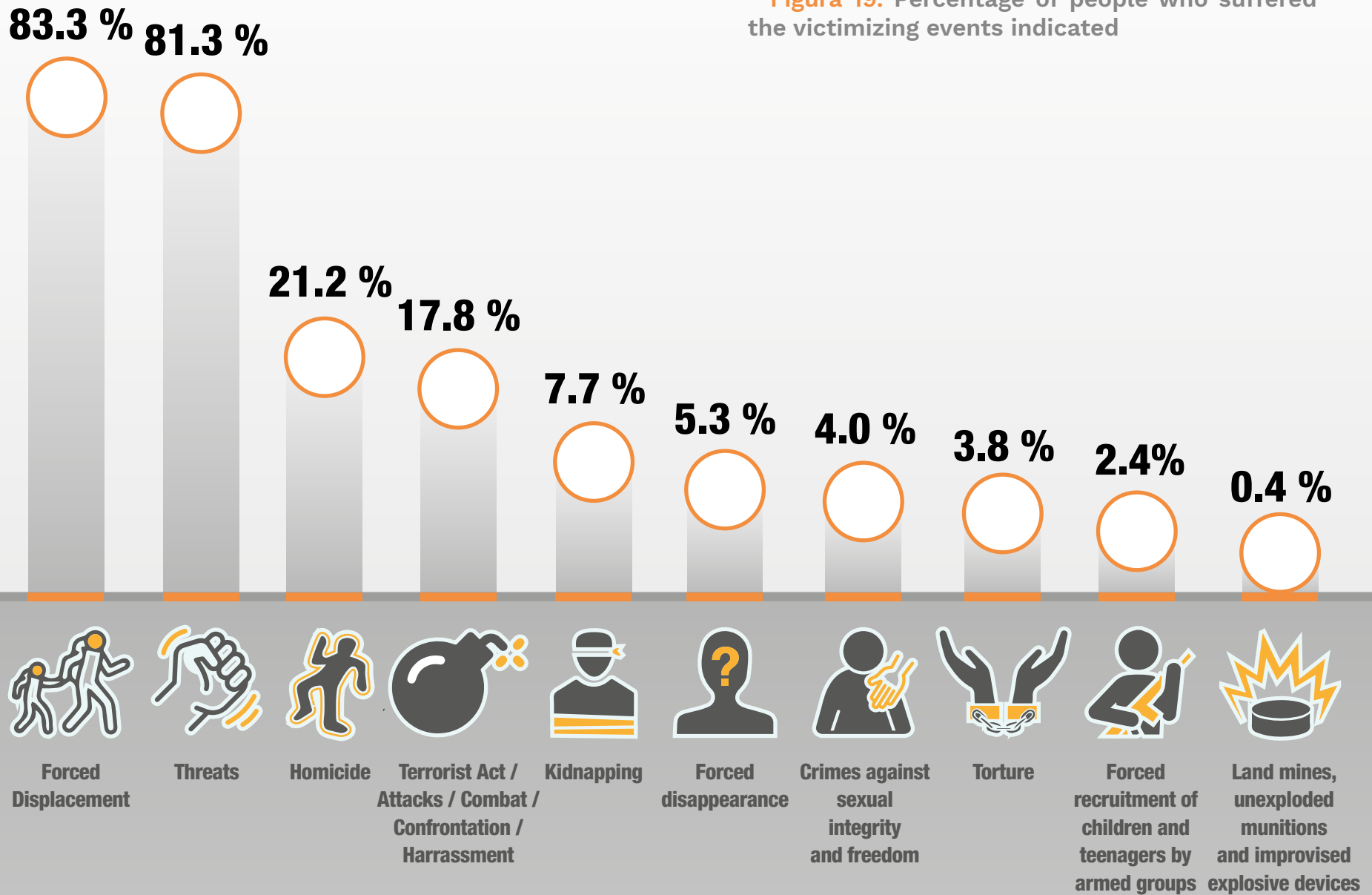
Figure 18. Number of occurrences of victimizing events, by year



2,612 surveys (in which 2,946 occurrences of victimizing events were reported).



Figura 19. Percentage of people who suffered the victimizing events indicated

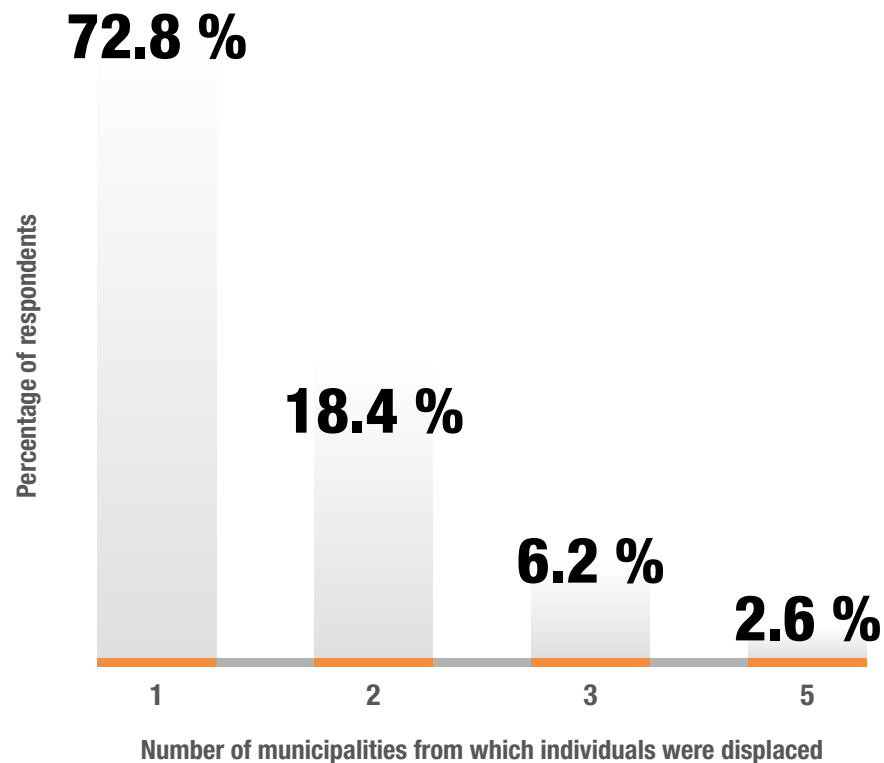


The sum is more than 100 % because interviewees could choose more than one answer.
 Base: 2,595 surveys (17 people did not answer the question).



Of the 2,161 victims surveyed who suffered forced displacement, 68 % stated they were internally displaced before leaving Colombia. This indicates that in most cases the migration of victims does not begin with departure from the country, but includes one or more previous internal displacements, through different municipalities, as will be seen later.

Figure 20. Number of forced displacements before leaving Colombia

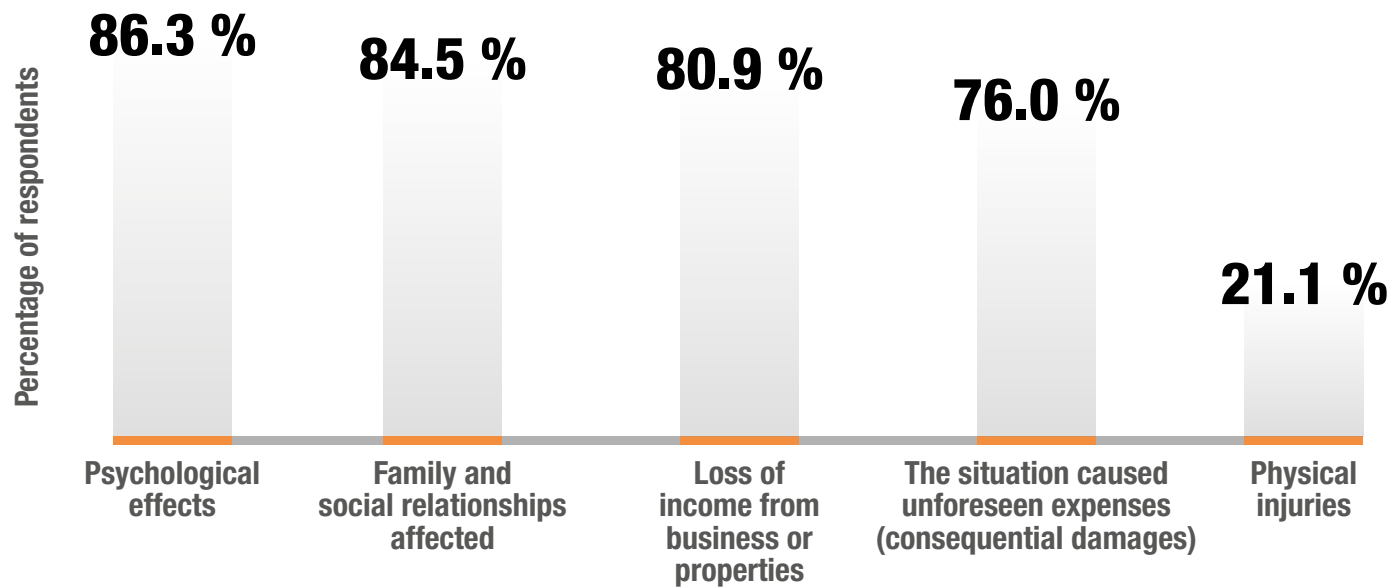


Base: 1,474 surveys (corresponds to the number of people who said they faced internal displacement before leaving the country. The gap between 3 and 5 municipalities is based on the available information).



In addition to the impacts of internal displacement, migration out of the country greatly deteriorates family and social ties, while representing an additional stress burden as a result of ignorance and uncertainty about the future and adaptation to other cultures. Among the victims surveyed, **the main damages caused by the victimizing events are, in order of importance: psychological effects, social and family breakdown, economic effects and, finally, physical effects.**

Figure 21. Damage caused by victimizing events



The sum is more than 100 % because interviewees could choose more than one answer.

Base: 2,612 surveys.





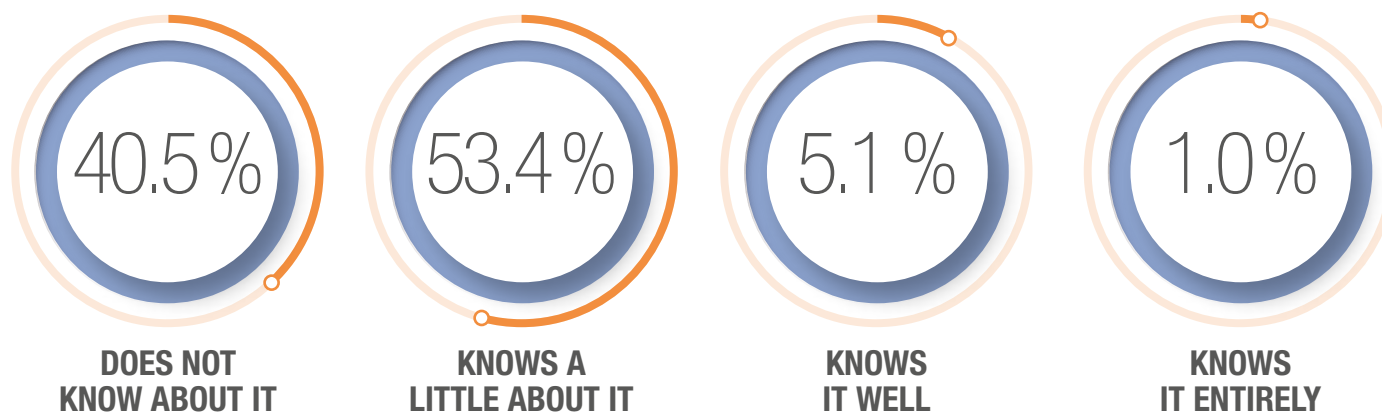
3. KNOWLEDGE

ABOUT LAW 1448

OF 2011

With regard to Law 1448 of 2011 — Victims and Land Restitution Law, 94 % of those surveyed claim to know little or nothing about it.

Figure 22. How much do you think you know about the Victims and Land Restitution Law?



Base: 2,612 surveys (of this number, 59.5 %, equivalent to 1,554 people, know this Law a little, quite well or fully).

Taking into account this context on the dynamics of victimization and the impacts suffered, the survey inquired about the rights that people believe they have as victims of the armed conflict. In this regard, **most recognize the right to reparation, followed by the right to protection and guarantee of a dignified life, as well as justice, truth and restitution of their land**, in that order of importance.



Figure 23. Rights you believe you have as a victim of the conflict



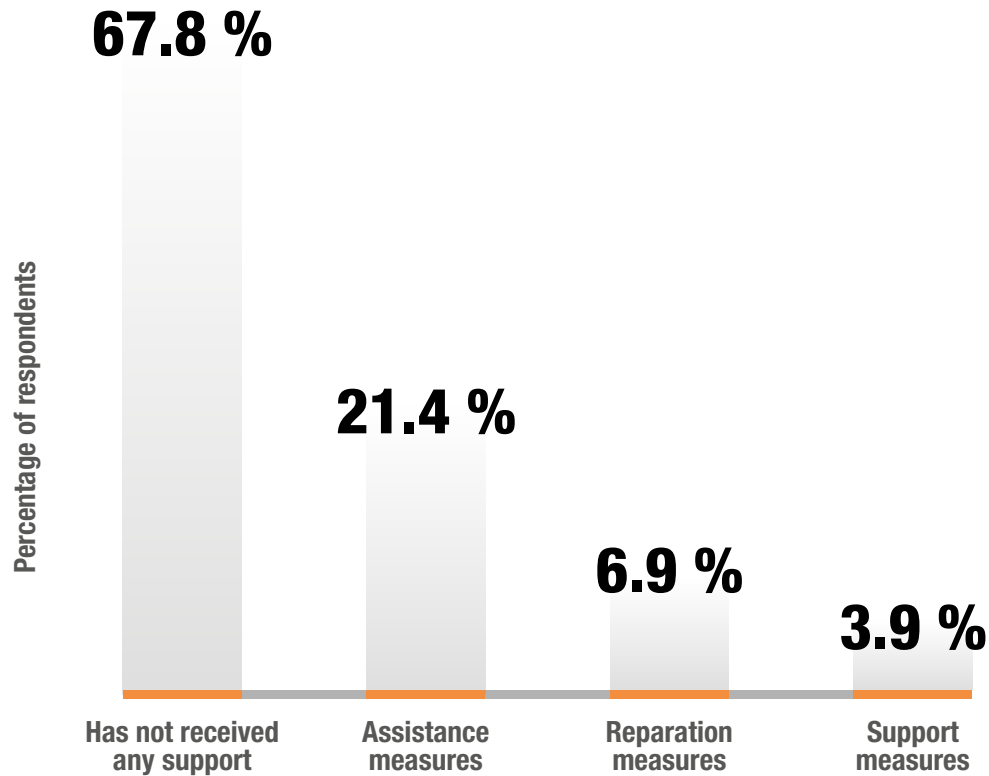
The sum is more than 100 % because interviewees could choose more than one answer.

Base: 2,537 surveys (75 people did not answer this question).



On the other hand, of the 1,554 people who claimed to know the law a little, quite well or fully, **68 % said they had not received any help from the Colombian government.**

Figure 24. Type of help received from the Colombian government



Base: 1,554 respondents (only the responses of those persons who previously claimed to know about the Victims and Land Restitution Law are shown here).⁴³





43 This was an open-ended question classified by the interviewer into the three types of measures.



4. VICTIMS AND THEIR MIGRATION ABROAD

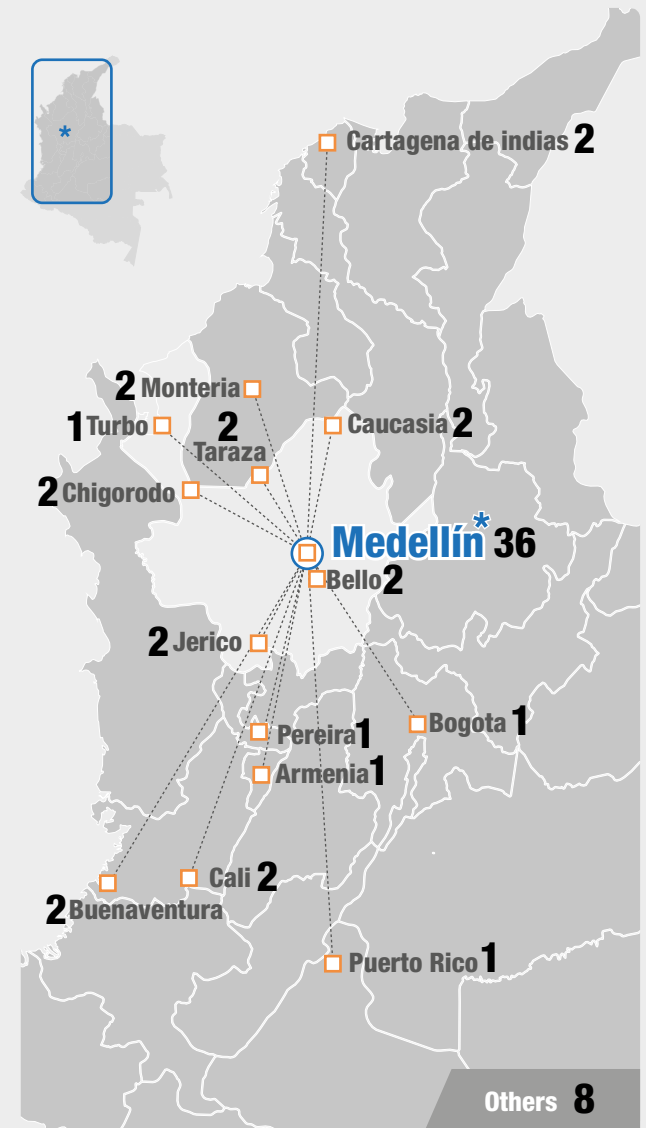
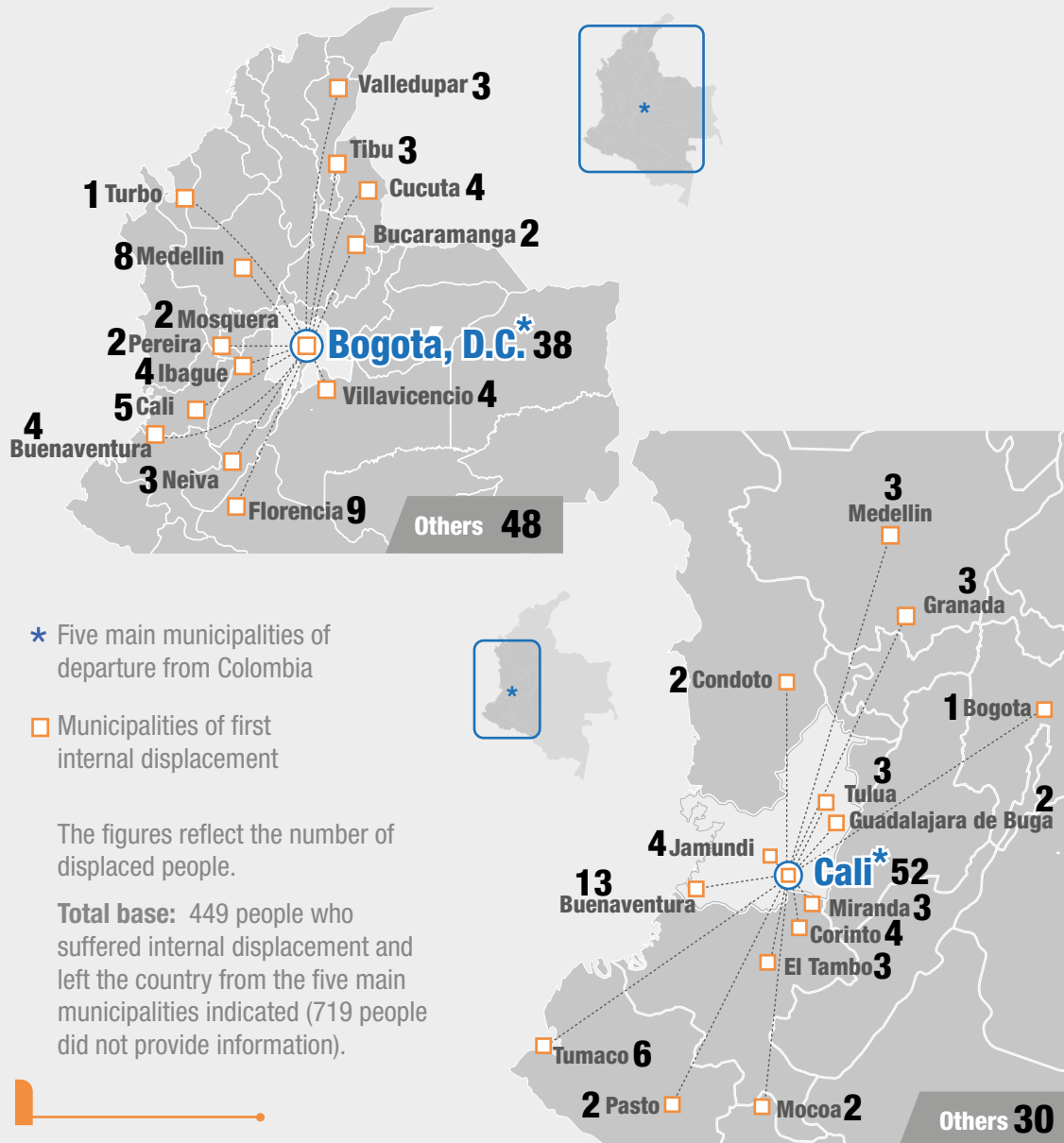
To better understand the dimensions of the dynamics surrounding forced displacement, which is exacerbated by departure from the country, this analysis seeks to investigate the routes within the country that have finally led to emigration abroad:

- » The 2,612 victims surveyed emigrated from a combination of various municipalities, although **Bogota D.C., Cali, Medellin, San Andres de Tumaco and Buenaventura** reflect a concentration of departures corresponding to 45 % of all answers.
- » Of the 1,474 people who indicated that they had undergone internal displacement before leaving the country, results showed that most of them (1,168) left mainly from the capitals and ports mentioned above.
- » The study shows that those who moved to Bogota came from almost every region in the country; those who left from Cali and San Andres de Tumaco began their displacement route from other municipalities on the Colombian Pacific coast and from neighboring departments. Meanwhile, those who left from Buenaventura came from some of the country's large capital cities and from municipalities in various departments; finally, those who emigrated from Medellin began their route mainly in other municipalities of Antioquia, but also, in some cases, in the Colombian Caribbean area.

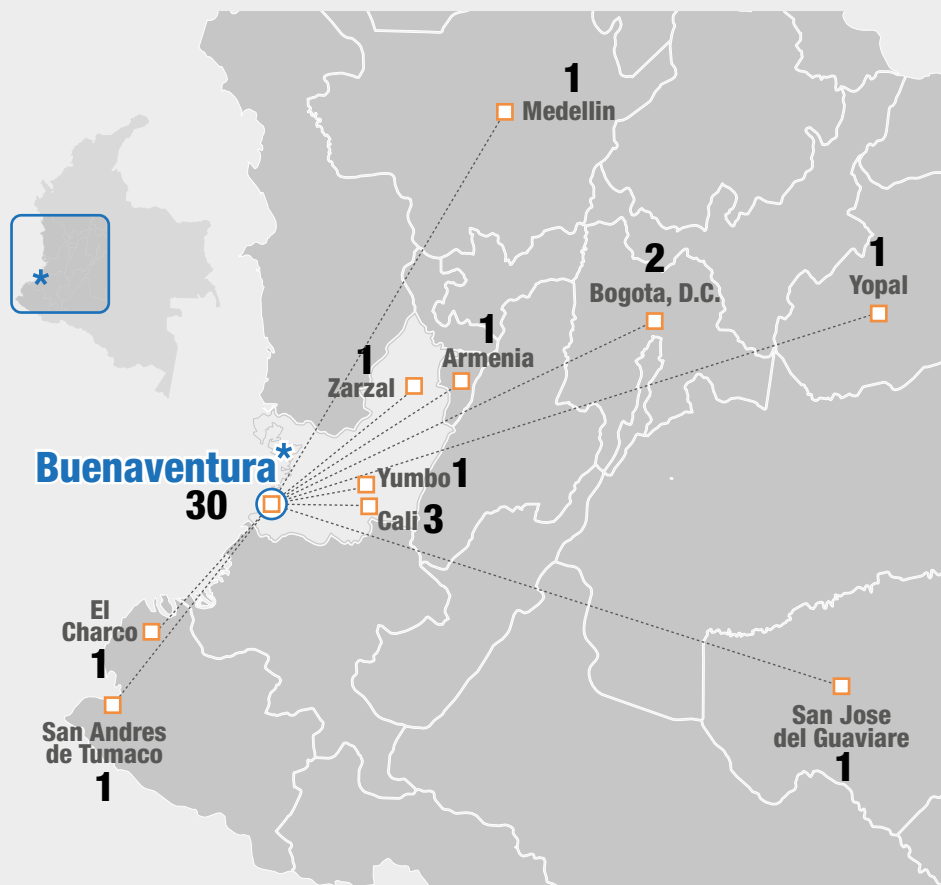
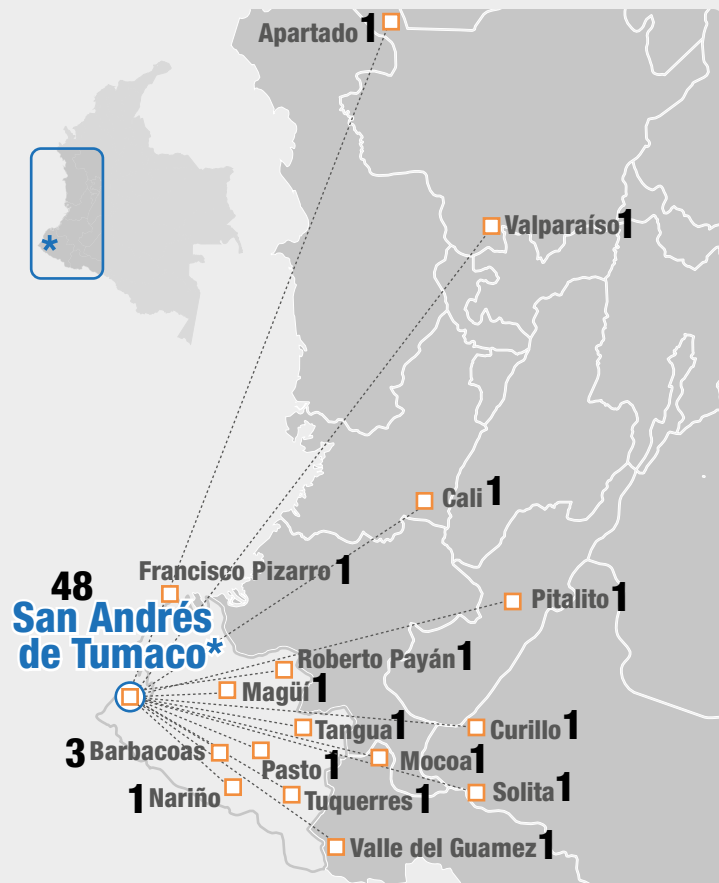
It is important to recall that of the 1,474 people surveyed who said they had suffered at least one forced internal displacement before emigrating, 73 % moved from one municipality, 18 % moved between two municipalities, 6 % between three, and 3 % between five.



Figure 25. Municipalities of first internal displacement in relation to the five main municipalities of departure from the country



The maps only show the relationship between the first municipality of displacement and the municipality of departure from the country for those people who provided specific information.



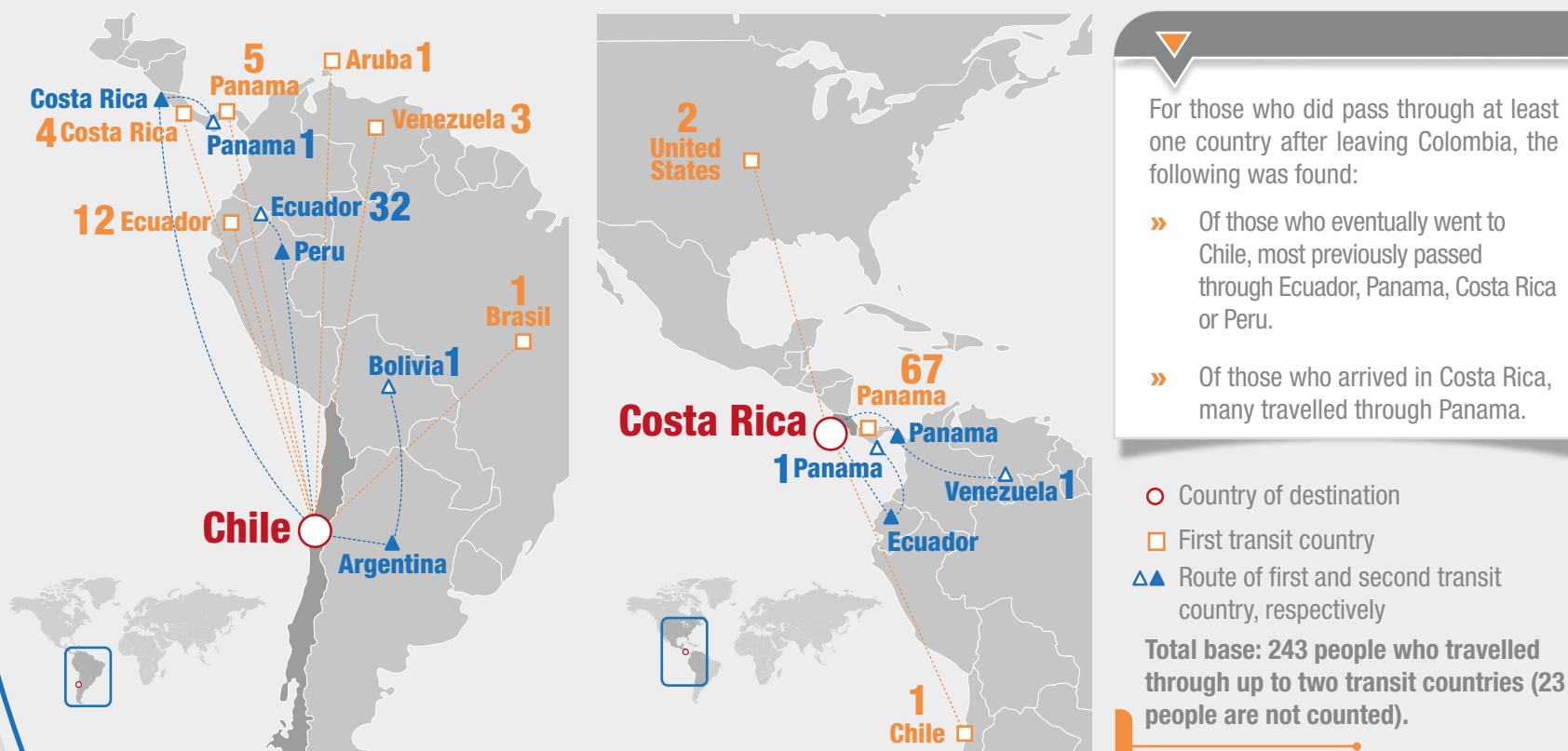
Based on the five maps of Figure 25, it is inferred that there is significant intra-urban displacement, given that most people moved within the same municipality from which they migrated abroad.

The connotation of departure municipalities is based on the information provided by respondents regarding the last municipality they lived in before their departure from Colombia.

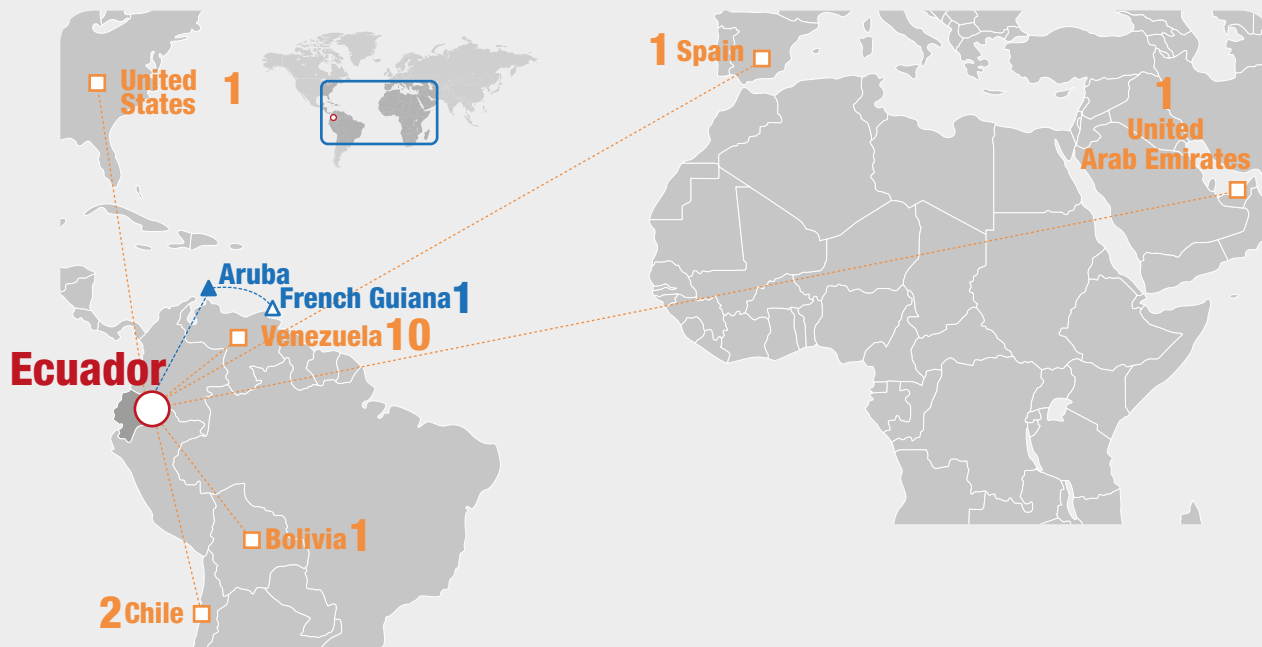


Of the victims surveyed, 90 % state that their first country of destination was that in which they are today. In contrast, the remaining 10 % answered that they had to pass through at least one country before reaching the country of their current location (of the 266 people in the latter percentage, most passed through only one transit country).⁴⁴ This indicates that **people generally remain in the country that was from the beginning the destination of their emigration**. The following maps show the routes only for those who passed through transit countries.

Figure 26. External migration: countries of transit through which the victims of the internal armed conflict travelled before arriving at their countries of destination



⁴⁴ Out of 266 people, 194 passed through one transit country, 49 through two countries, 13 through three countries, four through four countries and six through five countries.



- » Among those who arrived in Ecuador, the majority passed through Venezuela first.
 - » Of those who finally arrived in Spain, most passed through Ecuador first.
 - » Among those who eventually arrived in Panama, most went through Venezuela first.
- This information applies only to those who travelled through other countries.*





» Among those who arrived in the United States, the most frequent places of transit were Ecuador and Mexico

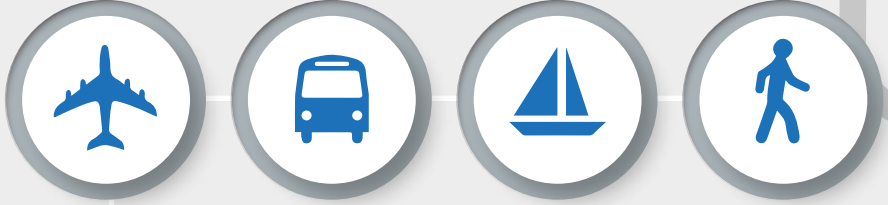
» Among those who went to Venezuela, there were few cases of transit through other countries.

This information applies only to those who travelled through other countries.





Among those who went to Canada, most went through the United States or Ecuador.



Among the 2,612 respondents, the main means of transport used to reach the destination country were air (47%), followed by land (37%). The countries bordering Colombia are those that have been reached mostly by land, although for Chile, which is not a border country, more than half the population that emigrated from Colombia traveled by land. On the other hand, the 13.5% who traveled by sea went mainly to Ecuador and Panama.

The connotation of transit countries does not determine any specific length of time.





Indecida

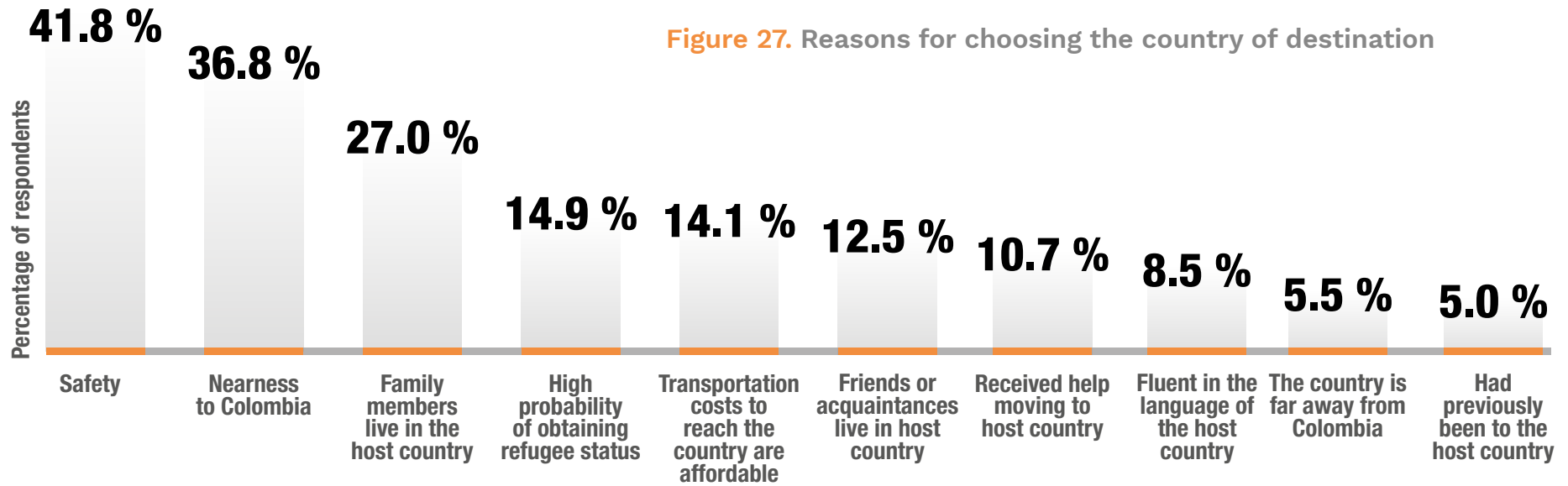
La par Dios

colegial



5. VICTIMS AND COUNTRY OF DESTINATION

The main reasons why the victims specifically emigrated to their countries of destination are related to different factors, such as perception of safety, proximity to Colombia or the fact of having family members in these countries, in that order of importance.



The sum is more than 100 % because interviewees could choose more than one answer.

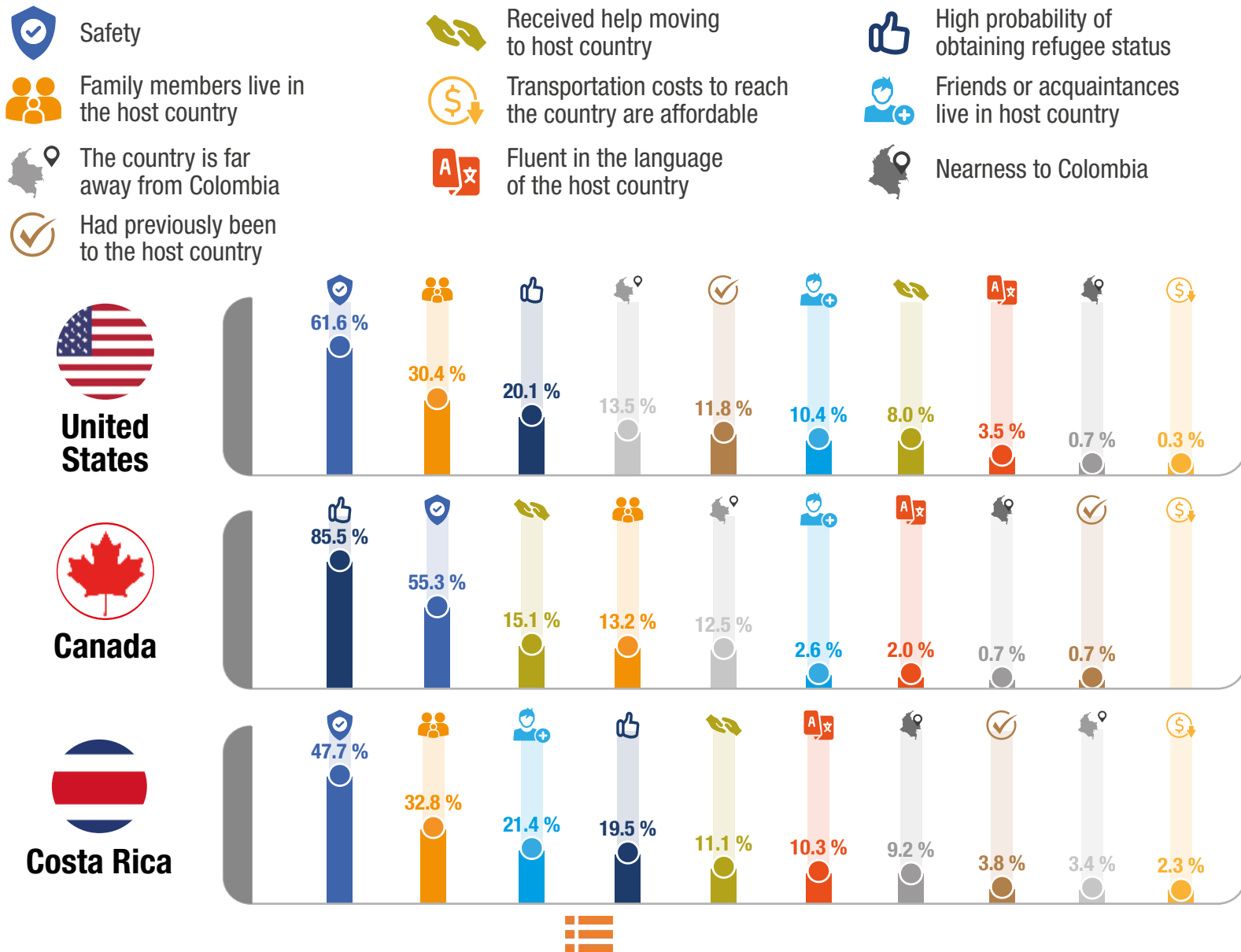
Base: 2,524 surveys (88 people don't know/don't answer).

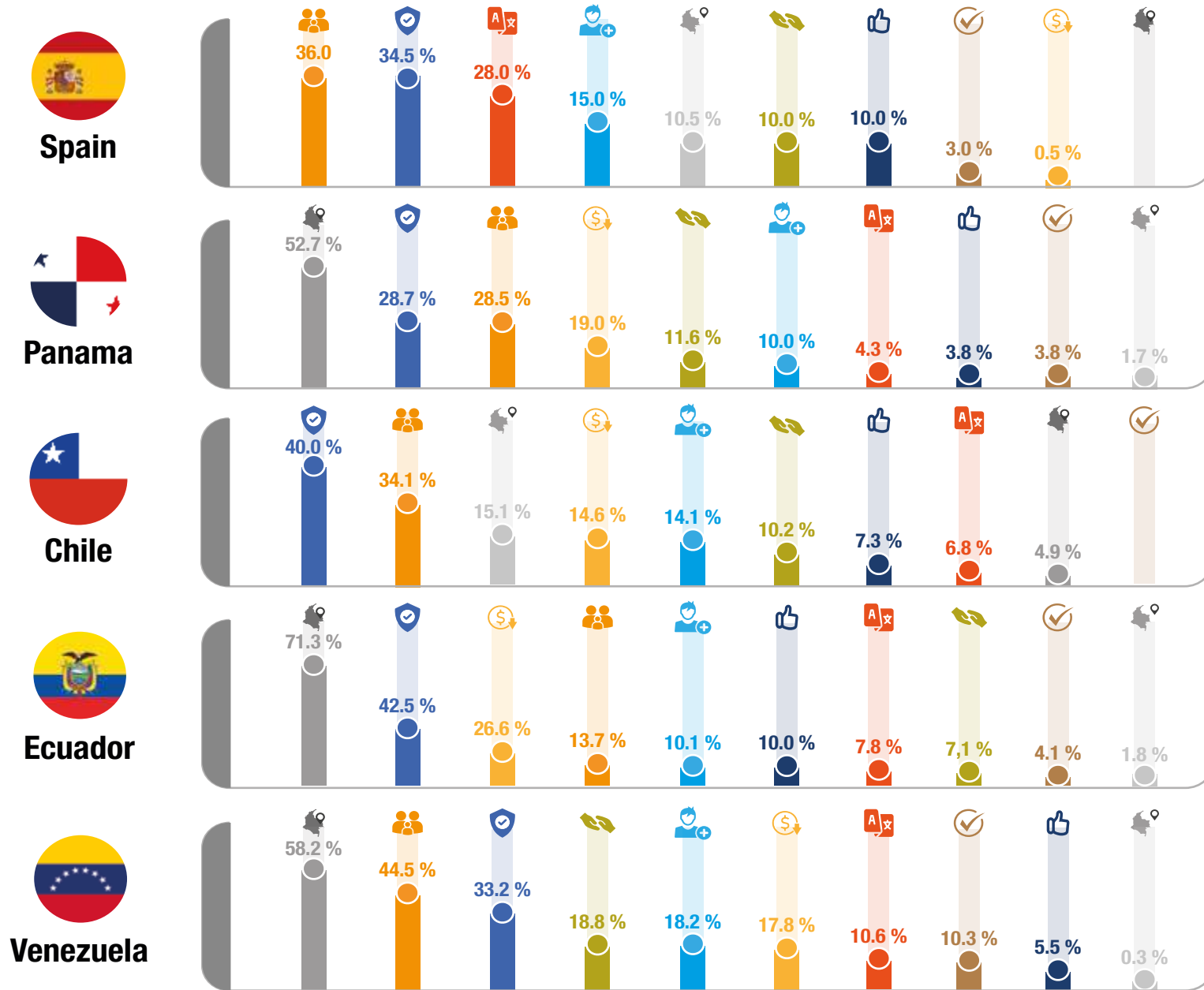
When analyzing migration dynamics in terms of the choice of each country of destination, results show that the various reasons are largely in line with the literature. In the case of Canada, the ease of obtaining refugee status was paramount, while in the United States the main reason for migrating was safety. In the border countries, such as Ecuador,



Venezuela and Panama, proximity to Colombia was the main reason. In the case of far away and nearby countries, such as Costa Rica and Chile, respectively, both safety and the prior existence of a network of family or friends were of great importance. In Spain there is a similar behavior to the latter two countries, although the fact of mastering the language was also an important factor to settle there.

Figure 28. Reasons for specifically choosing that country





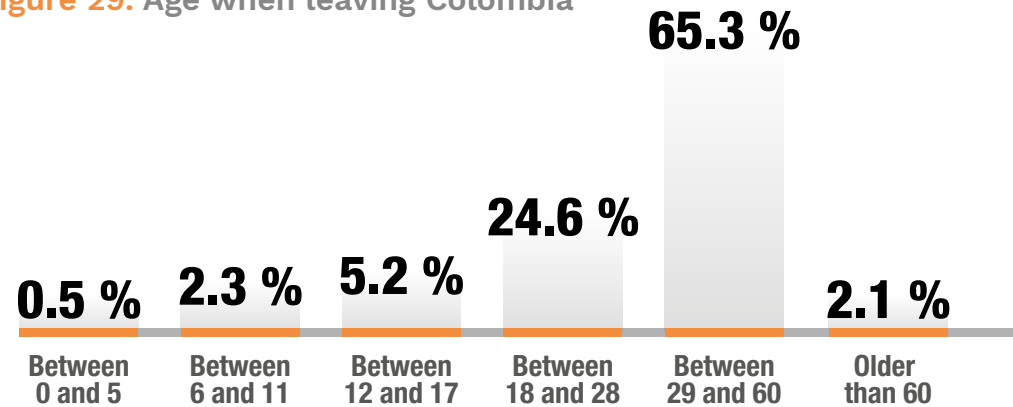
The sum is more than 100 % because interviewees could choose more than one answer.

Base: 2,524 surveys (Canada, 152; United States, 289; Ecuador, 703; Spain, 200; Venezuela, 292; Panama, 421; Chile, 205; Costa Rica, 262).



In relation to the age at which they left Colombia, 65 % left the country between the ages of 29 and 60, followed by 25 % who left between the ages of 18 and 28, indicating that **most of the victims surveyed emigrated in adult and productive age** (and are still in productive age, according to Figure 8). It is worth noting that only people older than 18 were surveyed.

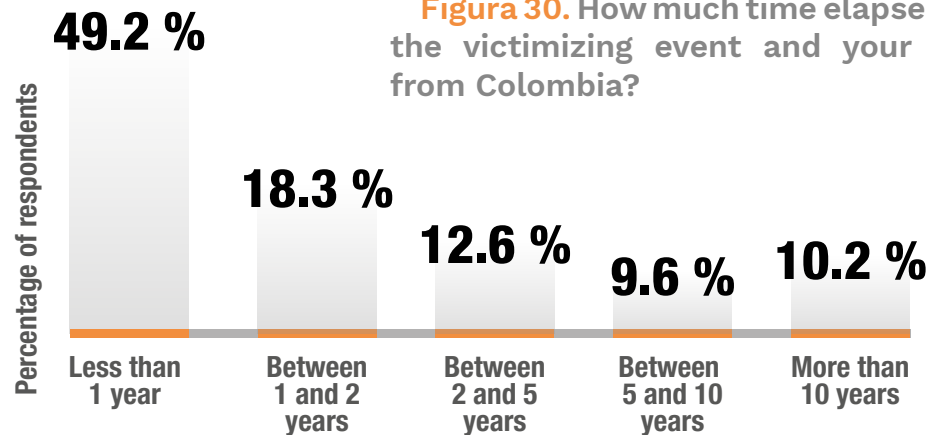
Figure 29. Age when leaving Colombia



Base: 2,591 respondents (21 persons do not respond).

Just as the time elapsed between the victimization event and the departure from the country has been short in most cases (67 % of people left two years or less after the victimization event), once people arrive in the destination country their stay becomes long. Specifically, in 47 % of all cases the stay has been ten years or more.

Figura 30. How much time elapsed between the victimizing event and your departure from Colombia?



Base: 2,612 surveys.

This coincides with secondary sources which state that for those who have just left, the reasons for not returning mainly have to do with safety, while for those who have been abroad longer, the fact of having started a new life project is the reason that reduces their chances of returning.



Figure 31. Length of stay in the destination country



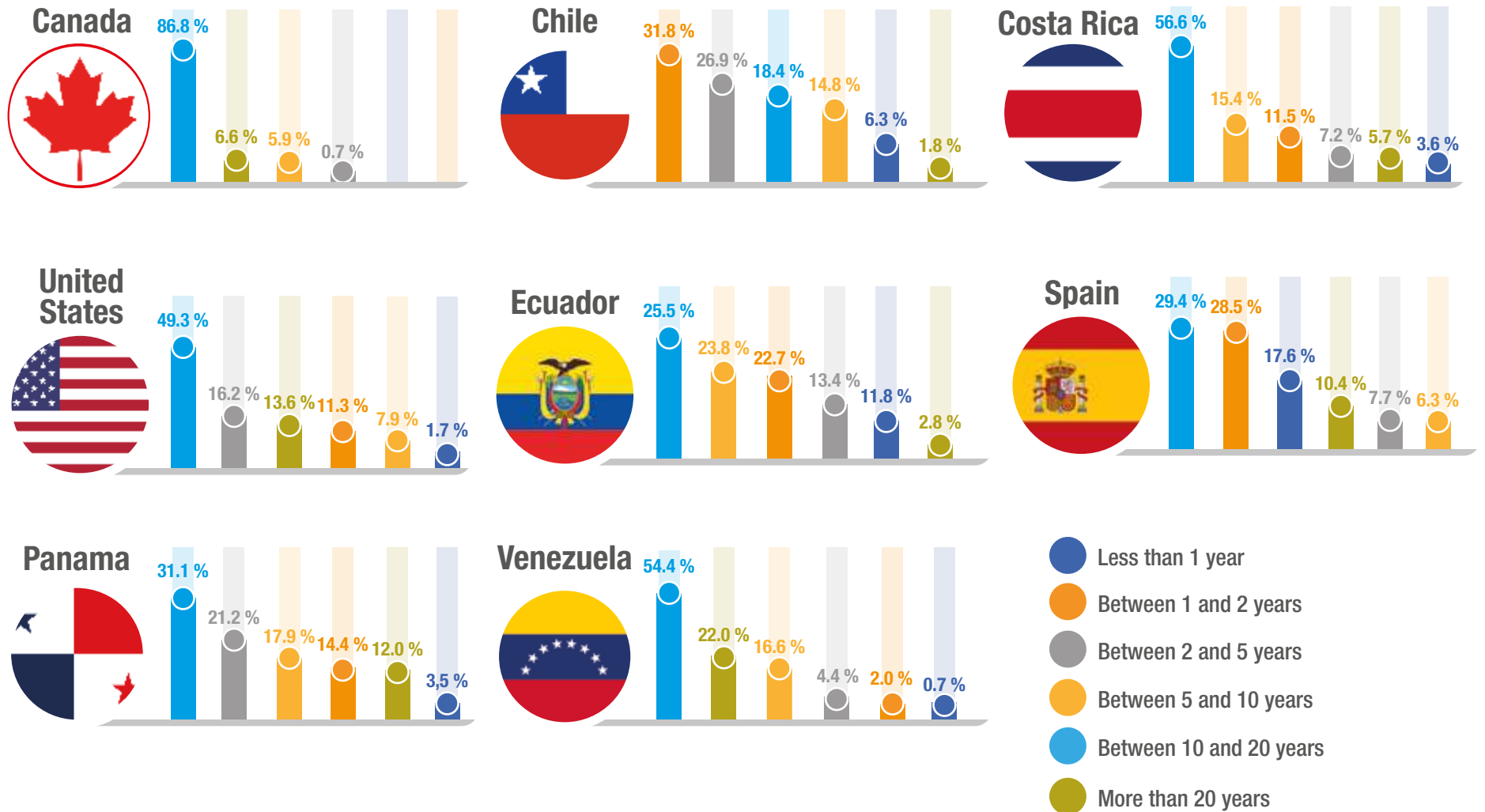
Base: 2,612 surveys.

Breaking down the analysis of permanence by country of destination, the survey shows that in the cases of Ecuador and Spain there are high percentages of people who arrived less than a year ago. This indicates that **the outward flow continues, and that departure from the country for reasons associated with the armed conflict has not ceased.**

The link between leaving the country and the armed conflict is established by the fact that all respondents consider themselves victims of the conflict.



Figure 32. Length of stay, broken down by country



Base: 2,612 surveys (Canada, 152; Chile, 223; Costa Rica, 279; Ecuador, 714; Spain, 221; United States, 302; Panama, 425; and Venezuela, 296).

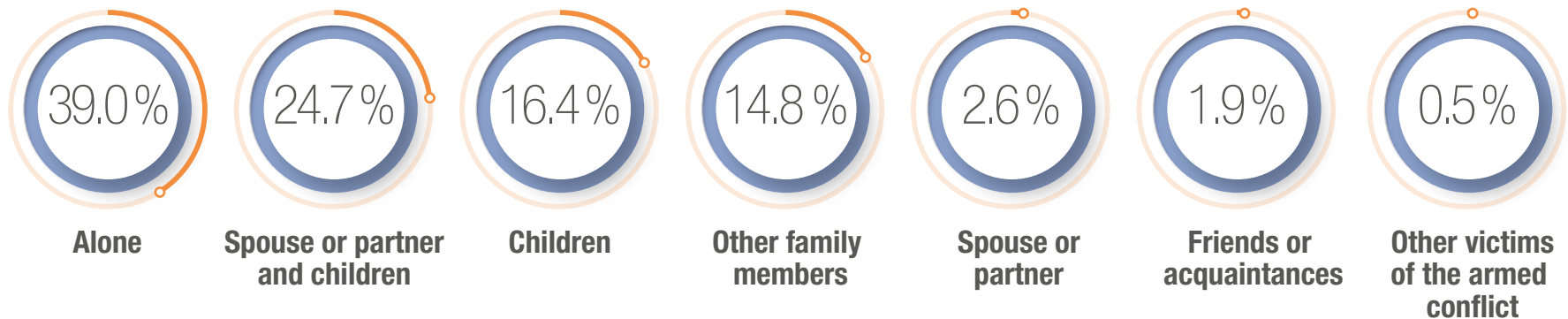


In addition, when asked about family ties, 59% of respondents stated that they had left with their partner, children or other relatives, while 39% of respondents indicated that they had left alone. This indicates that nearly

four out of ten people emigrate on their own, which corroborates the effect on family and social ties.

I left my wife, my children, my whole family. I know that I have a family, but it's not the same anymore, that family unit practically vanishes, the son respects the father because he knows he's the father, but there's no commitment anymore. The son has become accustomed to living without that person; [as for] the person who lives far away, they must now learn to live alone. (Testimony of a victim interviewed in the victim characterization focus group in Ecuador, 2018).

Figure 33. When you first left Colombia, who did you leave with?



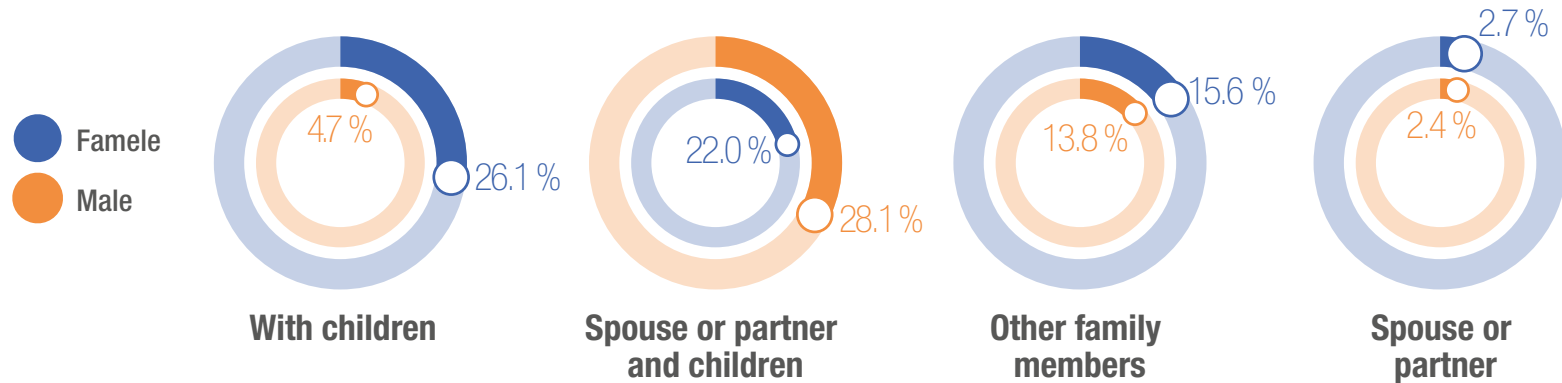
The sum is less than 100% due to one missing answer.

Base: 2,611 surveys (one person did not answer the question).

When broken down by gender, the survey shows that women have left with their families in a greater proportion than men;⁴⁵ in addition, women have left with their children significantly more than men, reflecting the additional burden they take on as providers and heads of household.



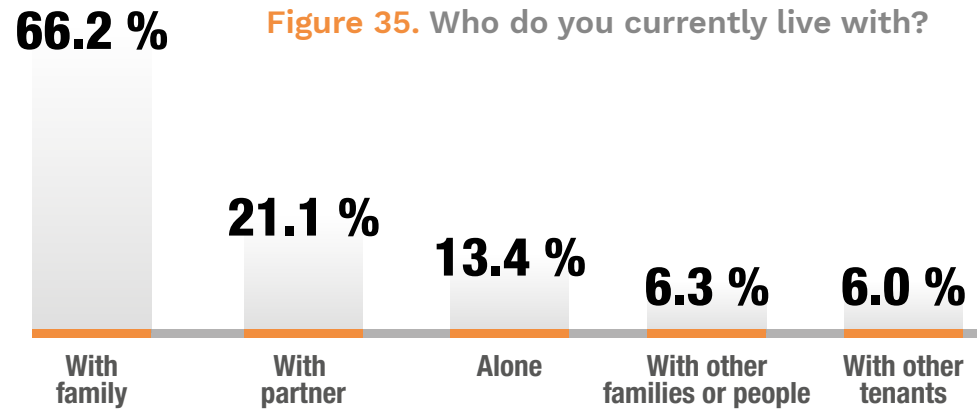
Figure 34. By gender, which family members did you leave Colombia with?



Base: 1,528 surveys - includes only those respondents who did leave with their family members (946 are women and 582 are men).

In contrast to the situation at the time of departure, the survey indicates that 66% of respondents currently live with their family and 21% with their partner, suggesting that upon arrival in the destination countries people at some point achieve family reunification or start building a family.

Figure 35. Who do you currently live with?



The sum is more than 100% because interviewees could choose more than one answer.

Base: 2,612 surveys.

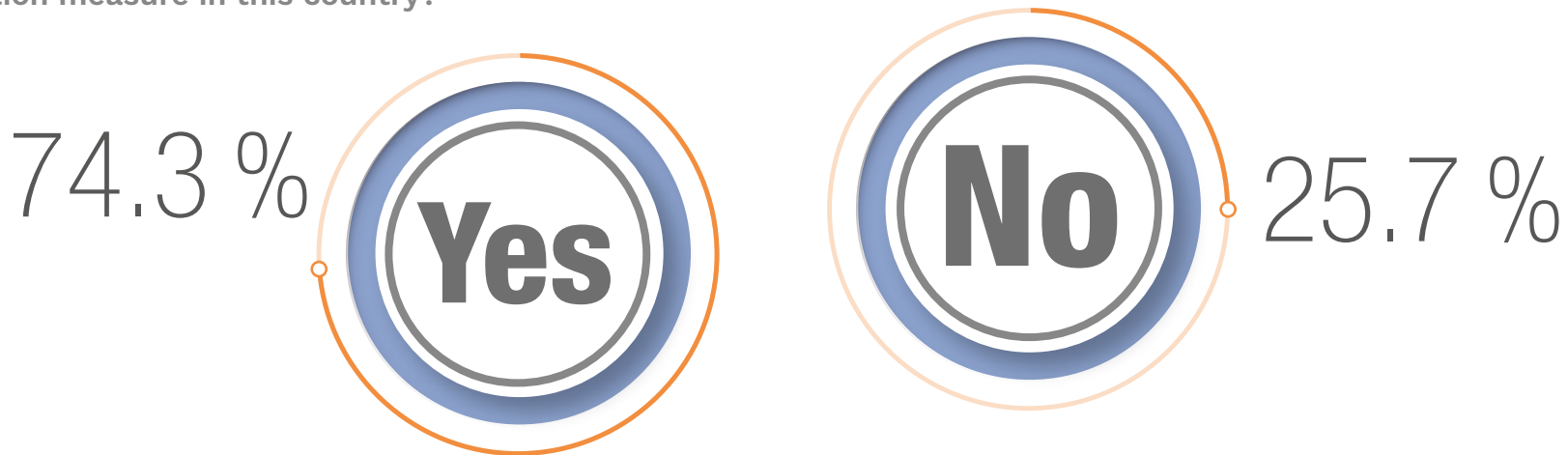
45 Out of 1,424 women surveyed, 66% left with their families; out of 1,187 men surveyed, 49% left with their families (one person did not respond).

6. ACCESS TO RIGHTS IN HOST COUNTRIES

Immigration status and reasons for emigration

Once the victims leave Colombia they must face the process of regularizing their immigration status in the host country. When asked if they had applied for asylum or any international protection measures, 26 % responded negatively.

Figure 36. Have you applied for asylum or any international protection measure in this country?



Base: 2,612 surveys.



Of the 74 % who did apply, corresponding to 1,942 people, 55 % were accepted, 13 % were rejected and 32 % are waiting for a response.

They say that if you don't pass the interview, you are denied refuge, so those people who are denied refuge, what do they do? They have to think about turning back or continuing to fight for it here, and if they turn back, they know the risk they are taking. If we are here it is because we know that we cannot be in Colombia, if we go there it is like passing to the next life. (Testimony of a victim interviewed in the victim characterization focus group in Ecuador, 2018).

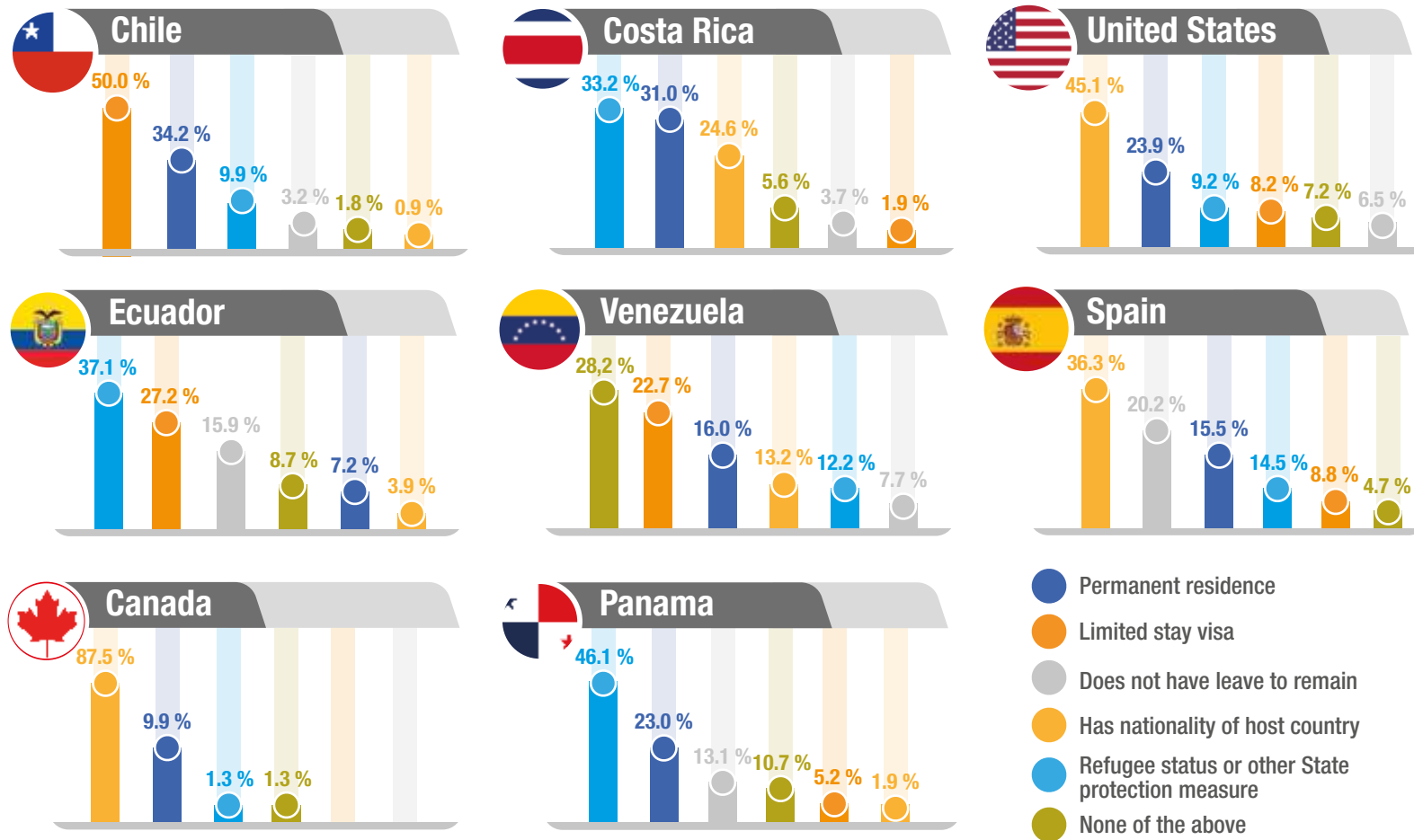
In addition, with regard to immigration status in the country of destination, 25 % indicate that they have some protection measures; 18 % already have the nationality of the country, another 18 % already have permanent residency, and 17 % have a visa with limited stay. Therefore, **78 % of all respondents have a regularized immigration status.**

Breaking down this information by country, the results indicate that 88 % of those who emigrated to Canada already have Canadian nationality, as is the case with 45 % of those who emigrated to the United States and 36 % of those who emigrated to Spain. In contrast, most of those who emigrated to Chile have temporary visas or permanent residency, while those who went to Panama and Ecuador have refugee status or other

The fact that 22 % of the population has irregular immigration status indicates that there is an even more vulnerable population.

State protection measures, more than other types of immigration status. Those who went to Costa Rica are more spread out between refugee status or another protection measure and permanent residency. In the case of Venezuela, it is noteworthy that it is the country where irregular or unidentified immigration status is most often found.

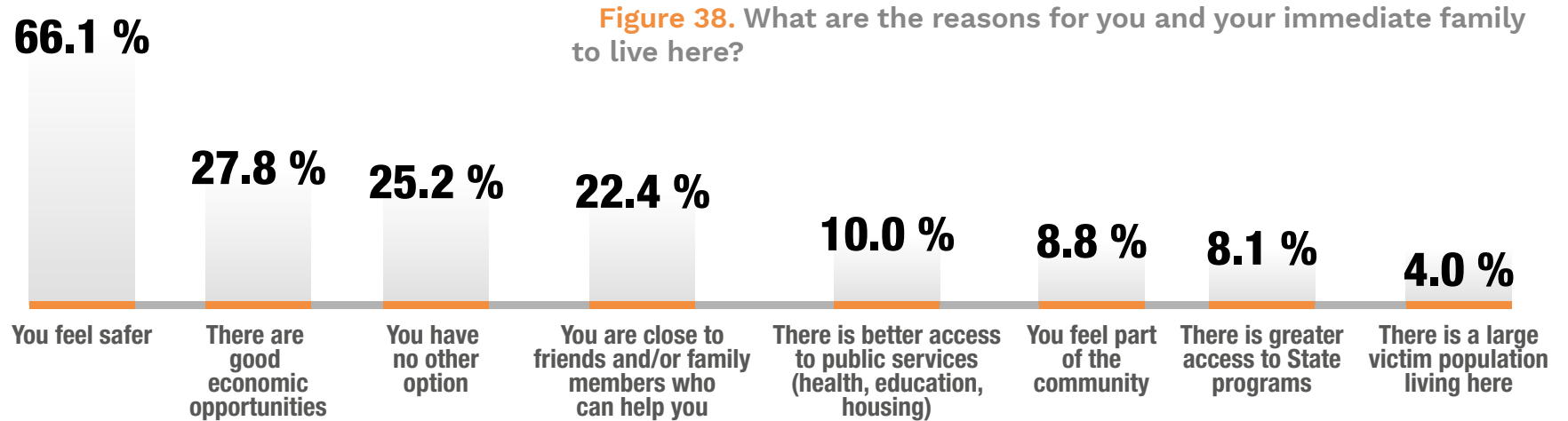
Figure 37. Immigration status by host country



Base: 2,534 surveys (Ecuador, 698; Panama, 421; United States, 293; Venezuela, 287; Costa Rica, 268; Chile, 222; Spain, 193; and Canada, 152). 78 people did not answer this question.



As to the reasons for staying in the destination countries, respondents mention safety as the main reason.



The sum is more than 100 % because interviewees could choose more than one answer.
 Base: 2,571 surveys (41 people did not respond).

Living conditions

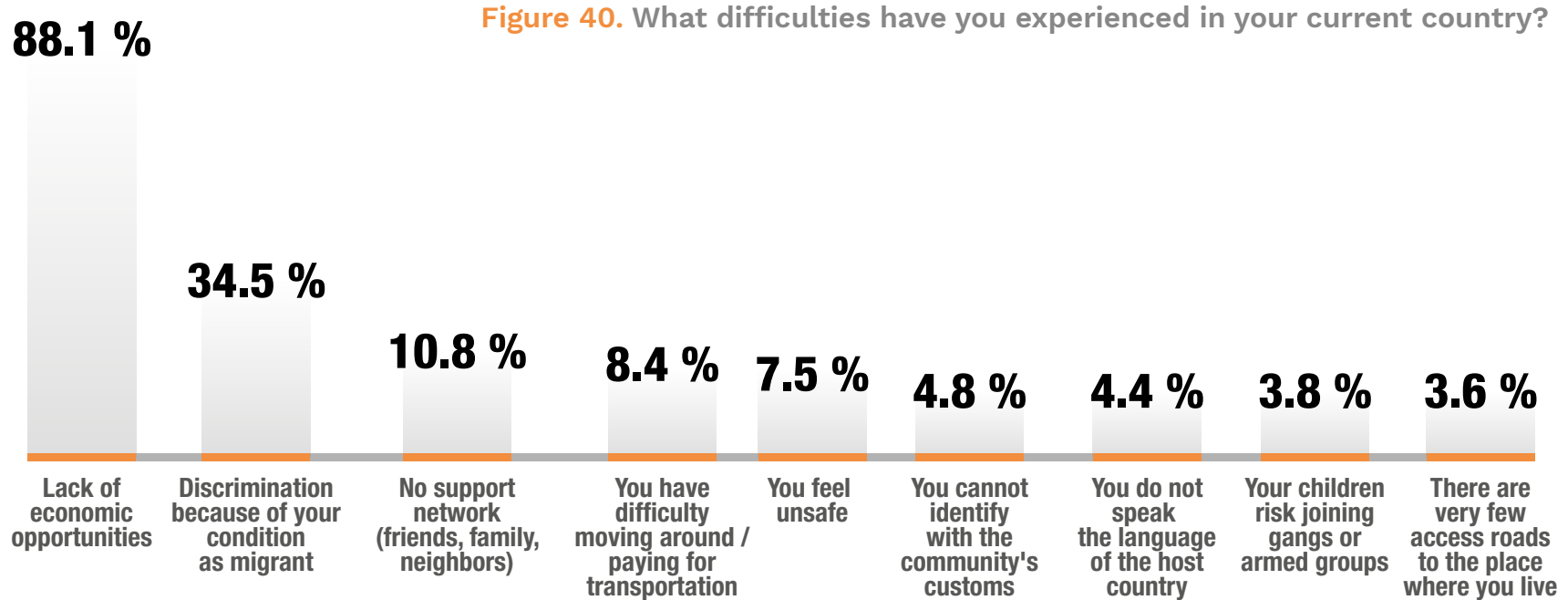
Although they feel safer, the majority, 83.7 %, say they face various difficulties in the destination country. Of the 2,187 people who claim this, the main difficulty is the lack of economic opportunity.

Figure 39. Do you feel that you and your immediate family are having difficulties where you live now?



Base: 2,612 surveys (2,187 people say yes and 425 say no).





The sum is more than 100 % because interviewees could choose more than one answer.
 Base: 2,080 surveys (107 people did not answer the question).

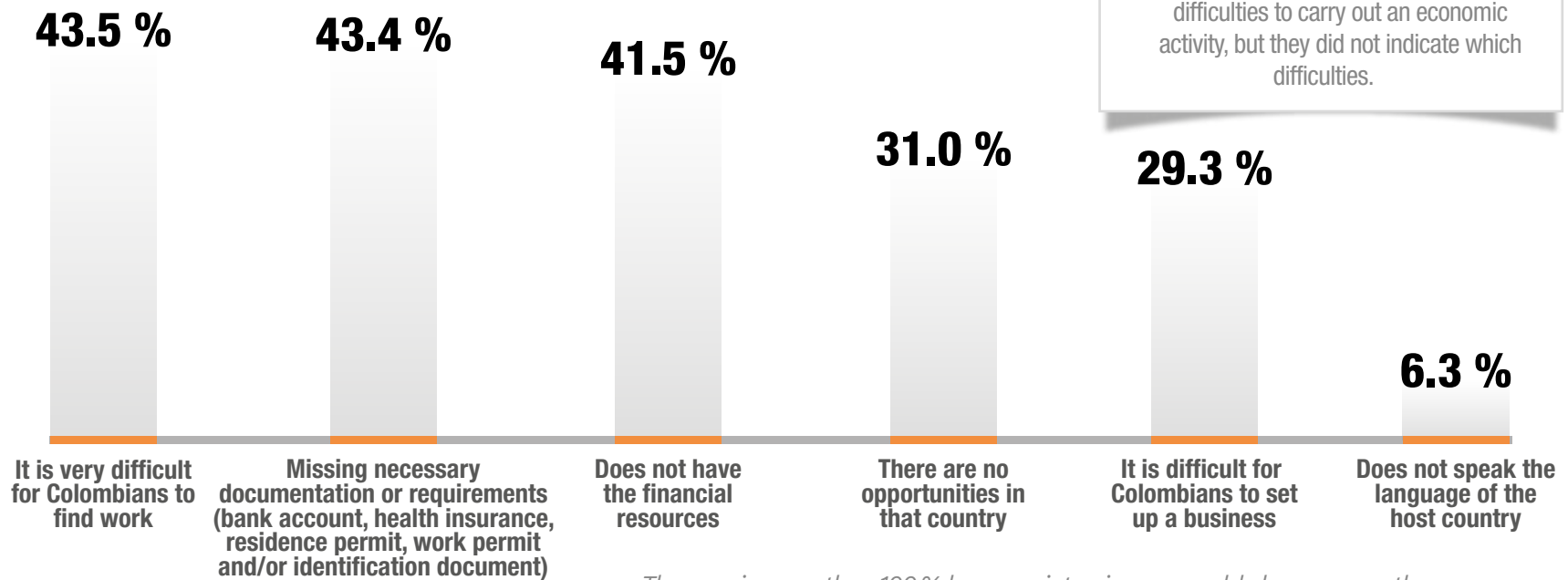
Considering that most people surveyed had an educational background that went as far as early high school at the most, it follows that there is a gap in education, which if addressed would also make people better qualified for employment.

Specifically, close to nine out of every ten people indicated that they had difficulties in finding economic opportunities, which resulted in deterioration of their quality of life.

When reviewing the reasons, Colombians' difficulty finding employment stands out, as does the fact that they do not have the necessary documentation or requirements. This suggests that, for reasons associated with their migrant status and lack of requirements, victims abroad face difficulties finding employment.



Figure 41. Main difficulties carrying out an economic activity today



93 people stated that they had difficulties to carry out an economic activity, but they did not indicate which difficulties.

The sum is more than 100 % because interviewees could choose more than one answer.

Base: 1,921 surveys.

In contrast, 48 % of all people surveyed said that, when they lived in Colombia, their income was sufficient to cover all their needs, 36 % covered them partially and 15 % could not cover them (the remaining 1 % was a person who did not respond).

A breakdown by country shows that in Panama, Spain and Chile access to employment is even more difficult due to lack of documentation and compliance with requirements. In Ecuador, 57 % of all respondents indicated that it is difficult for Colombians to find employment.

In addition, 88 % of those surveyed said that their monthly income only partially covers or cannot cover their needs. This indicates that approximately **nine out of ten people live with insufficient resources.**

Figure 42. Your monthly income is enough to

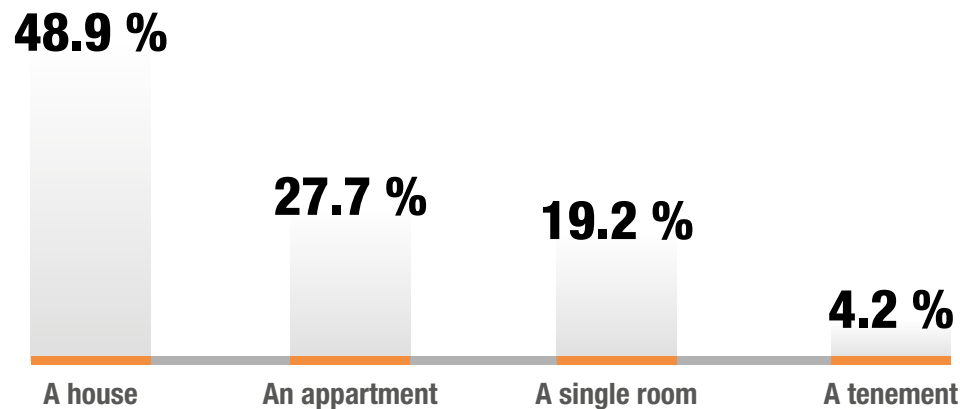


Base: 2,611 surveys (one person did not respond).

Housing

77% of people live in a house or apartment. In addition, 67% of all people pay rent.

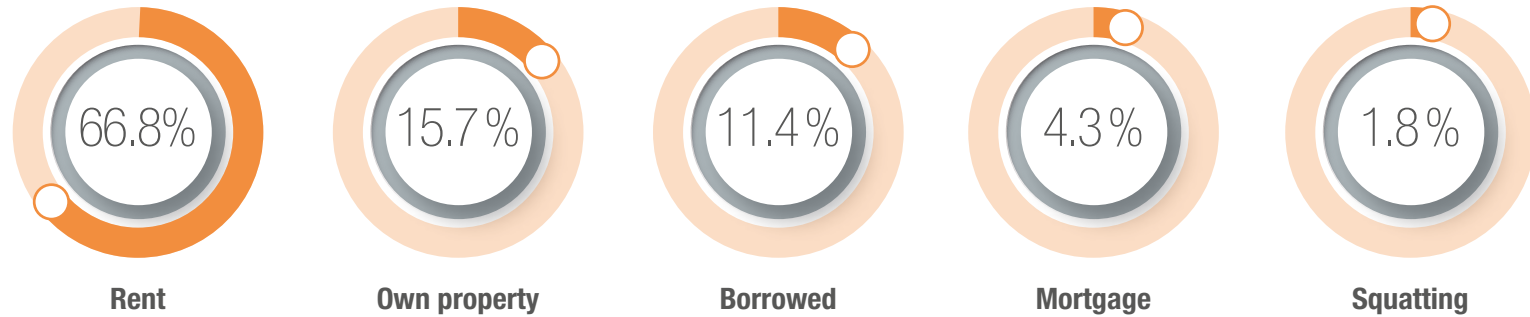
Figure 43. You currently live in



Base: 2,612 surveys.



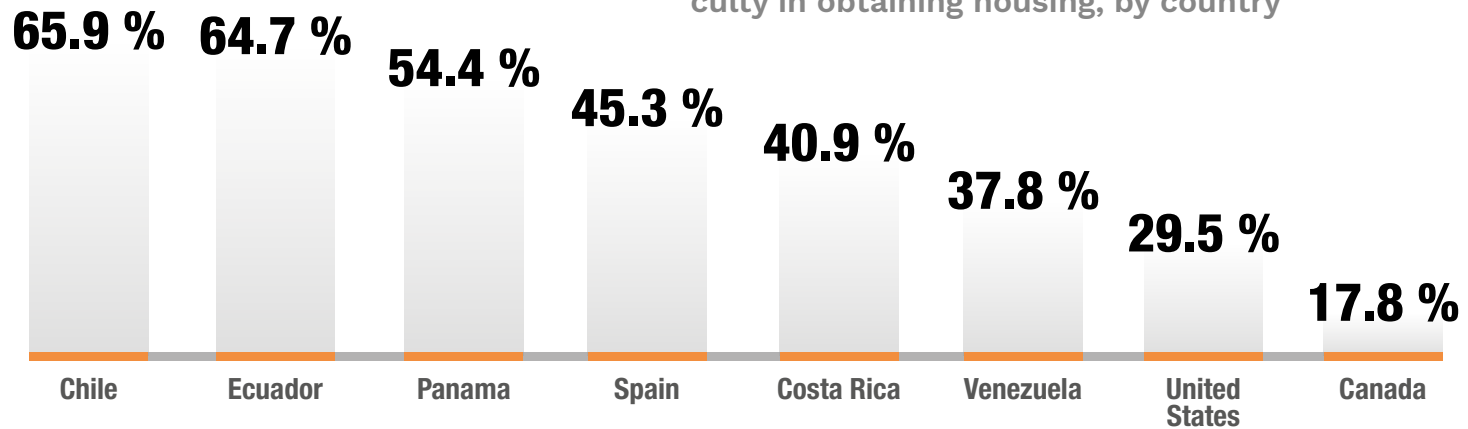
Figure 44. What is your current housing situation?



Base: 2,612 surveys.

When inquiring about the feasibility of obtaining housing in the destination countries, the survey shows that five out of ten people have had difficulties. This response was most frequent among victims surveyed in Chile, Ecuador and Panama.

Figure 45. Number of people who have had difficulty in obtaining housing, by country

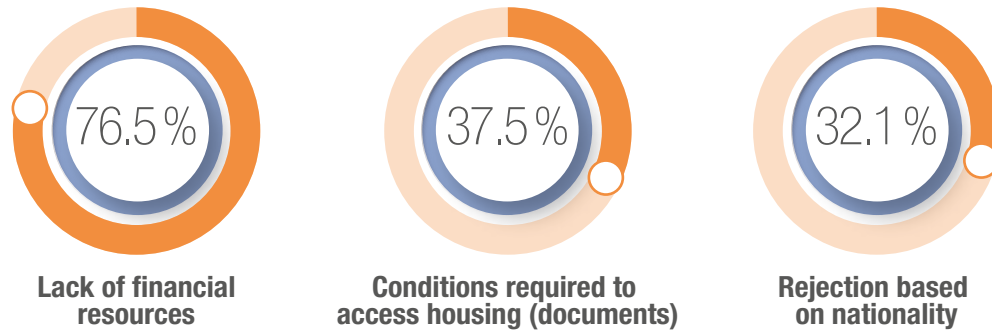


Base: 1,282 respondents (corresponds to those who expressed difficulty in accessing housing).



In addition, lack of income is the predominant factor in difficulties accessing definitive housing solutions.

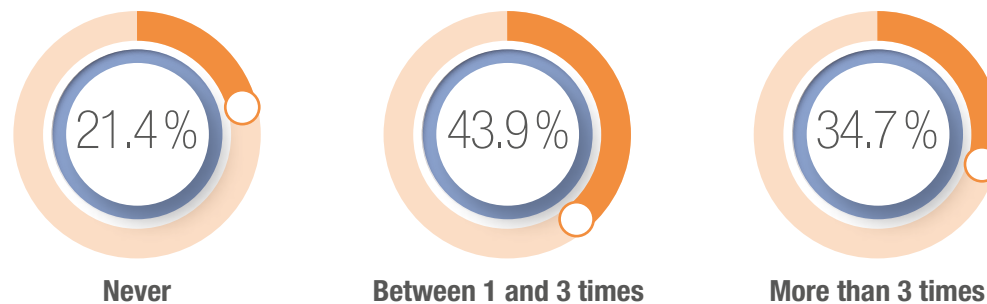
Figure 46. The main difficulty you have had in obtaining housing is



*The sum is more than 100 % because interviewees could choose more than one answer.
Base: 1,282 surveys (corresponds to those who expressed difficulty in accessing housing).*

In terms of housing stability, the survey indicates that three out of ten people have moved more than three times and four out of ten have moved between one and three times. Changes in residence are due in 31.3 % of all cases to deterioration of economic conditions and in 22.8 % of all cases to their improvement.

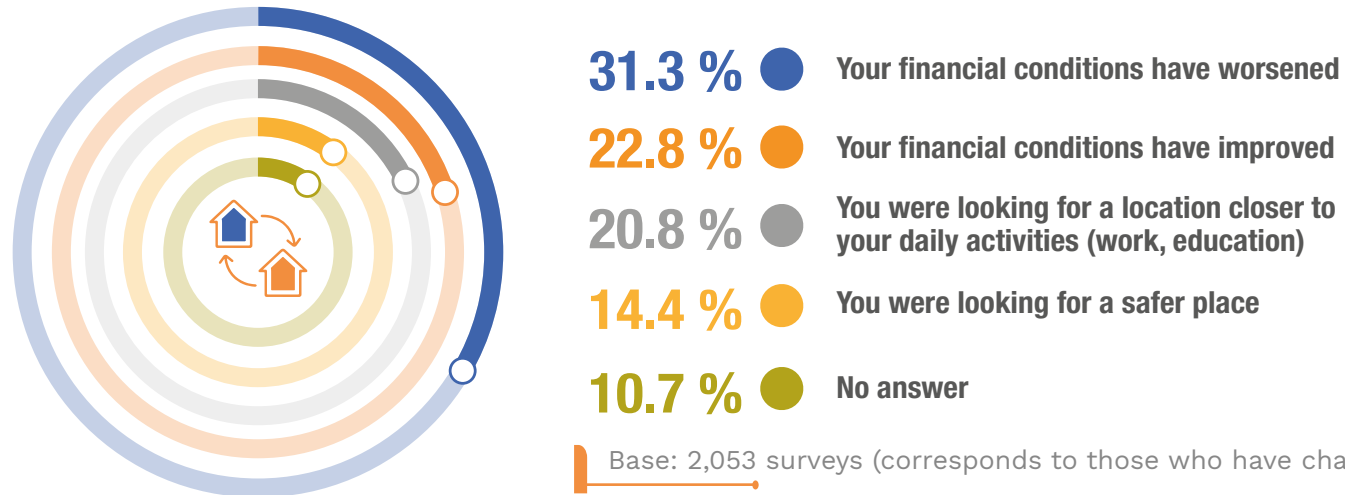
Figure 47. How many times have you changed homes since you arrived in this country?



Base: 2,612 surveys.



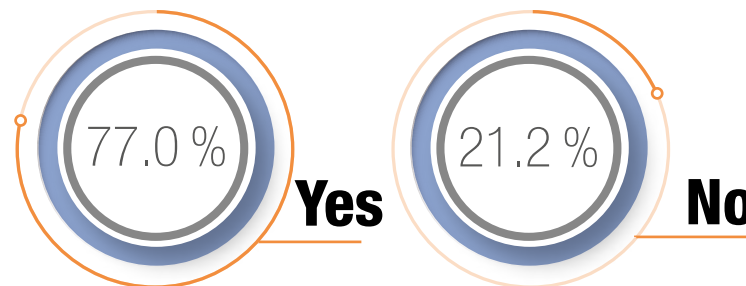
Figure 48. Reasons for changing your home



Health

With respect to the right to health, **77 % of respondents say they have coverage**. However, the fact that 21% lack this care is an alert signal with regard to quality of life. Those who do not have it are mostly in Costa Rica, Panama, Venezuela, the United States and Chile.

Figure 49. Access to health services

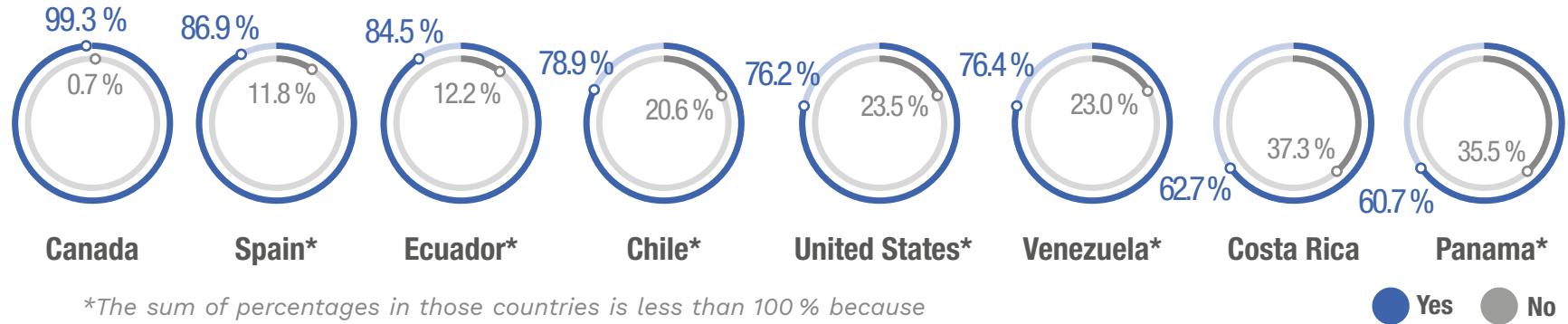


The sum is less than 100 % because 1.8 % indicated that they did not know.
Base: 2,612 surveys.

In Colombia, 79% of all respondents had access to health services. Of this group, 45% belonged to the subsidized system, Sisben. In addition, 5% have continued to make contributions from abroad to social security in Colombia, which includes both health and pension. Although it makes sense that a small percentage of the population contributes from abroad, this in turn entails a gap in contributions for those who return to the country.



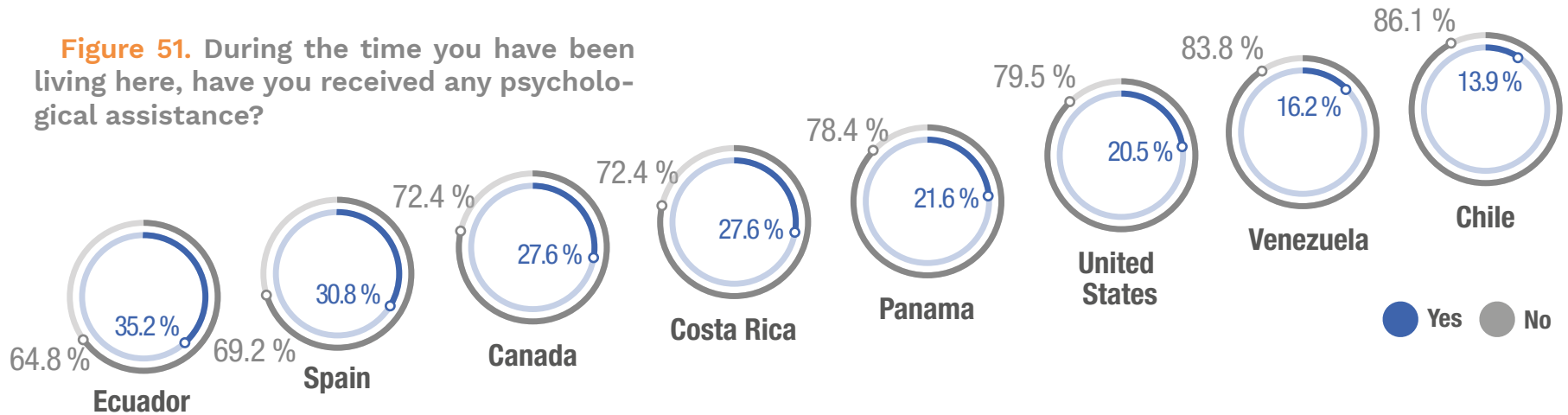
Figure 50. Access to health services by country



Base: 2,612 surveys.

Considering the relevance of psychosocial impacts on victims of the armed conflict, results show that, when asked about access to psychosocial care, **74 % of all people surveyed have not received such care in their host countries.** Below are the findings, by country.

Figure 51. During the time you have been living here, have you received any psychological assistance?



Base: 2,612 surveys.

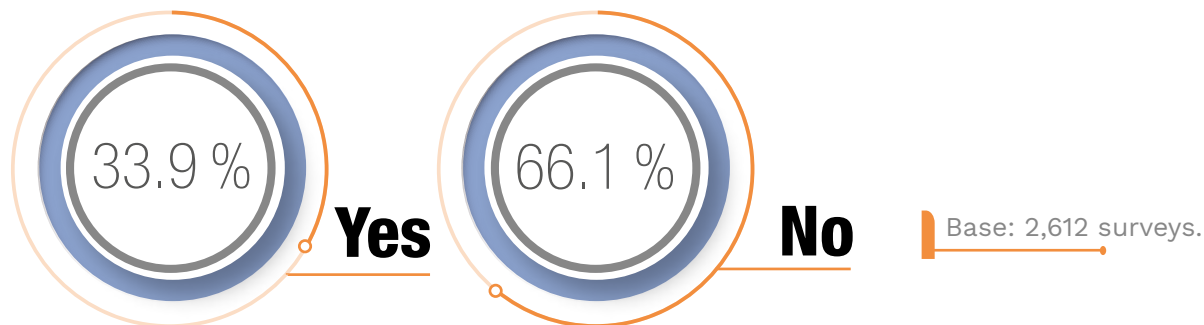
In addition, among those who have had access to psychosocial care,⁴⁶ the majority are women (65%), followed by people who have refugee status or some protection measure from the host State (35%).



Education

The majority of those surveyed (65 %) had studied up to secondary level, at the most, before leaving Colombia. **66 % state that they are not studying, which may be an indicator of school lag (people outside school age who did not complete high school education) and educational gaps that are affecting access to employment** and, therefore, to better living conditions for the victims in the destination countries.

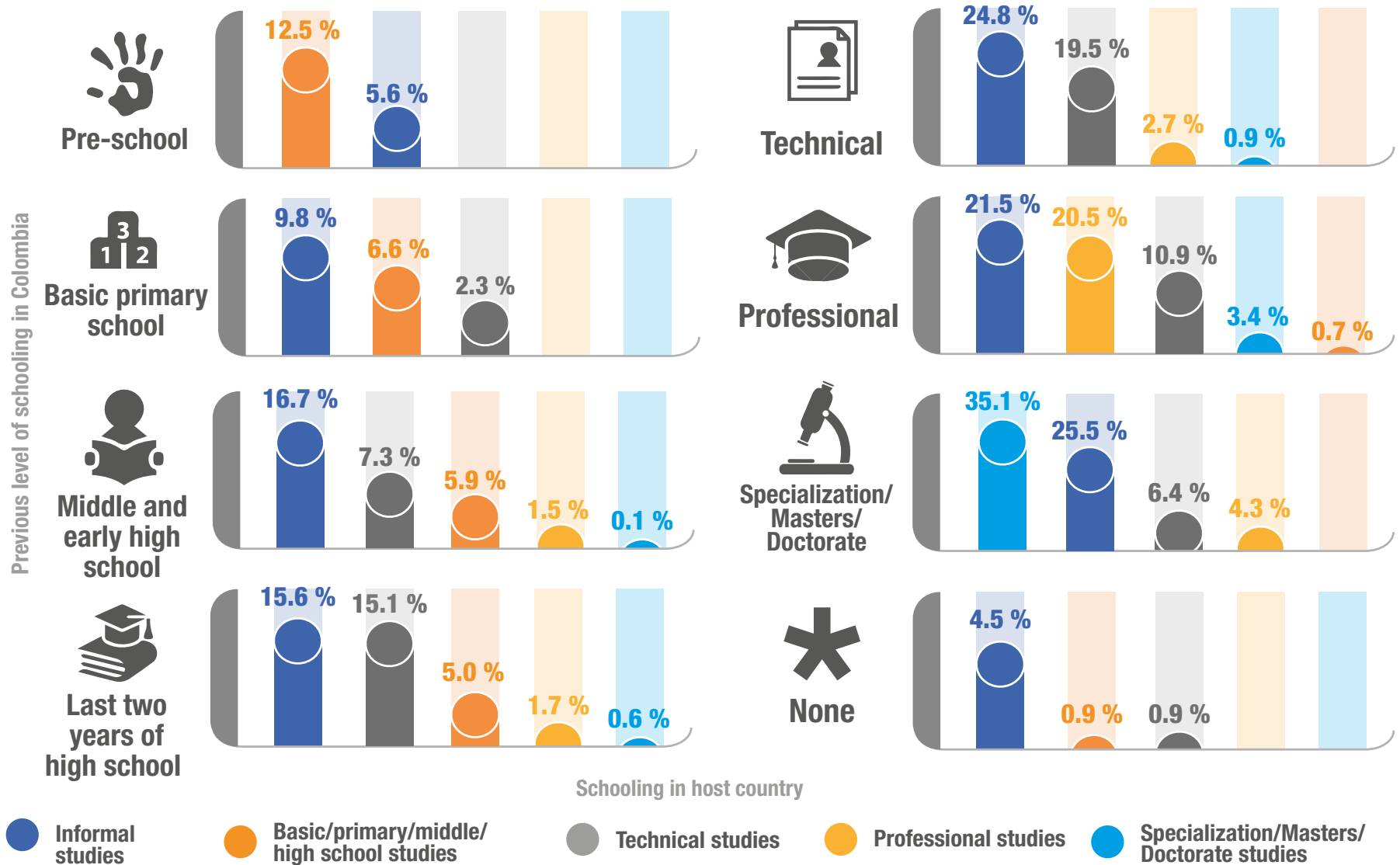
Figure 52. Have you attended or are you attending any kind of study in this country?



In addition, of the 857 people who have studied in the host countries, 46 % have been enrolled in non-formal studies, including language courses, while 22 % have been enrolled in technical studies. Those who took undergraduate and graduate courses in Colombia are mostly the ones who have been enrolled in professional or higher studies abroad.

46 Of the victims surveyed, 671 people have had access to psychosocial care in their host countries. Of this number, 438 are women and 233 are men. In addition, 232 people who have received psychosocial care have refugee status or other international protection measures.

Figure 53. Previous level of schooling in Colombia compared to type of studies attended in the host country



The percentages in each category are below 100 % because they are based on a total universe of 2,612 surveys, but only show the answers corresponding to the 857 people who have studied abroad.

Base: 2,612 surveys (previous level of schooling in Colombia) and 857 surveys (studies attended in the host country).



Although the majority of respondents are not studying in their host countries, it is worth noting that **46 % indicate that their children have been going to school**, while 12 % have children who have been enrolled in technical, non-formal, professional or higher education programs.

Figure 54. What kind of studies have your children attended or are attending in this country?



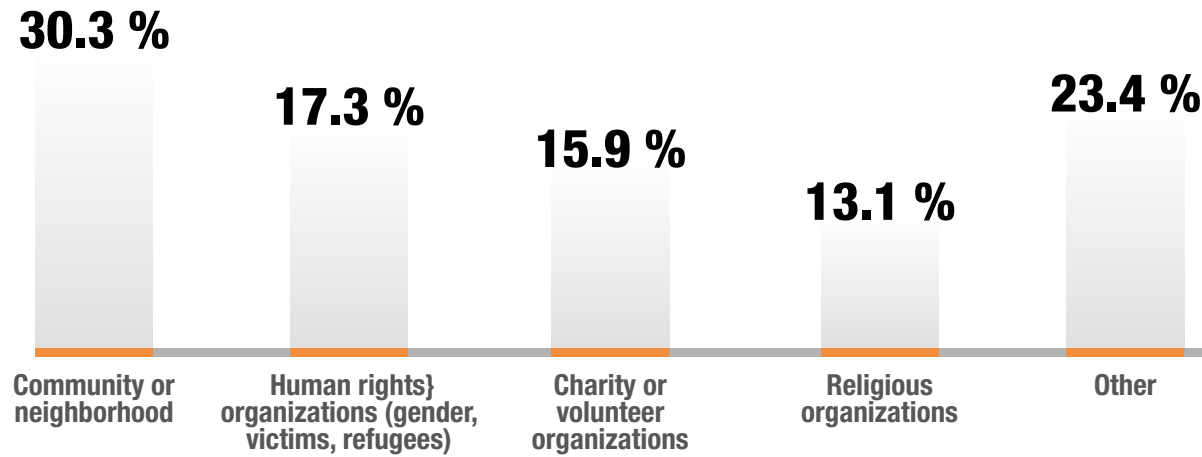
Base: 2,612 surveys.

12 %, equivalent to 302 people, are currently linked to some kind of social organization. In contrast, 21 % of those surveyed, equivalent to 538 people, indicated that they had been engaged in some form of activism before leaving Colombia, and that this activism was, above all, community or neighborhood-based.

Forms of social organization and support networks

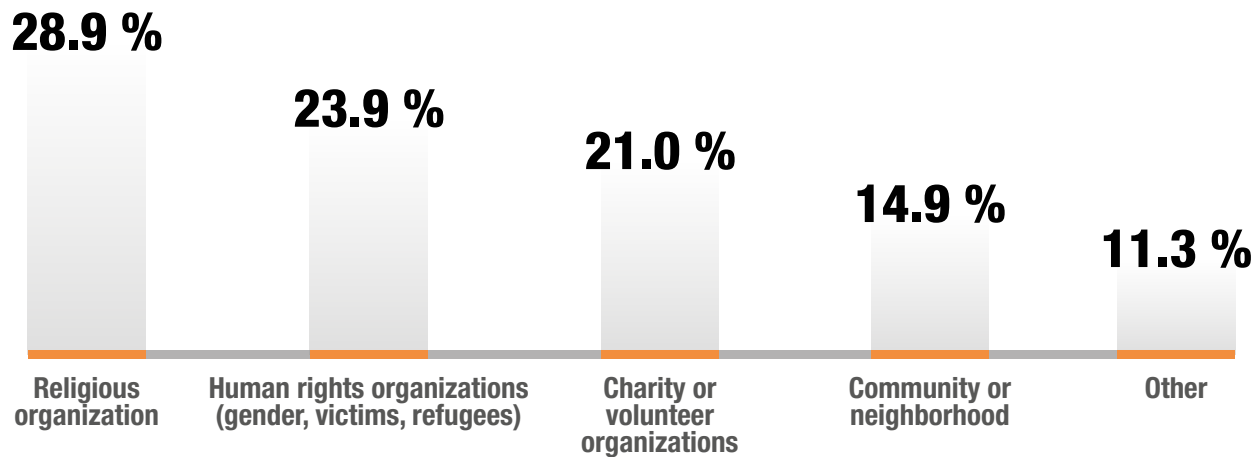
With respect to forms of social organization, the survey results show that **12 % of people are linked to some type of organization, which reflects a slight reduction in the activism that they exercised before leaving Colombia.** Abroad, the organizations in which people are most involved are religious, human rights and charitable organizations, in that order.

Figure 55. Forms of social organization in which you participated in Colombia



Base: 534 surveys (corresponds to those who answered that they did participate in some social organization when they lived in Colombia).

Figure 56. Forms of social organization abroad in which you are currently involved

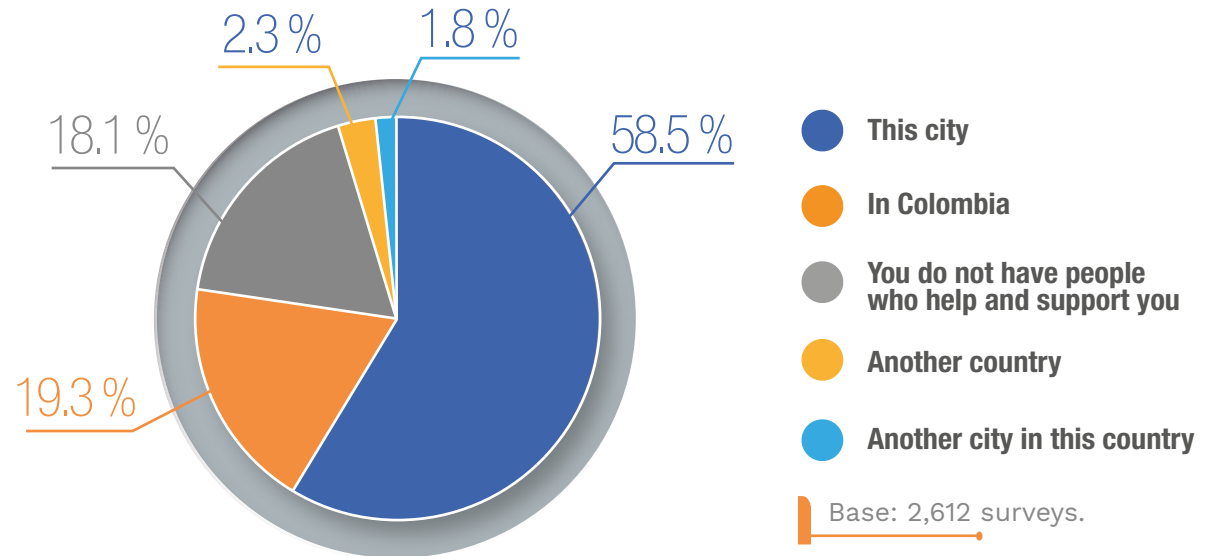


Base: 301 surveys (corresponds to those who answered that they do participate in some social organization in the host country).



On the other hand, **58 % of respondents have a support network in their current city of residence**, which indicates that four out of ten people do not have a support network nearby, constituting a vulnerability factor.

Figure 57. The people who, in your opinion, help and support you are in



Assistance to victims of the armed conflict

70 % of respondents state that they have not received any support in the host country on account of their condition as victims of the Colombian armed conflict. This is generally the case in all countries where the survey was conducted, with the exception of Ecuador, where the distribution between those who have received aid and those who have not is more equitable; there, 48 % of respondents have received aid.

An analysis by immigration status shows that **those who have refugee status or international protection have access, at a higher percentage, to some type of assistance or aid from the local government.** The same is true for those who have limited stay visas.

This means that, of the 2,612 people surveyed, 1,830 state they have not received any aid in the host country as victims of the armed conflict, while 782 have. This question allowed for interpretation by the respondent in relation to other types of assistance received on account of their migrant status, because they are a vulnerable population or due to any other factor (see Figure 58).

Figure 58. Have you received any institutional support in your host country as a victim of the Colombian armed conflict?

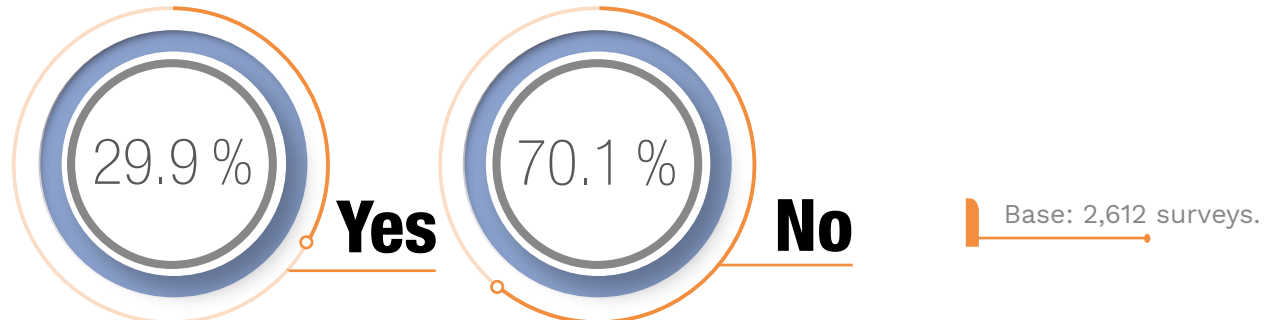
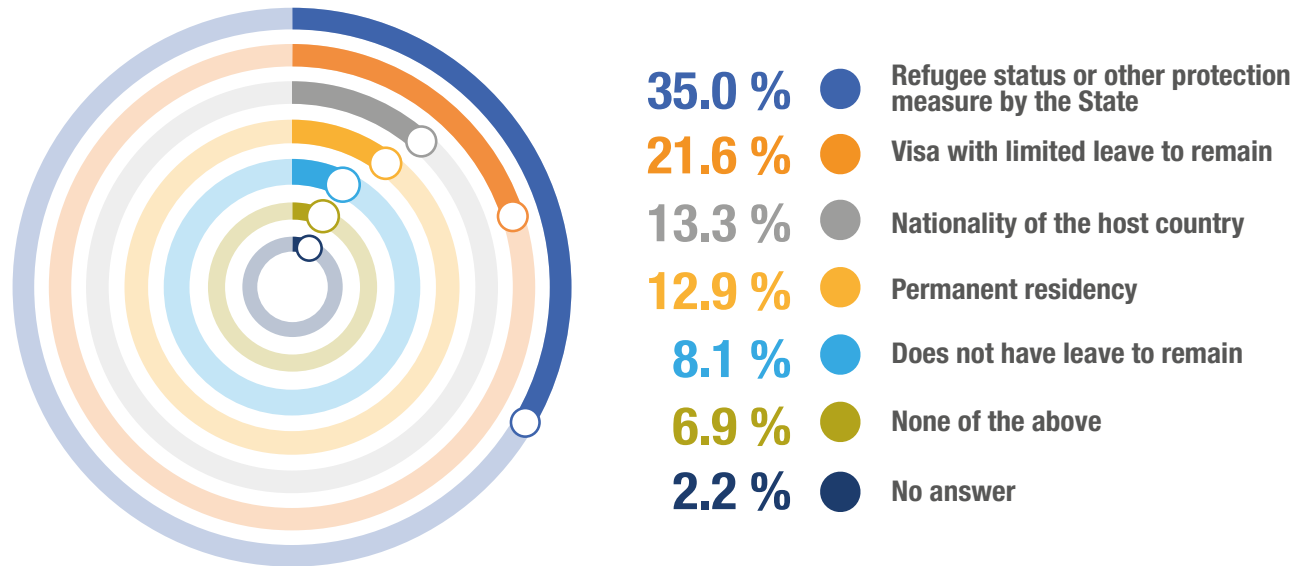


Figure 59. Percentage of individuals who have received support from the local government, on account of their immigration status

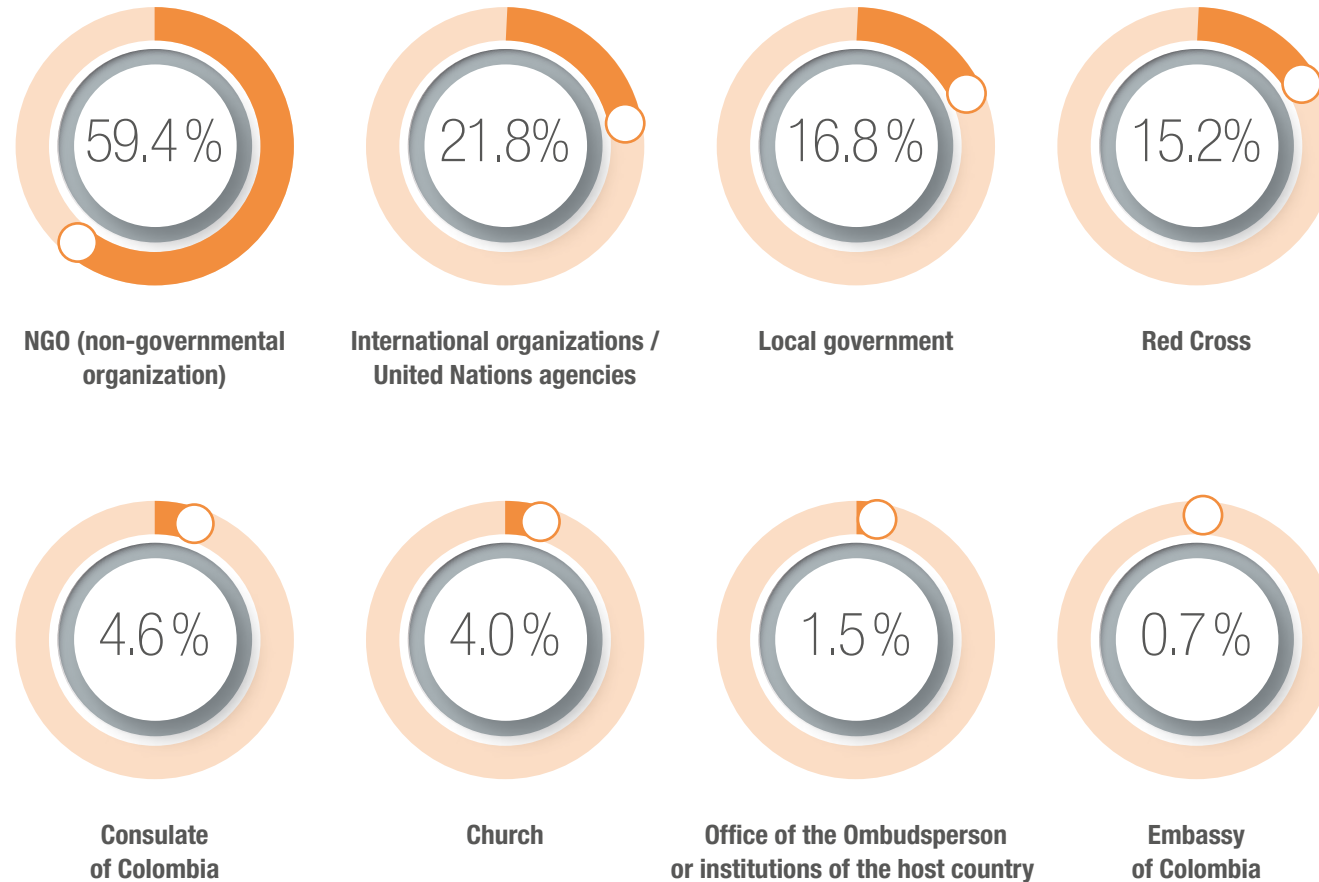


Base: 782 people (corresponds to those who have received aid from the local government because of their condition as victims of the Colombian armed conflict).



Of the 782 people who have received support because they are immigrants and victims of the Colombian armed conflict, that support has come, in order of participation, from non-governmental organizations (59.4 %), international organizations (21.8 %) and from the local government (16.8 %).









Figure 60. From whom have you received support?

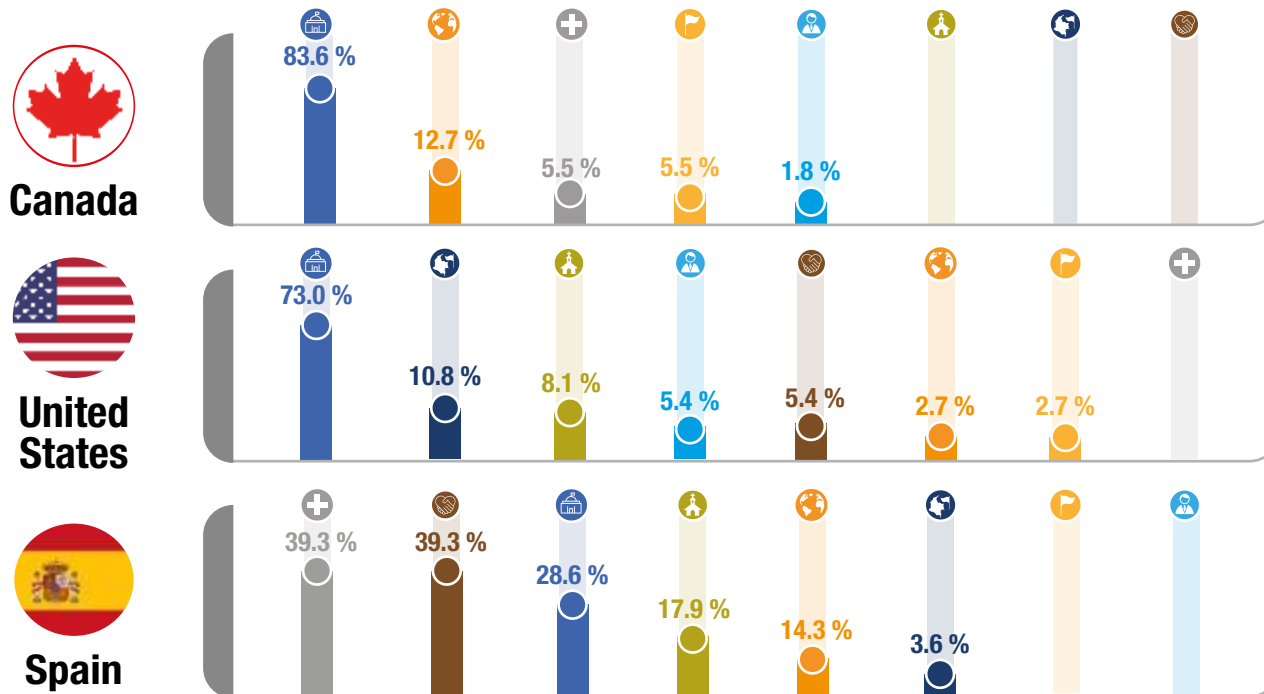


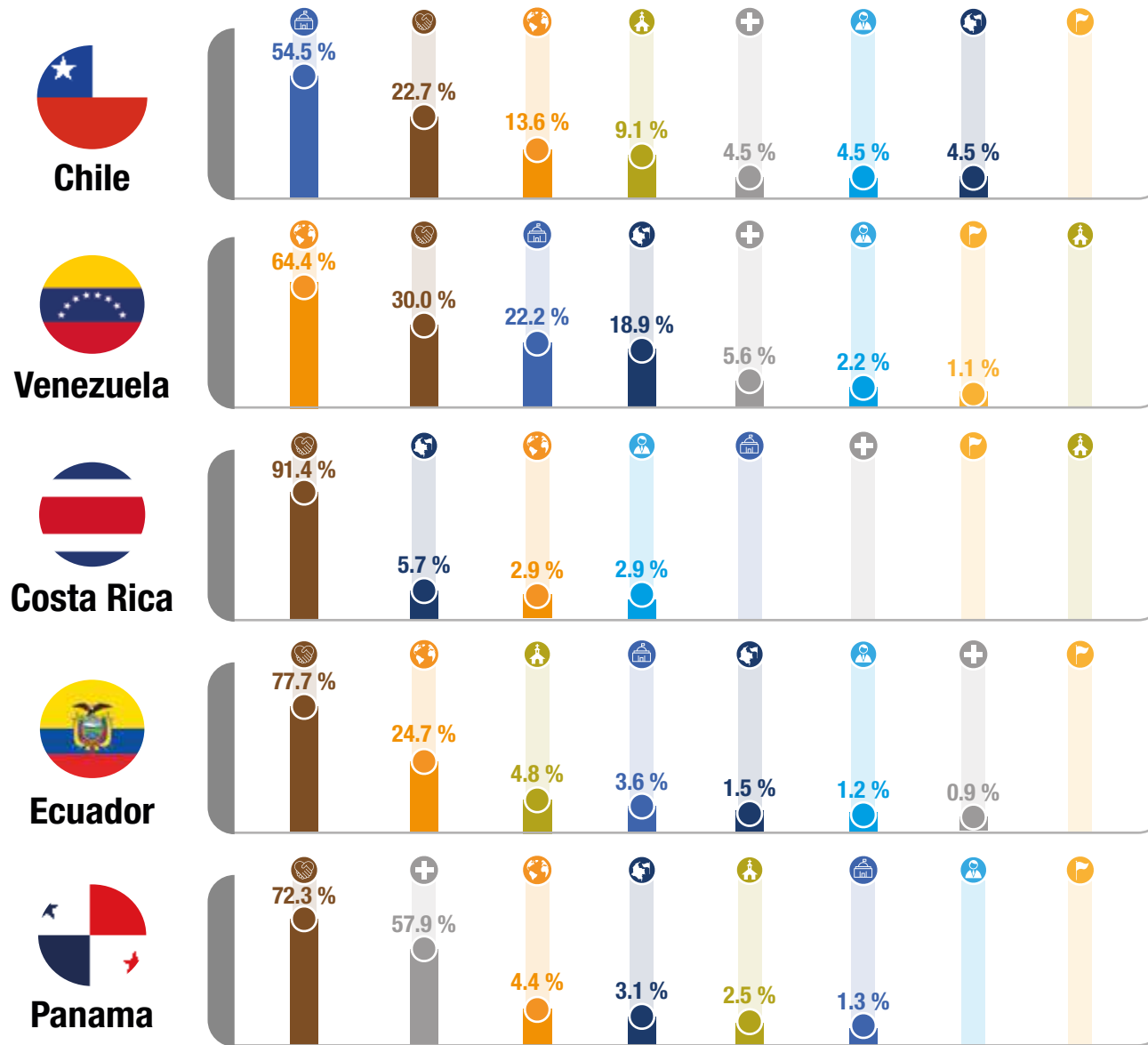
The sum is more than 100 % because interviewees could choose more than one answer.
 Base: 758 surveys (24 people did not respond).

When inquiring by country, results show that in Canada, the United States and Chile, assistance has come mainly from the local government. In Panama, Costa Rica and Ecuador, however, aid from non-governmental organizations (NGOs) prevails. In Venezuela, aid comes mainly from international organizations, while in Spain the assistance that weighs most heavily is that of the Red Cross and non-governmental organizations, even though the local government is also present.

Figure 61. Support received by country and type of organization

-  Local government
-  Embassy of Colombia
-  Consulate of Colombia
-  International organizations / United Nations agencies
-  Office of the Ombudsperson or institutions of the host country
-  NGO (non-governmental organization)
-  Red Cross
-  Church





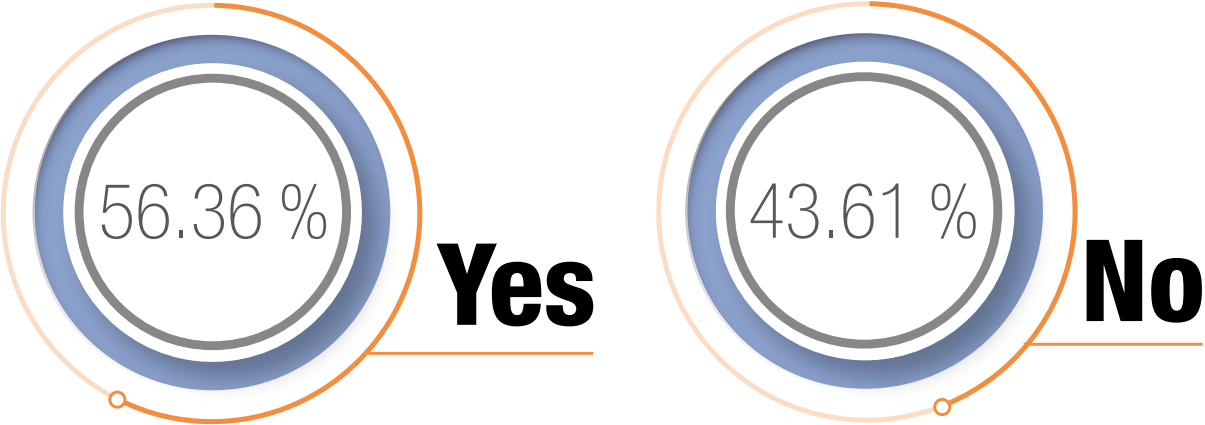
The sum is more than 100 % because interviewees could choose more than one answer.
 Base: 758 surveys (Canada, 55; Chile, 22; Costa Rica, 35; Ecuador, 332; Spain, 28; United States, 37; Panama, 159; Venezuela, 90).



Finally, when asked if the general situation of the victims of the internal armed conflict has improved since they left for another country, nearly six out of every ten respondents answer in the affirmative. Considering the answers given in previous sections, it can be inferred that a determining factor has been the increase in safety in their lives. Other than this, it is inferred that the economic difficulties faced have had a significant impact on four out of ten people whose situation has not improved.

When asked if they send part of their income to Colombia, three out of ten people say they do so on a monthly or occasional basis. On the other hand, the number of people who receive money from Colombia is significantly lower, covering only 8 % of the population versus 29 % in the previous case (remittances from abroad to Colombia). In addition, receiving money from Colombia is mostly occasional.

Figure 62. Do you feel that your situation in general has improved from the one you were living in Colombia?



The sum is less than 100 % because 0.03 % did not respond.
 Base: 2,612 surveys.





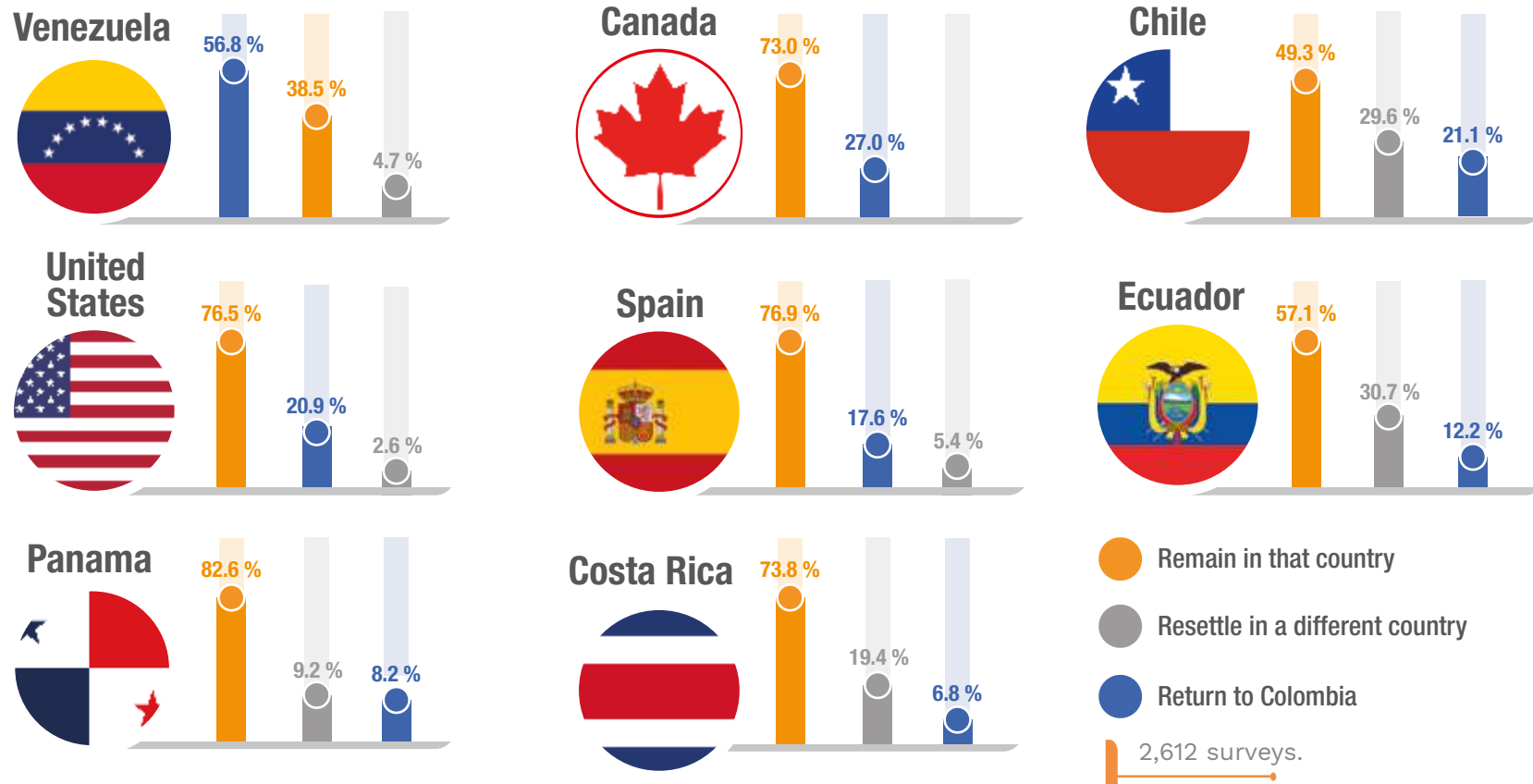
7. INTENTION OF VICTIMS ABROAD TO RETURN TO COLOMBIA, REMAIN IN THE HOST COUNTRY OR RESETTLE:

Among all victims surveyed, **19 % intend to return to Colombia, 65 % do not and 16 % would prefer to resettle in another country.** As shown below, the intention to return is low, regardless of whether or not living conditions have improved in the host country.

When inquiring by country, the survey shows that in all cases, with the exception of Venezuela, the intention to remain in the host country prevails. In the case of Venezuela, it is important to bear in mind the years when the field surveys were conducted for this report. It is also worth noting that the intention of resettlement comes mainly from people located in Ecuador and Chile.



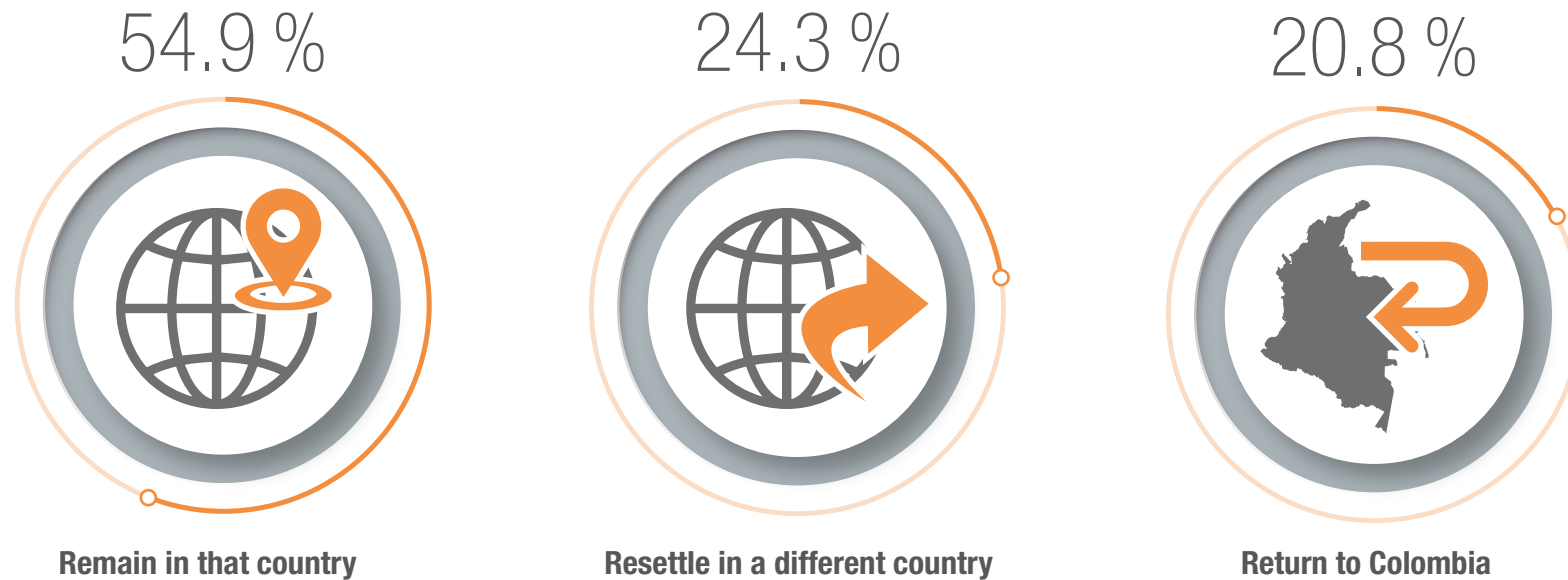
Figure 63. Regarding your current situation in the host country, your intention is to



According to Figure 62 above, 1,139 people indicated that their situation had not improved in the host country. Of this group, nearly six in ten prefer to remain where they are, while two in ten consider returning, and two in ten would prefer to resettle. In contrast, for those whose situation did improve,⁴⁷ the intention to resettle is lower (one in ten) and the intention to stay is present in seven out of ten.

⁴⁷ 1,472 indicated that their situation did improve in the host country.

Figure 64. Intention to return, stay or resettle among those who consider that their situation has not improved in the host country



Base: 1,139 surveys (corresponds to those who indicated that their general situation did not improve in the host country).

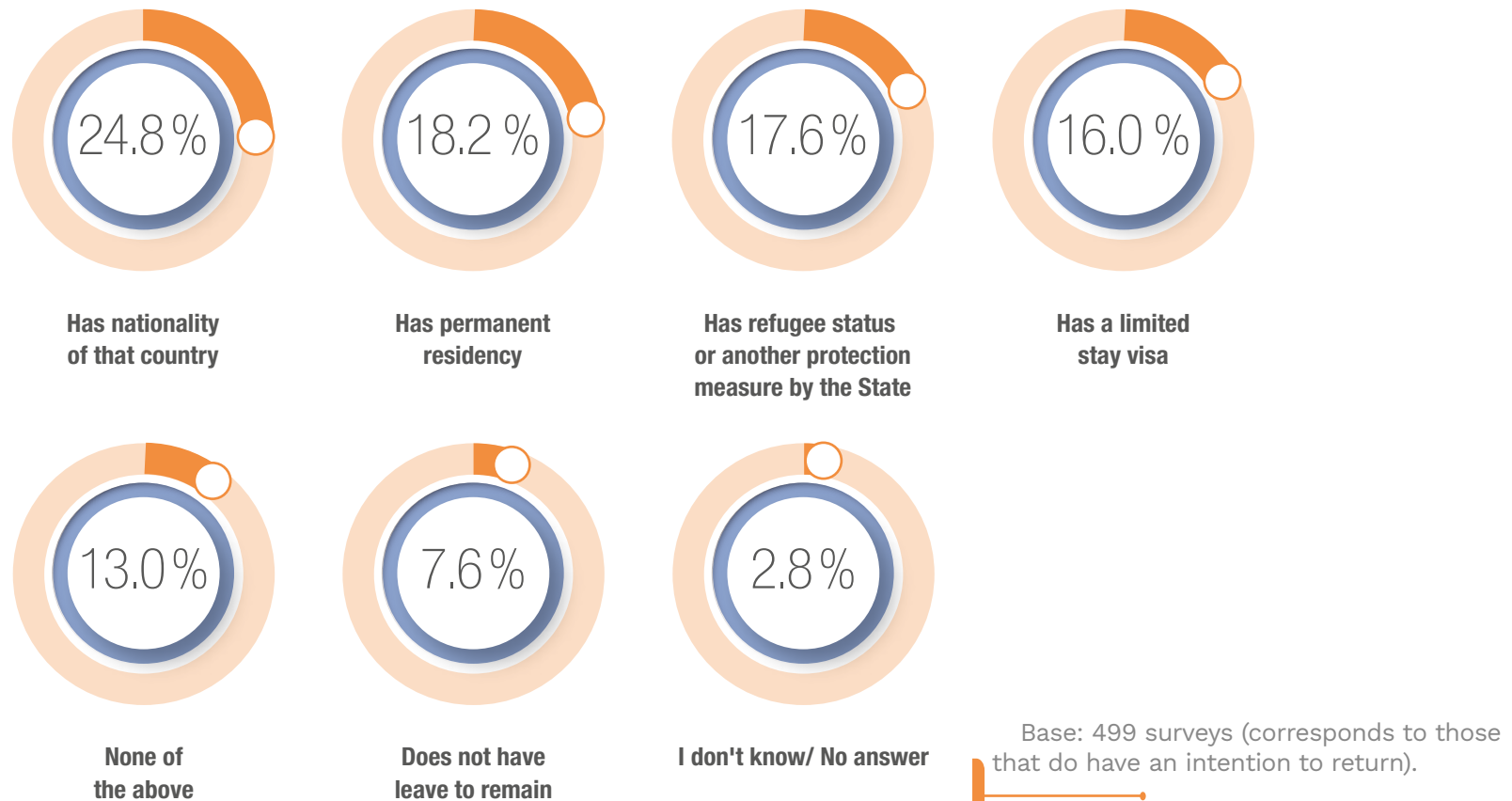
In addition, among those who do not intend to return to Colombia, 84 % indicate that the main reason is fear that they will suffer a new victimization. This response is consistent with the fact that most people prefer to remain in their host countries for safety reasons, regardless of whether they are facing economic difficulties.

Other reasons for not returning were much less important, such as the absence of necessary conditions (8 %), fear of remembering events due to the conflict (4 %), and lack of financial resources (3 %). There was no response from 3 % of respondents.



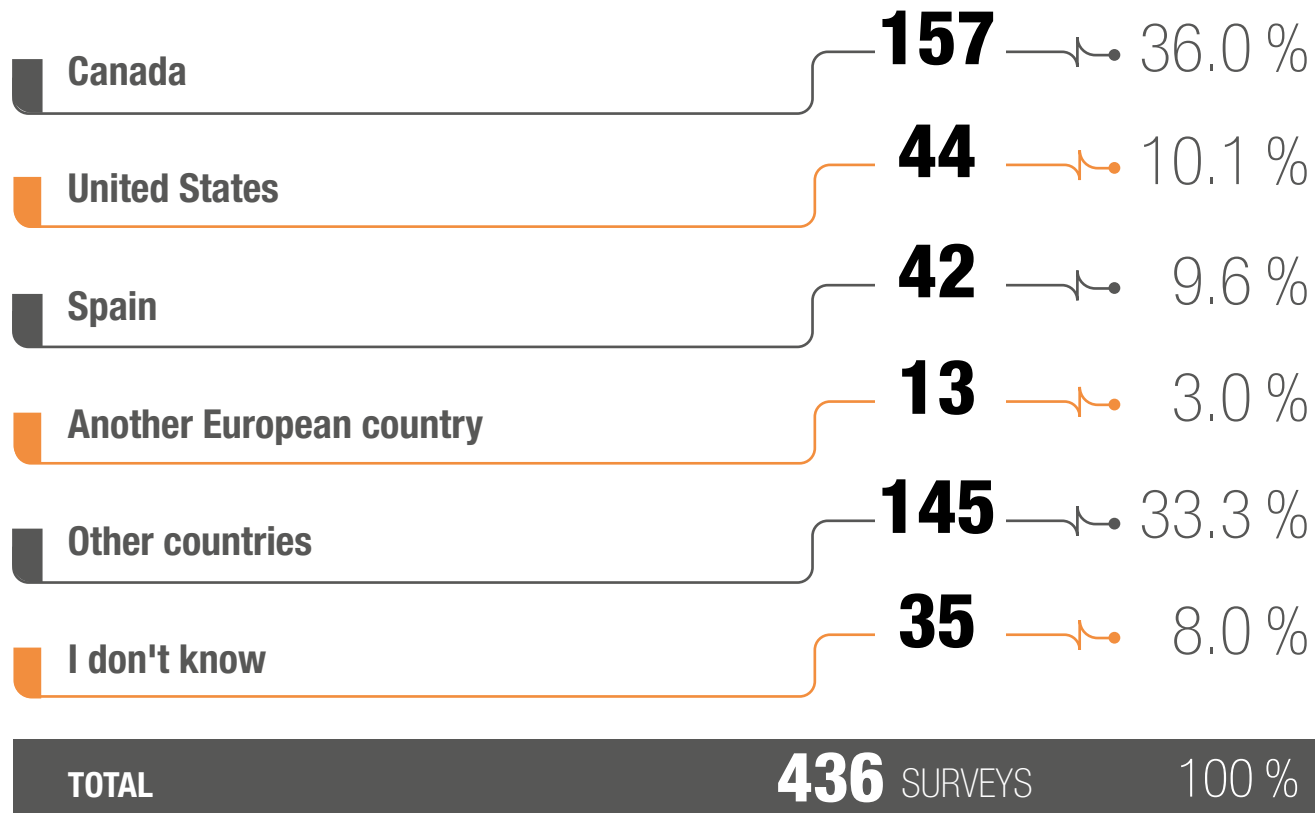
On the other hand, among the 499 people surveyed who do have an intention to return, results show that their immigration status in the host country does not have a determining influence on this intention.

Figure 65. Intention to return to Colombia, broken down by immigration status



On the other hand, those who intend to resettle would prefer to go to Canada (36.0%), the United States (10.1%) and Spain (9.6%).⁴⁸

Figure 66. In which country would you like to be resettled?



Among the 499 people who intend to return, 52% do not know when they will do so, while 26% intend to do so within one to six months.⁴⁹ Regarding the place in Colombia to which they would return, 32% would return to their former municipality of residence, 23% would return to their place of birth and 26% do not know (19% do not respond).



Finally, for all respondents, regardless of their intention to return or not, **the three main reasons why they would eventually return to the country are, in order of importance: to be with their family again, the security they perceive the Peace Agreement (Final Agreement) will bring and because they miss the country.**

Figure 67. The reasons why you would return to Colombia are



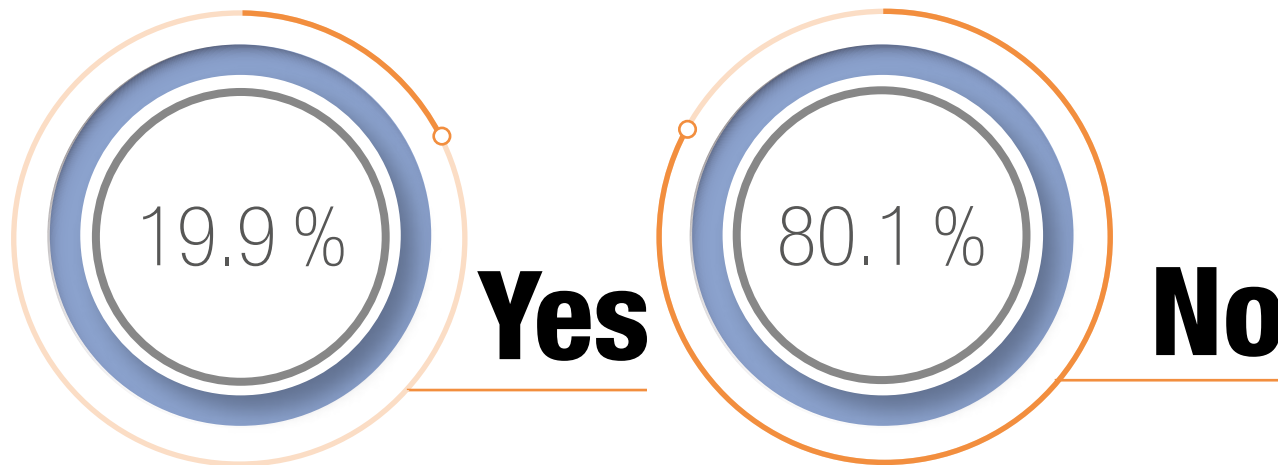
*The sum is more than 100 % because interviewees could choose more than one answer.
Base: 2,579 surveys (33 people did not respond).*

- 48** This intention to resettle coincides with global trends, according to which Canada and the United States are the most desired countries for resettlement (IOM, 2019).
- 49** The other 22 % intends to return after at least six months and even within more than three years (the breakdown of the 22 % is: 5 % between six months and one year, 10 % between one and three years, and 8 % more than three years).

Consistent with the low intention to return, eight out of ten respondents believe that a return to the country would not improve their living conditions (it should be kept in mind here that these answers preceded the Covid-19 pandemic and that, in this context, results might vary).

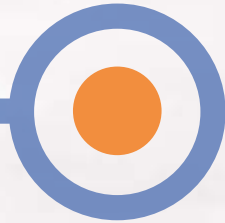
Nevertheless, closeness to family and land, as well as the expectation of peace, have been motivations for an eventual return, but in practice the search for safety through remaining in the host countries or through resettlement takes precedence.

Figure 68. Do you believe that your return would improve your current conditions?



Base: 2,612 surveys.





CONCLUSIONS

For more than half a century, the victims of Colombia's internal armed conflict have been not only those located in the national territory, but also those who suffered damages, as defined in Article 3 of Law 1448 of 2011, and are currently abroad.⁵⁰ Many of these individuals could also fall into the category of economic migrants or persons seeking international protection, in the light of International Refugee Law.

For a few people, leaving Colombia turned out to be a temporary situation; however, for the vast majority, this has become a long-term departure. For this majority, having to reconstruct their life project entails much more than regular migration. Indeed, this group left the country essentially in search of protection, which comes with its own struggles and limitations.

Addressing the needs of the population of victims abroad in terms of not only the satisfaction of their social, economic and cultural rights, but also the rights to comprehensive reparation, implies identifying the living conditions in which victims find themselves, their socio-demographic composition (gender, ethnic identification, age, educational level and occupation), the victimization events they suffered, their migration routes and their immigration status in the host countries, as well as the knowledge they have of their rights and of the means at their disposal to satisfy them.

This profile has sought to provide answers to the questions posed above, based on a characterization study over a two-year period (2018-2019). This study was carried out through surveys conducted among 2,612 people who identify themselves as victims of the Colombian armed conflict, located in eight of the ten countries with the largest victim

populations (Ecuador, Venezuela, Canada, United States, Spain, Panama, Chile and Costa Rica). The main conclusions drawn from this study are set out below.

Living conditions

The results of the characterization survey indicate that **the main consideration of victims abroad is the preservation of their safety and integrity.** This is the common element found in the decision to leave the country, the reason for staying in the host country and the reason a return to Colombia is unlikely in most cases.

The survey also found that the most frequent difficulty for victims abroad is their economic situation. In most cases, people's income is insufficient to cover their needs. This is due to the challenges they face carrying out an economic activity, mainly because they do not meet requirements

(such as documentation for work) or because of some type of discrimination, normally associated with their condition as immigrants.

Furthermore, although most people are adults in their productive years (between 29 and 60), in most cases their education is, at best, secondary-level (i.e. middle and early high school education). In fact, even though people with this level of education have demonstrated the greatest diversity in their type of occupation, they are also the ones most frequently found in the ranks of unemployment and informal work.

As far as the general well-being of people is concerned, **one of the most important impacts of the armed conflict, the psychosocial effects, has been highly neglected abroad.** Although 86 % of all respondents indicated that their mental and emotional health was affected by the victimization they

suffered, only 26% of the entire population stated that they had received care (among the population that has received care, the majority are women).

78 % of individuals surveyed have a regularized immigration status, either through State protection measures in the host country, nationality, a temporary visa or permanent residency.⁵¹ This suggests that nearly eight out of ten people have managed to take the first step to ensure their stay and enter local systems for access to social, economic and cultural rights.

In this regard, **the basic satisfaction of these rights is most evident in the areas of health and housing, while the greatest needs have been identified in the fields of education and employment.** This latter point has proven to be a fundamental factor, which is not only significantly affecting the quality of life of victims abroad, but has also put at risk other areas of life, such as access to housing.

Victimization and migration dynamics

From another perspective, in line with the information kept in the Single Registry of Victims (RUV), the results of the characterization survey corroborate that forced displacement and threats are the two victimizing events suffered by most of the victims who emigrated.

There is also a close relationship between the victimization suffered and the departure from the country, supported by the idea that, in almost half of the cases, people emigrated either less than a year after the occurrence of the events or between one and two years later.

50 67.5 % of all victims surveyed emigrated between less than a year and two years after the victimizing event.

51 It is worth noting that, of all the victims surveyed, 74% have formally applied for refuge (asylum) or other State protection in the host country.

Taking into account that nearly seven out of ten people suffered forced internal displacements before leaving the country, it is also evident that **migration abroad was the last resort for these people, forced to look beyond national and continental borders to safeguard their life and integrity.**

Although the population of victims of the armed conflict is distributed in at least 43 countries around the world, the results of the characterization survey, carried out in eight of the ten main countries, confirm that **the most decisive motivations in the choice of destination countries are safety, proximity to Colombia and the fact of having family and/or friends there.**

Knowledge of Law 1448 of 2011, the Victims and Land Restitution Law

Most victims surveyed abroad indicated that they were unaware of or knew little about the Victims and Land Restitution Law. Nevertheless, 86% of them are included in the Single Registry of Victims (RUV), which suggests

that, with regard to the process of presenting their statement of the victimizing events suffered, people have received some information and have taken the first steps necessary to access the support, assistance and reparation measures under said law.

Even without a precise knowledge of the law, **people are aware of the fact that they have certain rights as victims of the armed conflict, including the rights to reparation, protection of their life, justice, truth and restitution of their lands.**

In spite of this, only four out of every ten people surveyed claim to have received support, assistance and/or reparation from the Colombian State, vis-à-vis the satisfaction of their rights as victims.

Sources of assistance abroad and differential approaches

Assistance abroad for migrants, in this case victims of the Colombian armed conflict, has come from non-governmental organizations, followed by international organizations and local governments. In this regard, the finding is that, depending on the country, the institutions that provide the most assistance vary.

People with refugee status or other protection measures from the host State, as well as those with temporary visas, have received the most assistance. Despite the above, in general, **only four out of ten people have received any kind of assistance related to their condition as victims.**

With regard to the gender of surveyed individuals, the distribution between men and women who are victims of the armed conflict abroad is close, with only a slight majority represented by women.

With regard to ethnicity, results show that although most people do not identify with any particular group, there is still a significant ethnic

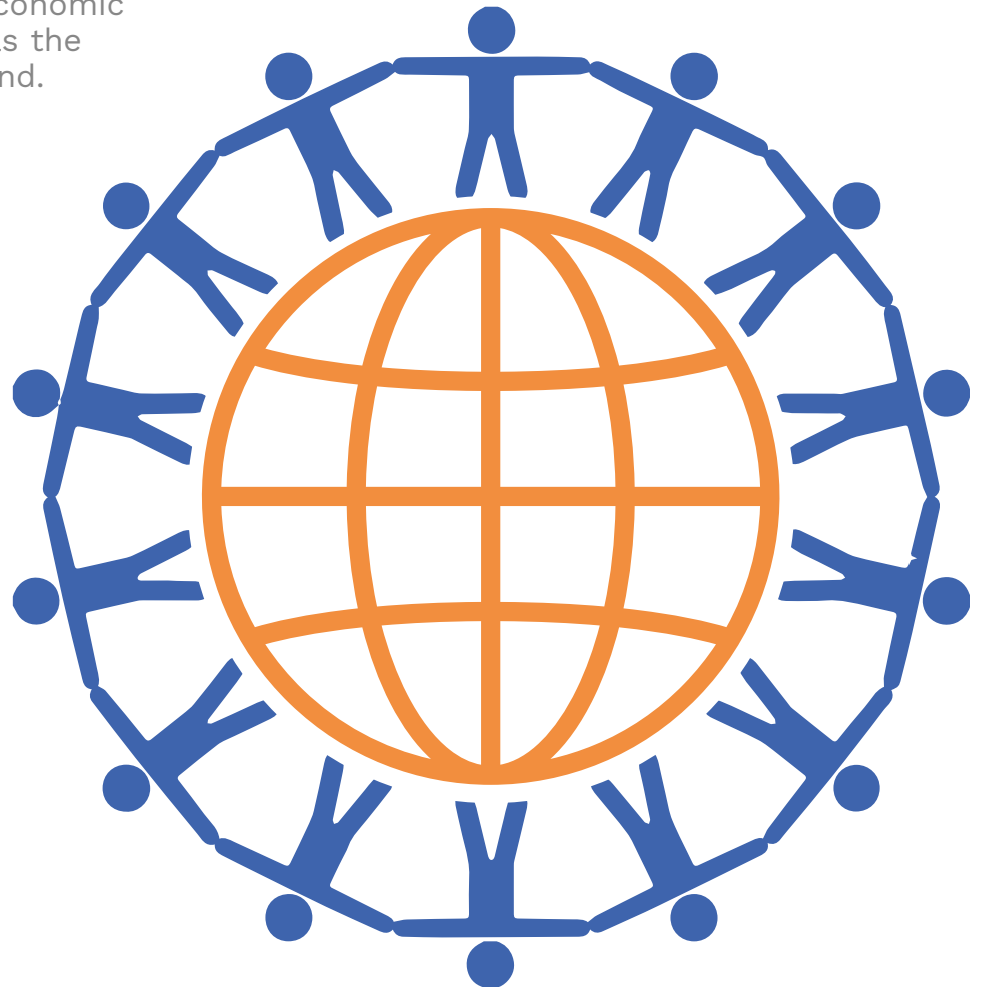


representation, considering that three out of ten people identify themselves as black/mulatto/Afro-Colombian (the majority), or indigenous. In this case, the countries with the greatest representation of these populations are Ecuador, Panama and Chile.

Intention to return

Finally, with regard to prospects of returning to Colombia, the finding is that most people (81%) do not intend to return, regardless of their immigration status, the economic difficulties they face or personal motives, such as the longing to be close to their family and their homeland.

When faced with the practical consideration of returning, most people believe that they are safer where they are, and that returning could expose them to further victimization.



Final considerations

The victims of the armed conflict who are located abroad, just like the victims who have remained in Colombia, have shown a strong capacity for resilience. Indeed, despite the adversities they have suffered, they tend to find ways of reconstructing their lives, a process that begins with finding conditions that guarantee their safety and integrity.

In many cases, people who have emigrated have found sources of support in the host countries. However, this profile shows that being a victim abroad brings about challenges inherent in being a migrant, which in turn can limit possibilities in terms of economic activity, among others.

As for the actions that the Colombian State can take to strengthen its scope, there is room to grow in providing training for employment, offering psychosocial support, implementing the reparation measures under the Victims and Land Restitution Law, and ensuring proper communication about these measures.

Creating and strengthening alliances between State institutions and civil, non-governmental and international organizations will be fundamental to achieve this goal. As evidenced in this profile, by adapting mechanisms that are better suited to the needs and living conditions of victims abroad, public policy can enhance its effectiveness ensuring the satisfaction of their rights.



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