

INFORMATION ECOSYSTEM ASSESSMENT

of the Migrant, Returnee, and Refugee Population in

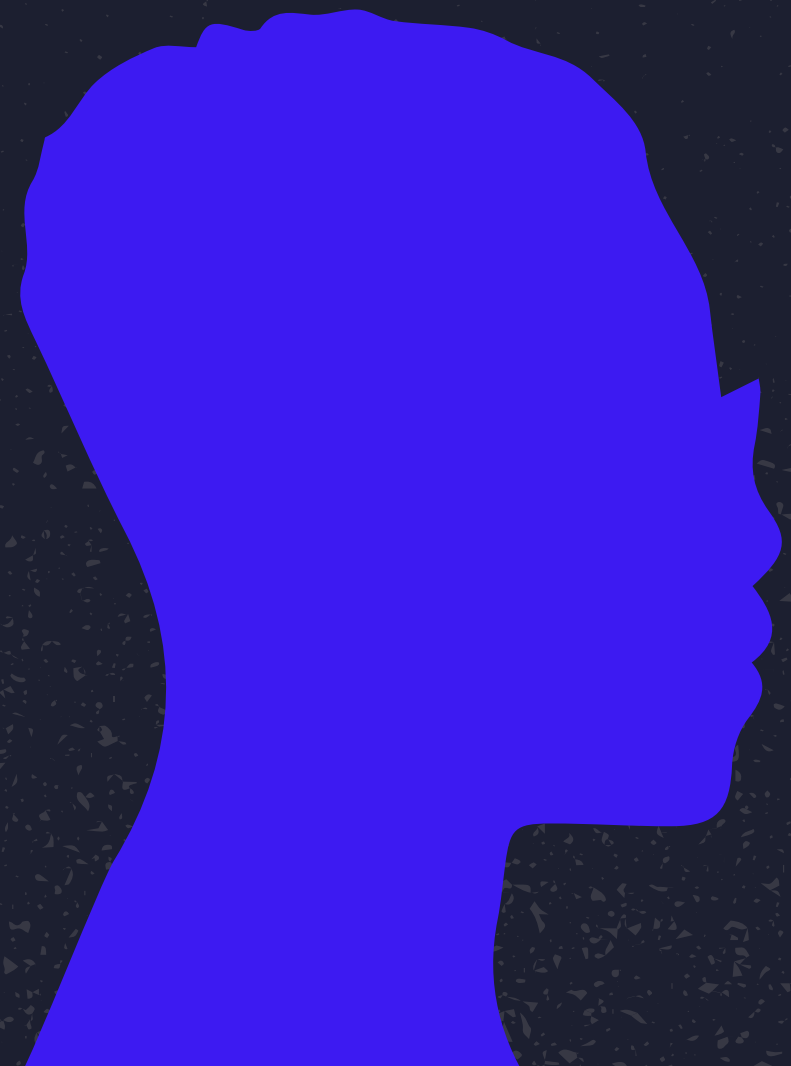


MAY 2022

SANTIAGO DE

CAALI

COLOMBIA



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ACRONYMS

CSO	Civil Society Organization
ETPV	Temporary Statute for the Protection of Migrants (Estatuto Temporal de Protección a Migrantes)
DANE	National Department of Statistics (Departamento Administrativo Nacional de Estadística)
ECAR	Continuous Study on Radial Audiences (Estudio Continuo de Audiencia Radial)
GIFMM	Grupo Interagencial sobre Flujos Mixtos Migratorios
ID	Identification Document
GBV	Gender-Based Violence
GIFMM	Interagency Group on Mixed Migratory Flows (Grupo Interagencial sobre Flujos Mixtos Migratorios)
IEA	Information Ecosystem Assessment
IOM	International Organization for Migration
PEP	Special Residence Permit (Permiso Especial de Permanencia)
MinTIC	Ministry of Information and Communication Technologies
PPT	Temporary Protection Permit (Permiso de Protección Temporal)
RUMV	Unified Registry for Venezuelan Migrants (Registro Único de Migrantes Venezolanos)
SISBEN	Identification System for Potential Beneficiaries of Social Programs (Sistema de Identificación de Potenciales Beneficiarios de Programas Sociales)
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees

INTRODUCTION



The following document presents an Information Ecosystem Assessment (IEA) for migrants in need of international protection and Colombian returnee populations in Santiago de Cali (Colombia) within the framework of USAID's Conectando Caminos por los Derechos Program.

Under its IEA methodology, the IEA research team evaluated seven ecosystem dimensions: the local media landscape, information needs, information production and flow, access to media dynamics, information use and its impact, social trust, and stakeholder influence.

The IEA research team produced this study using a combination of qualitative and quantitative methodologies, including the review of secondary sources, semi-structured interviews, focus groups, and surveys. The team used study findings to determine information dynamics for protection services and responses to human rights violations against migrant and returnee populations in Cali. The IEA research team conducted the study between February and June 2022

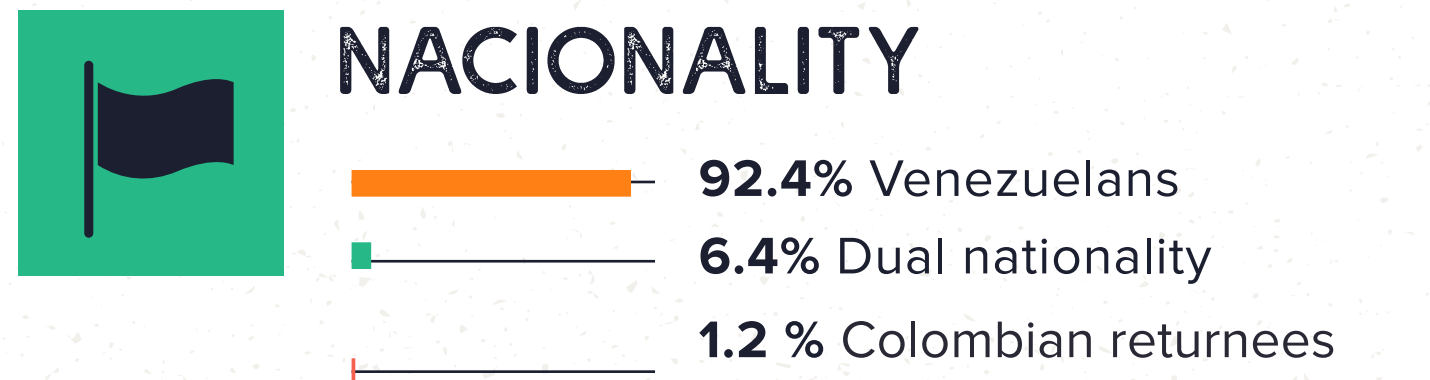
KEY FINDINGS



RECOMMENDATIONS

KEY FINDINGS

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



*(This characterization corresponds to the people surveyed)

Information Needs and Access

for the Migrant Population in

Cali

Migrant, refugee, and returnee populations expressed needing the following key information for life in Cali (multiple response question):



78.3% on basic needs, such as access to health care, housing, and food



62.1% on livelihoods, such as information on employment, education, and community life participation

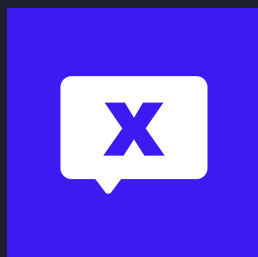


51.7% on legal information, such as new migration laws, human rights protection guidance, civil registry guidance, and support for minors

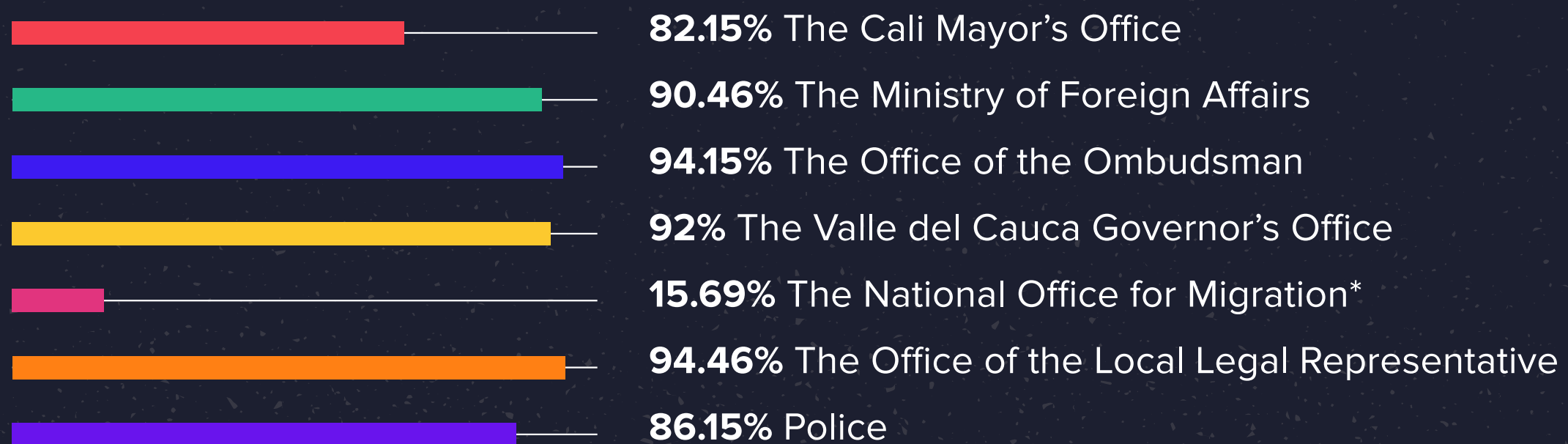
The migrant population has encountered the most barriers in accessing services in the abovementioned areas. Survey respondents expressed that both health care and education access are their main priorities, particularly regarding access for minors to such services.

Information Access

Barriers



The migrant population does not have frequent or regular communication with local authorities. Furthermore, **44.9% of survey respondents expressed using and preferring in-person communication at the offices of local institutions.** Survey respondents indicated they rarely or never communicate with the following:



* In Spanish, Migración Colombia

The one authority with whom survey respondents stated to be in regular communication is the National Office for Migration. Specifically, 51.69% of respondents reported occasionally being in touch with this office, whereas 14.46% reported almost always being in touch. This is because the National Office for Migration is responsible for regulating the migratory status of survey respondents, through in-person sessions—for example, for pre-registry biometric procedures, the delivery of temporary protection permits (PPTs)—and remote communication, such as the delivery of email updates on migrant registration processes.



The migrant community faces challenges to understanding the complexity of Colombia's bureaucratic system. Migrants do not know which institutions they should go to or the responsibilities of each one. Migrants expressed the need of having clear road maps to access services so anyone unfamiliar with the national system may easily understand the system.



Government efforts to share and spread information on new migration laws, migratory status regulation procedures, formalization procedures, and access to services and protection are not enough. Foundations, grassroots organizations, and community leaders have taken on the mantle of sharing this information, primarily through instant messaging channels, word of mouth, and community encounters.



Women face several barriers to access justice due to their irregular migratory status and a lack of knowledge of Colombian institutions. In turn, this increases the gender-based violence (GBV) to which migrant women are exposed.



The IEA research team conducted a **desk review of local media between May 2021 and March 2022 focused on YouTube** content by local public television channels. Results from this review coincided with results from focus groups: content and news do not meet the main information needs of the migrant population, including information on basic needs and livelihoods. Despite not meeting their main information needs, televised news is the main type of program consumed by survey respondents.

Information

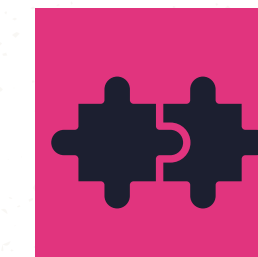
Ecosystem Stakeholders



Among survey respondents, **78.29%** expressed that family and friends provide most of the information on subjects relevant to their integration into Colombia. Furthermore, 99.4% of survey respondents stated that, since arriving in the city, friends and family are their main source for guidance and support.



Civil society organizations (CSOs), migrant leaders, and international agencies often reach a greater audience when sharing information relevant to migrants' life in Colombia through word of mouth and instant messaging channels.

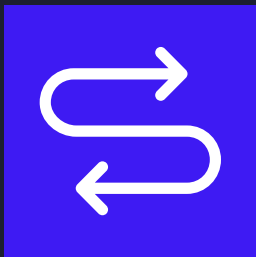


Community leaders are stakeholders who serve as a bridge for the migrant population, connecting them to relevant information and making it more accessible to them. Community leaders may be Colombian or Venezuelan migrants who are leveraging useful information to help migrants lead their lives in Colombia.



The mediation that community leaders conduct, especially between the National Office for Migration and target communities, primarily serves to translate technical language, terminology, and unknown bureaucratic procedures into information communities can access as well as to transfer information on migratory status regularization.

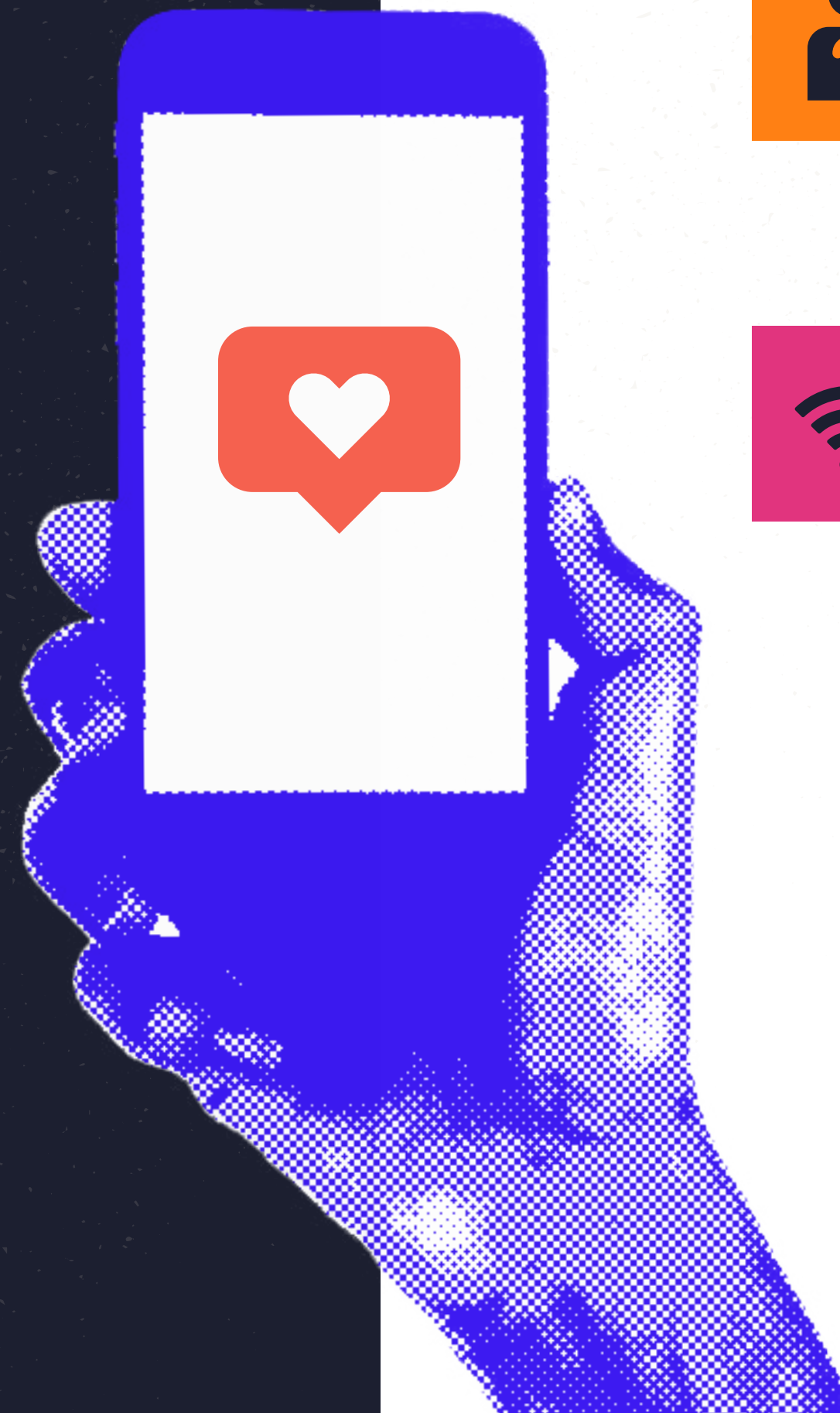
Information Access



In Cali, the migrant population has radically improved access to media compared to that in Venezuela. The main reasons behind this change include economic barriers to accessing television or radio and the ease of accessing information online using mobile devices.



WhatsApp groups are the main channel through which migrants reach out to organizations. These organizations often build trust with migrants by constantly sharing verified information with them.



Television is the traditional media that migrants trust the most. Moreover, 85% prefer television over radio, which is only used by 12% of migrants in Cali, and printed media (including newspapers and magazines), which is only used by 3% of this population.

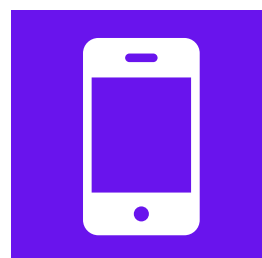


National data on media, mobile device, and internet consumption may underrepresent and render invisible the migrant community, especially due to this community's legal status and subsequent barriers to acquiring media services under their own name.



The migrant community in Cali frequently and generally uses the internet: 84.4% of survey respondents reported accessing internet on a daily basis. Migrants who use the internet the most are seniors aged 74 to 81. For them, the internet is their main information source in 100% of cases. Further, 90.8% of adults aged between 26 and 33 access the internet daily to obtain information, whereas 87.8% of adults aged between 34 and 41 do so. These figures are closer for adults aged between 42 and 49 and youth aged between 18 and 25, 80.4% and 80.6% of whom access the internet daily for information, respectively.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

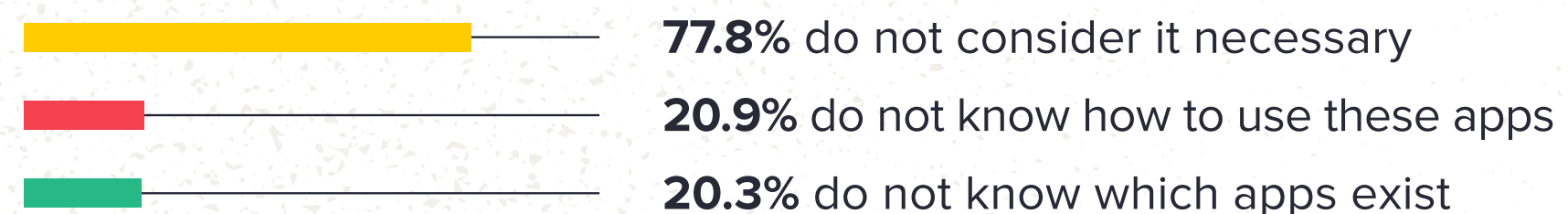


Among migrants, 93.5% use mobile phones. This reflects migrants' use of social media and instant messaging apps, showcasing their fundamental need to access the internet to remain connected with their friends and family. As well, 88% of migrants reported using their mobile phones to call friends and family, 49.7% to access social media, and 41.7% to work or conduct business transactions.



Among survey respondents, 78% stated they do not use mobile apps other than WhatsApp, Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, YouTube, and TikTok. As well, 48.3% stated they are not willing to download a mobile app to be informed of their rights as migrants, refugees, or returnees. Most survey respondents preferred using zero-rating apps, such as WhatsApp and Facebook, which do not consume data and are therefore better options to remain connected.

On the subject of downloading mobile apps, survey respondents expressed the following:



Disinformation



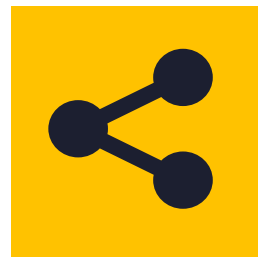
Among survey respondents, 41.28% have heard rumors about migrants, returnees, or refugees; 80.6% of survey respondents believed that these rumors and disinformation spread through word of mouth, whereas 46.76% believed that rumors and disinformation spread through social media and 28.36% through instant messaging.



The IEA research team identified the most common rumors as follows:

- Increased Colombian unemployment due to the informal hiring of Venezuelan migrants
- National budget allocations to service the migrant population
- The handout of national ID cards for migrants to allow them to vote in elections
- Perceptions of increased crime and poverty in the city of Cali

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



Among survey respondents, **89.6%** stated that sharing relevant information with other migrants, refugees, or returnees is an important activity for them. Survey respondents expressed sharing this information during their personal interactions but also through instant messaging apps.



Among survey respondents, **80.1%** stated they verified the information they receive or find suspicious, using methods such as the following:

63.03% Asking other migrants or host community members

46.18% Checking if other sources such as organizations and well-known media (radio, television, websites, or press) report the same information

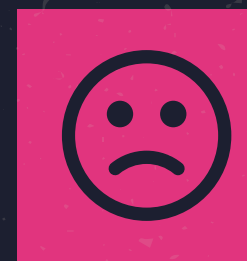
42.73% Checking the social media of the person, organization, or media that published the information to verify trustworthiness

36.64% Doing a separate online search of websites to compare URLs and verify whether the address used to publish the information is real or fake

29.77% Finding the phone number of the organization or institution associated with the information and calling to request additional details

Information

Impact



Among survey respondents, **37.9%** expressed having experienced, witnessed, or heard about cases of discrimination, violence, or aggression based on nationality in the city. Survey respondents identified host community members as the main aggressors against the migrant population.



Among survey respondents, **21.4%** stated that discrimination increased during elections, including public opinion, censorship, and verbal and physical aggression against respondents themselves or other migrant, refugees, and returnees. Further, 6% of survey respondents stated knowing of cases where a migrant was paid or pressured into campaigning for or against a candidate or political party.

Venezuelan

Migrant Adaptation to

Life in Cali, Colombia:



Residence. Among survey respondents, 92% expressed wishing to stay in Cali. According to 82% of survey respondents, the main reason is they have friends and family in the city.



Ethnicity and Race. Migrants' ethnicity and race increase discrimination against them, excluding them and limiting their access to policies and services. While survey respondents and focus group participants pointed out these categories as a basis for discrimination, the migrant population in Cali does not necessarily identify itself with either category.



Health Care Access. Among survey respondents, 40.6% stated they have regularized their migratory status,¹ Of these, 26.5% stated they are not registered with the national health care system, reflecting the social vulnerability migrants, refugees, and returnees continue to face, regardless of their migratory status.

¹ A regular migratory status refers to foreigners who have valid identification documents (IDs) to conduct legal activities within Colombia. Valid documentation includes foreigner ID cards, temporary residence permits (PPTs), and the special residence permits the PPT replaces (particularly the generic special residence permit, PEP, and its work-related equivalent, PEPFF), safe-conduct passes for asylum seekers, and visas stamped on a valid passport. All these documents must be unexpired.



Employment Access. Of the 205 women surveyed, their main sources of income are informal jobs, street vending, remittances, or humanitarian aid. Only 6.3% reported obtaining income through formal employment.² **Survey respondents also identified the informal sector as the most enabling environment for hostilities or discrimination.³**



Focus group participants indicated that developing employment skills and knowledge to enter local labor markets is one of the greatest challenges they face.



Education Access. Migrant children, adolescents, and persons with disabilities face limitations to enter the education system due to their migratory status. Being a migrant is yet another layer to the challenges an underage person with disabilities faces, significantly increasing inequalities in education access.

² In this study, formal employment is the work for which relevant parties make monthly contributions to the national social security system, taxation system, and any other payments as required by labor laws in Colombia.

³ In 2009, the Colombian National Department of Statistics (DANE) defined informal employment as the economic market activities that operate using household resources without being constituted as formal businesses with a separate legal identity. In addition, "workers are considered to have informal employment if their employment, de jure or de facto, is not subject to labor legislation, income tax, social protection, or other employment-related payments and allowances. Informal employment includes the following types of workers: (1) self-employed workers and workers in establishments, businesses, or companies that employ up to five people across all their agencies and offices, including the patron or partner; (2) family workers with no remuneration; (3) workers with no remuneration in companies or businesses outside their own household; (4) domestic workers; (5) day laborers and field hands; (6) self-employed workers in establishments of up to five people, excluding professional independent workers; and (7) patrons or employers in businesses with up to five workers" (DNP 2020).

Perceptions on the Temporary Statute for the Protection of Migrants



Among surveyed participants, 279 reported having applied to the Temporary Statute for the Protection of Migrants (ETPV). Of these, 2.86% indicated they had requested a payment to register with the Unified Registry for Venezuelan Migrants (RUMV).



Twelve survey participants reported having applied for asylum. Of these, two stated having felt pressured to renounce the safe-conduct pass for asylum seekers in favor of adhering to the ETPV, with one of them specifying their PPT request was denied for having the safe-conduct pass. Some asylum-seeking focus group participants expressed having felt pressured by relevant authorities to withdraw their asylum-seeking process in favor of adhering to the ETPV.



Participants in focus groups for migrant and CSO leaders stated that, in general, **public officers and host community members lack knowledge and have not yet adopted the ETPV and PPT as a valid identification document.** In addition, there are technical barriers because this document is still not an option in digital platforms for the identification and access of the migrant population to rights and services (banking, health, education services, among others).



RECOMMENDATIONS

Promoting and strengthening communication between local authorities, community, and CSOs

Doing so will satisfy migrants' basic information needs, such as access to health care and employment, and information on regularizing their migratory status, ETPV implementation, and other migratory dispositions. The IEA research team recommends local authorities implement a comprehensive system for information sharing, similar to the one aid organizations use, where community leaders and CSOs serve as a main communication bridge with the migrant population.

For such a system, it is worth noting that community leaders and CSOs use WhatsApp as their main means of communication. Establishing a direct channel for constant communication between local authorities and community leaders and CSOs may help guarantee relevant information is shared effectively and in a timely manner while acknowledging the important role leaders and CSOs play.

Using traditional media to share information and fight xenophobia

As observed in this report, traditional media in Cali offer extremely limited information for and about migrants. Local authorities and the Colombian government may capitalize on these media to use them to implement communication campaigns aimed at providing relevant information to migrants and raising awareness among the general population of the profound consequences of xenophobia. As shown in this report, campaigns where this media may have a greater effect include Caracol and RCN (television); Olímpica, Tropicana, and Radio Uno (radio); and *Q'Hubo* (printed newspaper). Authorities may also capitalize on digital media with large audiences, such as the ones examined in this report.

Implementing informative campaigns on the roles and responsibilities of different public institutions and their respective communication channels

As discussed in this report, a main information barrier migrants face is a lack of understanding of Colombian public institutions. Strategies such as a directory of public institutions and their roles and responsibilities may guide migrants and help increase their understanding of institutional dynamics so this population may become more independent and reach greater inclusion in daily life activities.

Reviewing the development of specific apps to centralize information for migrants

This study showed that migrants have little interest in and face economic and technical barriers to downloading new apps. Moreover, the use of new apps raises questions about migrant privacy and the use of their personal data. Therefore, the IEA research team urges international agencies and public institutions to avoid creating such apps and instead focus on leveraging existing and proven information channels. This includes word of mouth through community leaders and CSOs, capitalizing on existing WhatsApp groups, sharing information during peak news times (e.g., mealtimes), and using social and digital media.

Strengthening information-focused projects led by international agencies

This study has shown that migrants acknowledge the positive impact that international agency projects can have on matters such as fact-checking, digital security, misinformation preventions, and content creation. These projects help migrants make informed decisions and prevent the negative effects of misinformation in their communities.

Improving migrant characterization at the local level

Migration has different characteristics at the local level. Local authorities such as the Cali Mayor's Office and Municipal Council should aim to have a better understanding of the migrant population in Cali so they can promote local policies that better address the needs of this population.

Helping migrants self-identify in ethnic and racial categories

The IEA research team observes that a significant challenge ahead is finding new ways to characterize migrants more adequately on ethnic and racial categories, precisely because migrants themselves are not aware of these, but their hosting environment understands them based on these. This ethnic and racial identification divergence may increase migrant discrimination and exclusion, especially when their condition is considered from an intersectional approach. For example, organizations such as IOM do not apply these categories when addressing migrants but do provide this population with information to raise their awareness of the meaning and importance of each category.

Activating dialogue and collective action mechanisms

Understanding that communication between migrants and local authorities is limited, the IEA research team recommends establishing or reactivating periodic roundtables with local authorities and migrant CSOs and leaders to improve service access road maps and the sharing of information. In particular, local authorities should acknowledge the key role CSOs play in mediation with the migrant community to better capitalize on their capacity and networks.

Implementing campaigns on migrant employment rights

The IEA research team found that a high percentage of the surveyed migrant population has a job, but their employment is not covered by Colombian labor laws, excluding them from the social security system and leaving them vulnerable to abuse and labor exploitation. To address this situation, the IEA research team recommends implementing campaigns aimed at the private sector to raise its awareness of migratory dispositions in Colombia, procedures to hire migrants, and the legal consequences of hiring this population under conditions not permitted by law.

Training public and private officers

As shown in this report, migrants and other stakeholders identify officers responsible for service provision as one of the main aggressors against the migrant population. This underscores the need to train officers—both public and private—on how to treat migrants, refugees, and returnees adequately, raising their awareness of the profound consequences of xenophobia and giving them the tools to fight and prevent the stigmatization and discrimination of this population.

Raising awareness among the financial and telecommunication sectors

As shown in this report, the private sector often is not aware of the reach of instruments such as the PPT or a safe-conduct pass, which constitutes a barrier for migrants. In particular, it is important for relevant stakeholders to work with the financial and telecommunication sectors to raise their awareness of national migratory instruments and dispositions so migrants can access the key services needed for their socioeconomic inclusion, including opening bank accounts and registering mobile phone lines under their own name.

Promoting the PPT across different service provision platforms

This study showed that not all platforms reflect updated ID information and that not all service providers acknowledge the PPT as a valid ID. Thus, work is needed to fully achieve the acknowledgment of the PPT as a valid form of ID. This can foster migrants' economic inclusion by granting them access to bank accounts and internet networks under their own names. In turn, this access can help migrants enter the formal job market, help them start their own credit history (e.g., for loans), and make this population visible as consumers to improve the services aimed at them.

Sharing clear information on resources to address migration in Colombia

As shown in this report, the national and local governments and the media should make greater efforts when it comes to sharing information on financial resources to provide services to the migrant population. Existing misinformation around this topic has fostered rumors and fueled xenophobia and discrimination against the migrant population because host communities tend to assume that financial resources come only from the Colombian government, completely disregarding international aid.

Training National Office for Migration officers to treat migrants more humanely

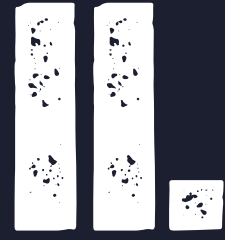
As discussed in this report, study participants specifically identified National Office for Migration officers as primary aggressors, pointing to the need to train these officers to provide more humane services. In many cases, National Office for Migration officers limit their actions to posting information on their office doors or directing migrants to consult websites for information, failing to acknowledge that many among this population may not have the resources needed to go to offices in person or access the internet or may be facing an urgent situation requiring immediate attention. Migrants participating in the IEA study acknowledge the important role of the National Office for Migration, expressing the fundamental need to strengthen communication channels between this institution and their communities, particularly in making information more accessible to all.

Sharing clear information on ETPV implementation

Migrants have several doubts regarding ETPV implementation, especially what happens with those who entered Colombia after the ETPV registration deadline. Moreover, there is a need to reevaluate the ETPV deadline to open new registration sessions for migrants who, for different reasons, were unable to register initially or were victims of PPT scams.

Increasing international agency and public institution understanding of migrant realities

International agencies and public institutions should have a better understanding of migrant realities and contexts to avoid implementing activities that are contrary to them. For example, developing an app to centralize relevant information for migrants may seem like an adequate solution to address migrant information needs. However, such an app may be difficult to download, not be supported by migrant mobile devices, and imply additional costs for not being zero rated, which are all conditions that would prevent migrants from making an effective use of this tool. Instead, the IEA research team recommends capitalizing on tools that migrants already use constantly, especially instant messaging apps such as WhatsApp and Telegram and social media such as Facebook and Instagram.



CONTEXT

By mid-2022, while writing this study, 5,087,495 Venezuelan migrants and refugees were estimated to be in most countries across Latin America and the Caribbean (R4V, 2022). Colombia, which shares a 2,219-kilometer border with Venezuela, received close to two million Venezuelans (Ministry of Foreign Affairs 2022). Between 2017 and 2022, migration increased by a factor of ten, driving the Colombian government to take emergency short- and medium-term measures to service this population in terms of access to rights, coverage of basic needs, and socioeconomic inclusion (Conpes 4100, 2022).

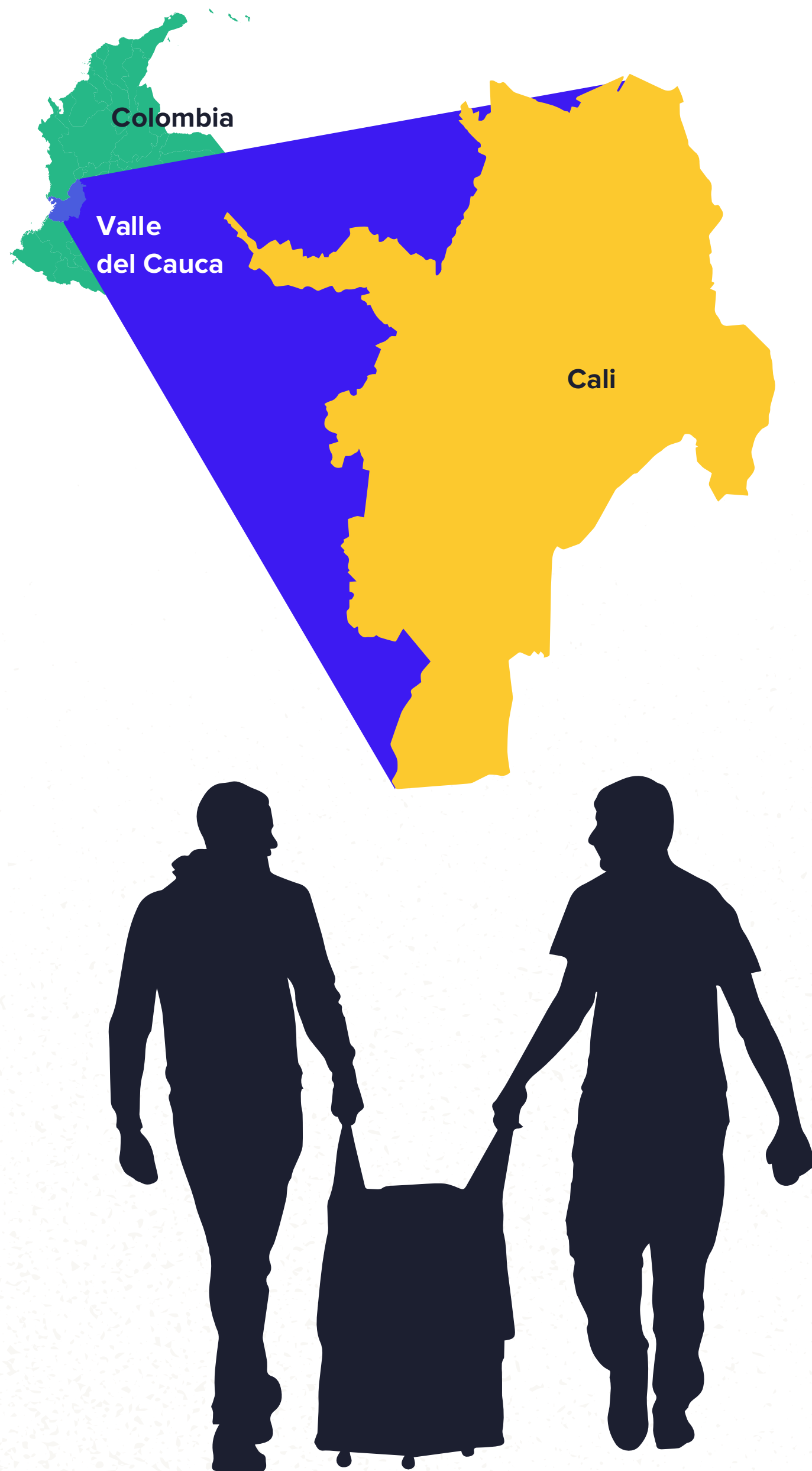
31% OF CITY RESIDENTS ARE NOT ORIGINALLY FROM CALI OR THE VALLE DEL CAUCA DEPARTMENT.



Mixed migration flows from Venezuela upended Colombia's internal migration policy. Beyond already-established migratory regularization channels, since 2017, the Colombian government has developed different types of documentation, including transit, temporary, and special protection permits. Currently all these types of documentation are contemplated under the PPT, issued by the Colombian government in 2021⁴.

This mechanism is exemplary worldwide due to its reach and implementation because it allows 2,384,141 Venezuelan migrants already in Colombia as of June 2022 to remain in the country and access public goods, services, and rights, excluding political rights (Colombian Presidency 2022; National Office for Migration 2022). Venezuelan migrants entering Colombia after May 28, 2022, must comply with other regulatory requirements, as established in Decree 210 of 2021.

⁴ Decree 2016 of 2021 and Resolution [No. 971 de 2021](#) of the National Office for Migration.



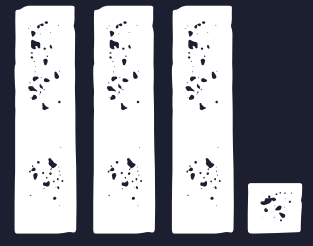
Despite the efforts of the national and subnational governments, humanitarian aid, nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), and CSOs, in [2022](#) the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) estimated that there were 845,000 Colombian returnees from Venezuela in Colombia not registered in the Unified Registry for Returnees. Their lack of registration limits any real measurement of returnee access to public goods, services, and rights within the context of the migration crisis.

Cali, the departmental capital of the Valle del Cauca department, is the third most populous city in Colombia, with a total population of 2,252,616 residents, according to DANE's 2018 National Census. From a local perspective, Cali is a main city at the departmental and national level familiar with human mobility challenges. In recent history Cali has had to contend with forced internal human mobility processes, coming especially from the Colombian Pacific region, that are primarily the result of internal armed conflict. According to the Municipal Social Welfare Secretariat, Cali is the city hosting the third largest number of migrants in the country ([Cali Mayor's Office 2022](#)). Moreover, according to a Corpovisionarios survey (quoted by [El País 2018](#)), 31% of city residents are not originally from Cali or the Valle del Cauca department. At the departmental level, in Valle del Cauca, approximately 160,000 Venezuelan citizens have registered with the RUMV, especially between May and July 2021 ([National Office for Migration 2022](#)). Venezuelan citizens aged 18 to 29 are the population group with the highest number of registries. The city of Cali contains 51% of the Venezuelan migration in the Valle del Cauca department, making this the city with the fifth largest number of Venezuelan migrants in Colombia ([National Office for Migration 2021](#)).

Within the context of the Venezuelan migration, Cali (situated in the Southwest of Colombia) has not only been a transit point to other countries such as Peru, Chile, and Ecuador, it has also been a center for migrants seeking to establish themselves in the city or in important municipalities nearby, including Palmira, Jamundí, Tuluá, Cartago, and Bugalagrande. Cali currently hosts a population of 85,000 Venezuelan migrants, according to data from the National Office for Migration and as reported by the Municipal Social Welfare Secretariat ([Cali Mayor's Office 2022](#)).

The 327 people consulted for this analysis migrated to Colombia and Cali between 2015 and 2021, with most participants reporting their migration between 2018 and 2019. Following the 2018–2019 peak period, migration waves have subsided, possibly due to the COVID-19 pandemic and associated restrictions. These numbers are consistent with the data published by the National Office for Migration in its Migratory Flows reports, both at the national and departmental levels ([National Office for Migration 2022](#)).

Migrants' intention to stay permanently in Cali implies great challenges for the municipal administration. City strategies for migrant inclusion and right guarantees (such as access to health care, education, decent housing, and employment) are still under development. This challenge is compounded by a lack of knowledge of the communication and information channels migrants can access to understand these strategies. Considering this context, the IEA research team conducted this study to analyze the information needs and flows that migrants experience in the city of Cali.



SOCIODEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS

To identify the information needs of Venezuelan migrants and returnees in Cali, the IEA research team surveyed 327 people aged 18 and older who lived in Venezuela between 2012 and 2021 and who have since moved to Cali as migrants, refugees, or returnees. The survey included a section on sociodemographic characterization presented as part of this study and to serve as a data input for stakeholders addressing migration in Cali and Colombia.

NATIONALITY

92.4%
Venezuelans

6.4%
double
nationality

1.2%
Colombian
nationals
returning from
Venezuela

In both the qualitative and quantitative phases of the IEA study, more women participated than men, as shown in Figure 1. Women being the majority of participants indicates they were more available than men to participate in this type of study because men are frequently partaking in employment activities that do not allow for their participation. This reflects a marked division of gender roles when it comes to employment, which migration has exacerbated, and this is an important sociodemographic feature to understand when analyzing this population

Figure 2 shows that participants were aged between 18 and 81, with most between 18 and 41 years of age. Generally, young participants aged between 18 and 25 represent 20.8% of survey respondents. Adults between the ages of 26 and 57 represented 71.8% of participants, whereas adults 58 and older represent 7.4% of the total.

Figure 3 shows **94.5% of survey respondents still use their Venezuelan ID cards (cedula venezolana) as an identification document (ID)**, whereas only 29.1% have a PPT. Not having a valid ID in Colombia creates multiple barriers to access rights and services, as this study found.

Figure 1. Gender Distribution of Survey Respondents

Source: Compiled by the IEA Research Team (2022).

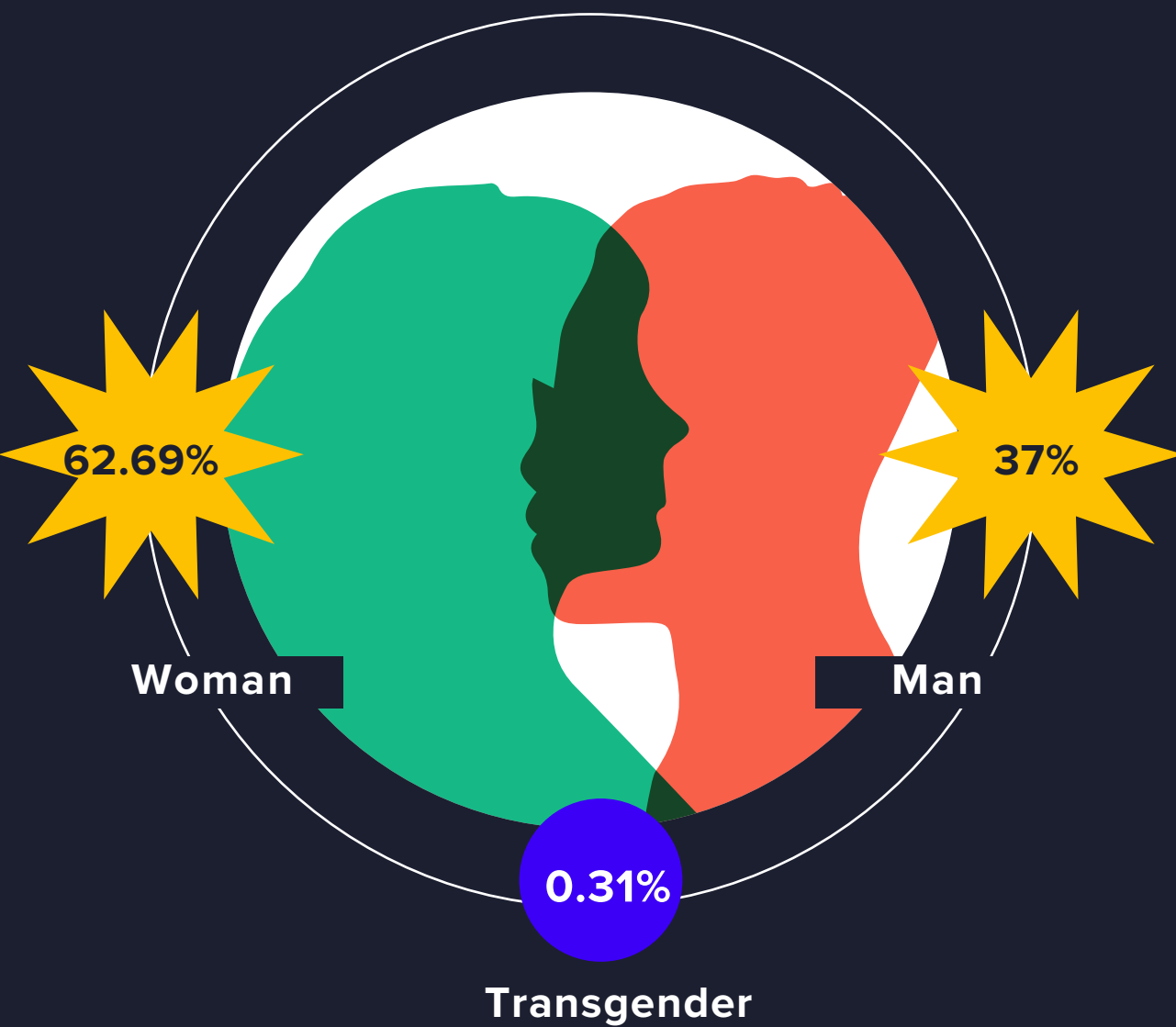


Figure 2. Demographic Pyramid based on Gender and Age

Source: Compiled by the IEA Research Team (2022).

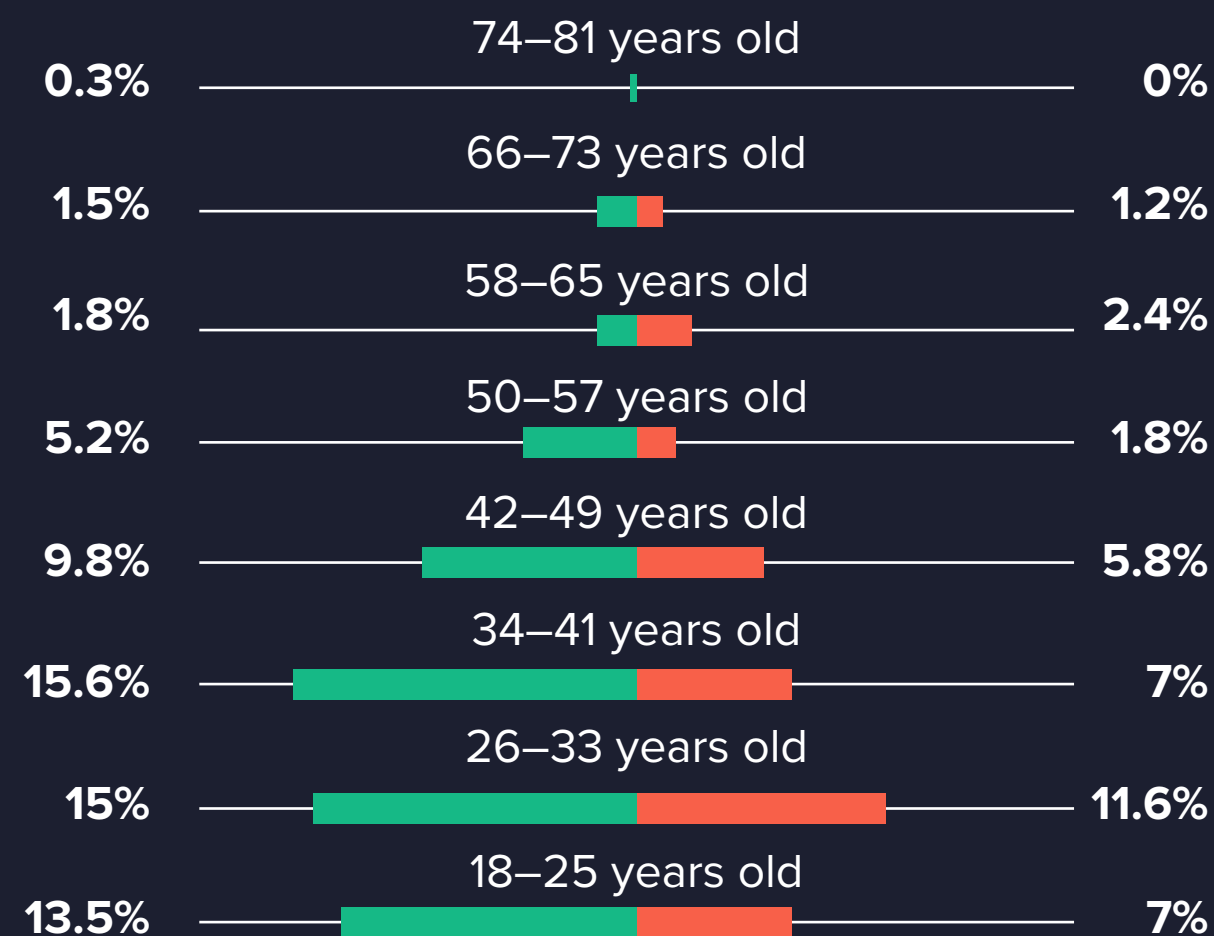


Figure 3. Survey Respondent Distribution Based on ID

Source: Compiled by the IEA Research Team (2022).

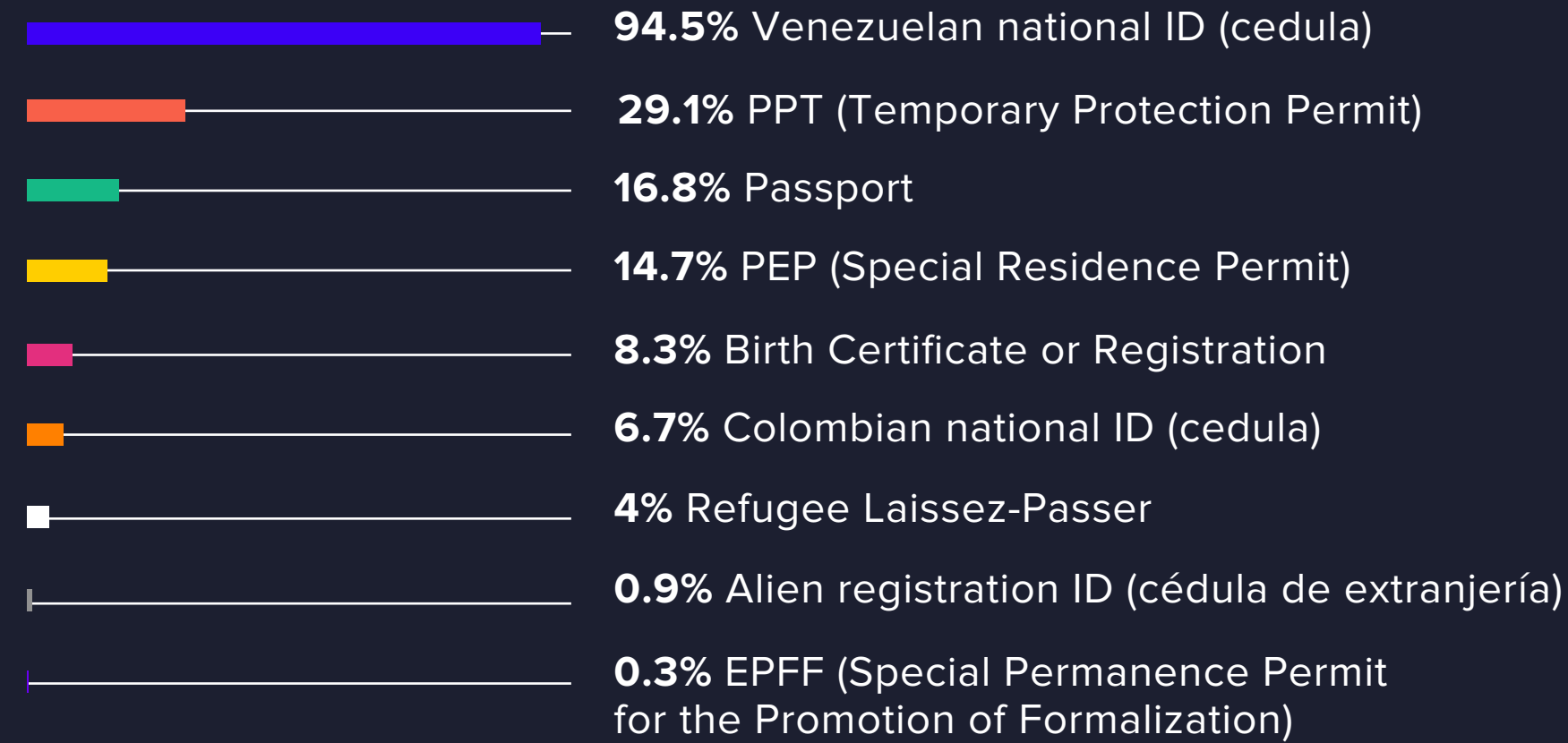
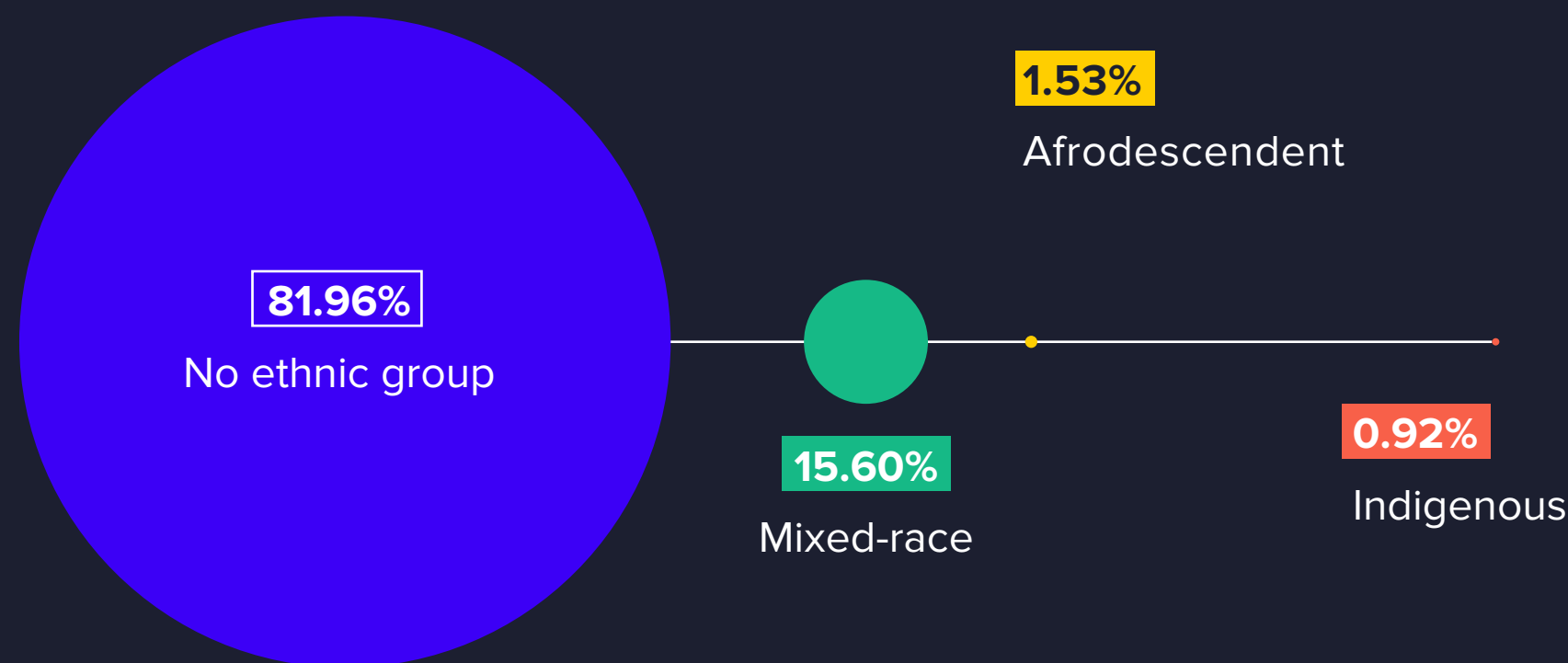


Figure 4. Migrant, Refugee, and Returnee Ethnic Groups

Source: Compiled by the IEA Research Team (2022).



ETHNIC AND RACIAL SELF-IDENTIFICATION

Graph 4 shows the ethnic and racial categories contemplated during the study, which are the same used by DANE: (i) indigenous; (ii) biracial; (iii) black, Afro-descendant, Afro-Colombian, Raizal (Afro-Caribbean), or Palenquero (Creole); (iv) Romani, and (v) no ethnic group. Most survey respondents did not identify with any of these categories. According to focus group discussions and the survey team, this is largely because respondents are not aware of this ethnic approach. This aspect can be challenging due to its social, cultural, demographic, and political implications.

In an interview conducted for this study with the Center for Afro-Diasporic Studies of ICESI University, the IEA research team explored how migrants' lack of self-identification across ethnic and racial categories may be explained by the different historical, social, and political processes experienced in Colombia and Venezuela. In particular, with its 1991 Constituent Assembly and Political Constitution, Colombia began conceptualizing its condition as a polyethnic and multicultural nation. Building on these political processes, Colombian citizens have been self-identifying across ethnic and racial categories, unlike their Venezuelan counterparts.

CALI AS A PLACE OF RESIDENCE

The survey shows that 90.1% of migrant respondents currently live in neighborhoods classified as strata 1, 2, and 3 (Map 1).⁵ Stratum 3 neighborhoods host the largest share of respondents (40.7%), followed by strata 2 (31.9%) and 1 (17.4%). This distribution is consistent with migrants' socioeconomic status because the strata where this population lives have the lowest rent and public service costs..

Among survey respondents, **91.7% stated their wish to remain in Cali**, with 82% of them expressing they already have friends and family in the city. Having friends and family in the city is an aspect that favors migration to Cali because these **personal relationships function as support networks, points of attraction, and information sources, all of which are key for new migrants.**

In addition to family and friend support networks, focus group participants expressed perceiving Cali as an open and receptive city for migrants, making it a city where they are less likely to experience xenophobia, in contrast with other areas in Colombia. A general explanation migrants gave for this perception is that, historically, Cali residents have been hosts to internal migrants who have been displaced from their homes by the Colombian armed conflict.

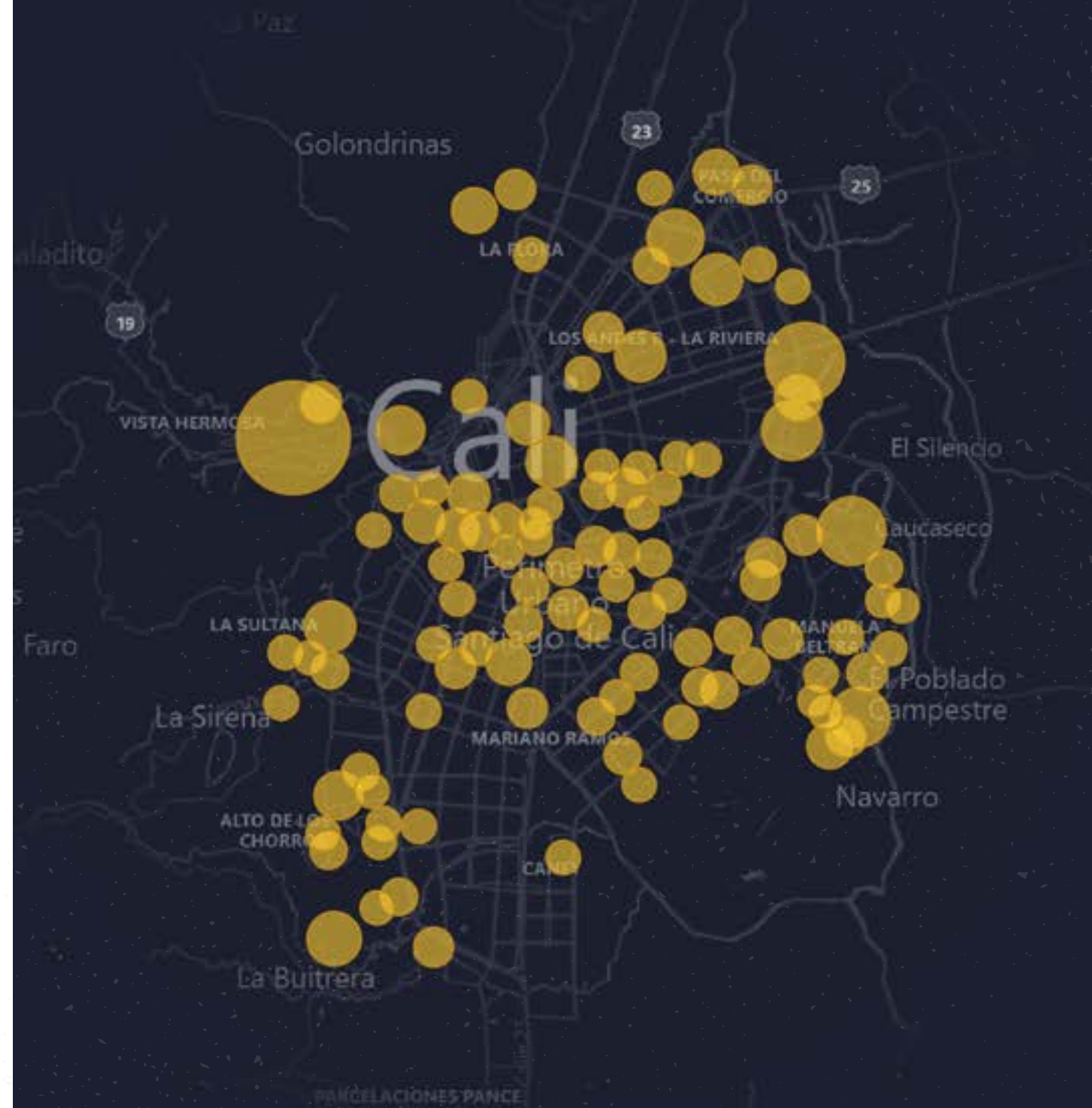


I can say it was Cali because, in general people—we cannot say everyone—but in general, they are more receptive toward Venezuelans. And it seems to me that, for other Venezuelans who have settled in the city, it is precisely about this warm

⁵ In Colombia, housing is officially classified into six strata based on socioeconomic factors and for administrative purposes (for example, to progressively charge for public services and establish progressive property taxes). Stratum 1 corresponds with the lowest socioeconomic level and 6 with the highest.

Map 1. Spatial Distribution for Survey Respondents by Neighborhood

Source: Compiled by the IEA Research Team using OpenStreetMap from Microsoft Corporation (2022).



Percentage	Zone	Commune
33,5%	Oriente	7, 13, 14, 15, 16, 21
24,5%	Oeste	1, 19, 18, 20
22,9%	Centro	3, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12
17,4%	Norte	2, 4, 5, 6
1,5%	Sur	17, 22

welcome, this warm treatment. And it is even as though it is a little similar to the warmth of people in many cities in Venezuela.

—Woman 38 years old, migrant community focus group

Another element that may support migrants' intention to remain in Cali is the low cost of living of the city when compared to other metropolitan areas such as Bogotá and Medellín. In 2018, *Forbes* magazine considered Cali as one of the cheapest places to live in the world; for example, it has rent prices between 25% and 30% cheaper than Medellín ([Forbes 2018](#)).

Alongside Barranquilla and Bucaramanga, Cali currently has one of the cheapest rent markets in Colombia, and according to 2022 consumer index price data, the city is among the least expensive (together with Florencia and Popayán) with an annual index of 7.85% ([La República 2022](#); DANE 2022). Focus group participants underscored this cost-of-living advantage as a major selling point for remaining in Cali.

Because of low rent and public service costs, migrants tend to settle in neighborhoods like Terrón Colorado, Montebello, Aguacatal, and Floralia. In addition to cost-of-living advantages, migrants and host community members also expressed a generalized perception that it is precisely in these lower-income neighborhoods where migrants tend to receive greater support.



At least where I live, there are people with an income even lower than ours, but, when we got there, they still said “here, neighbor, this is for you,” or “have this for your kid, have this for you.”

—Woman 38 years old, migrant community focus group

Figure 5. Survey Respondent Distribution based on Education Level

Source: Compiled by the IEA Research Team (2022).

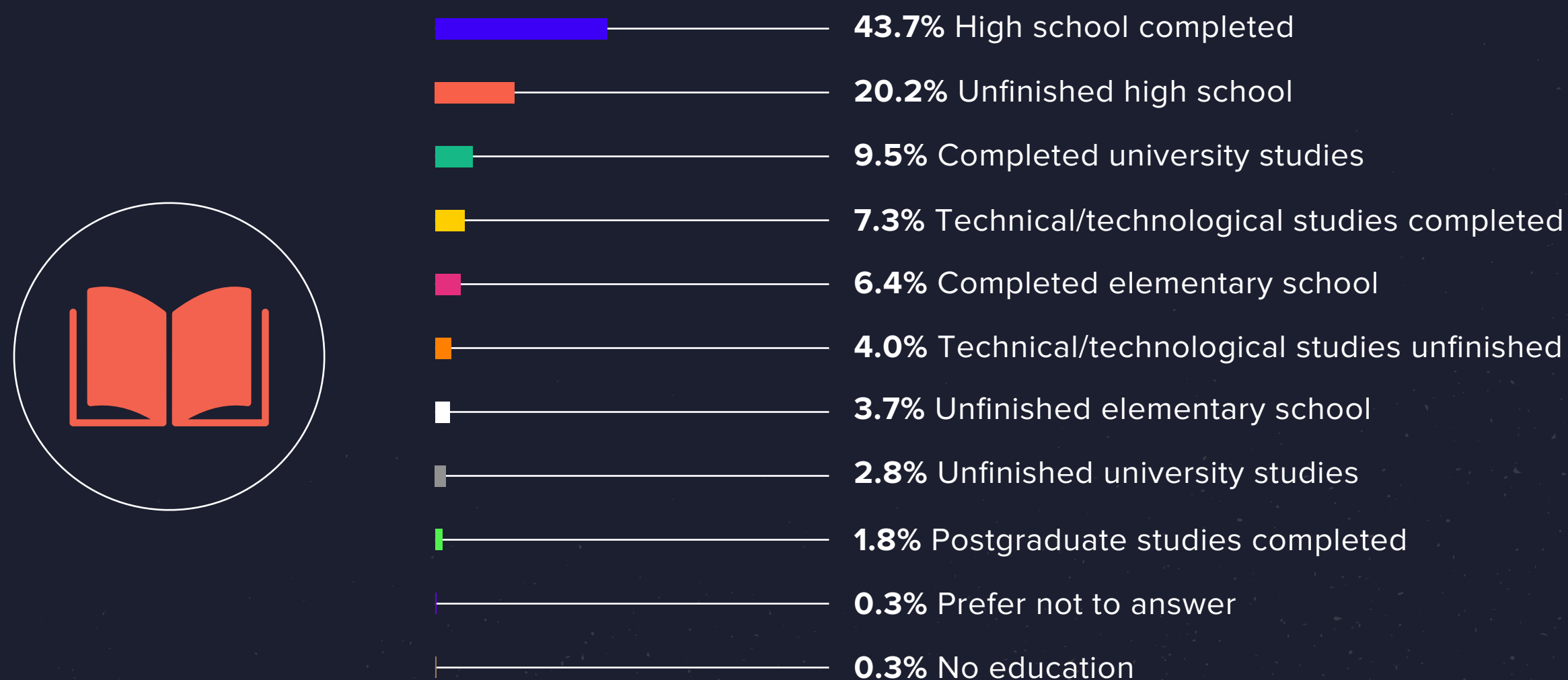
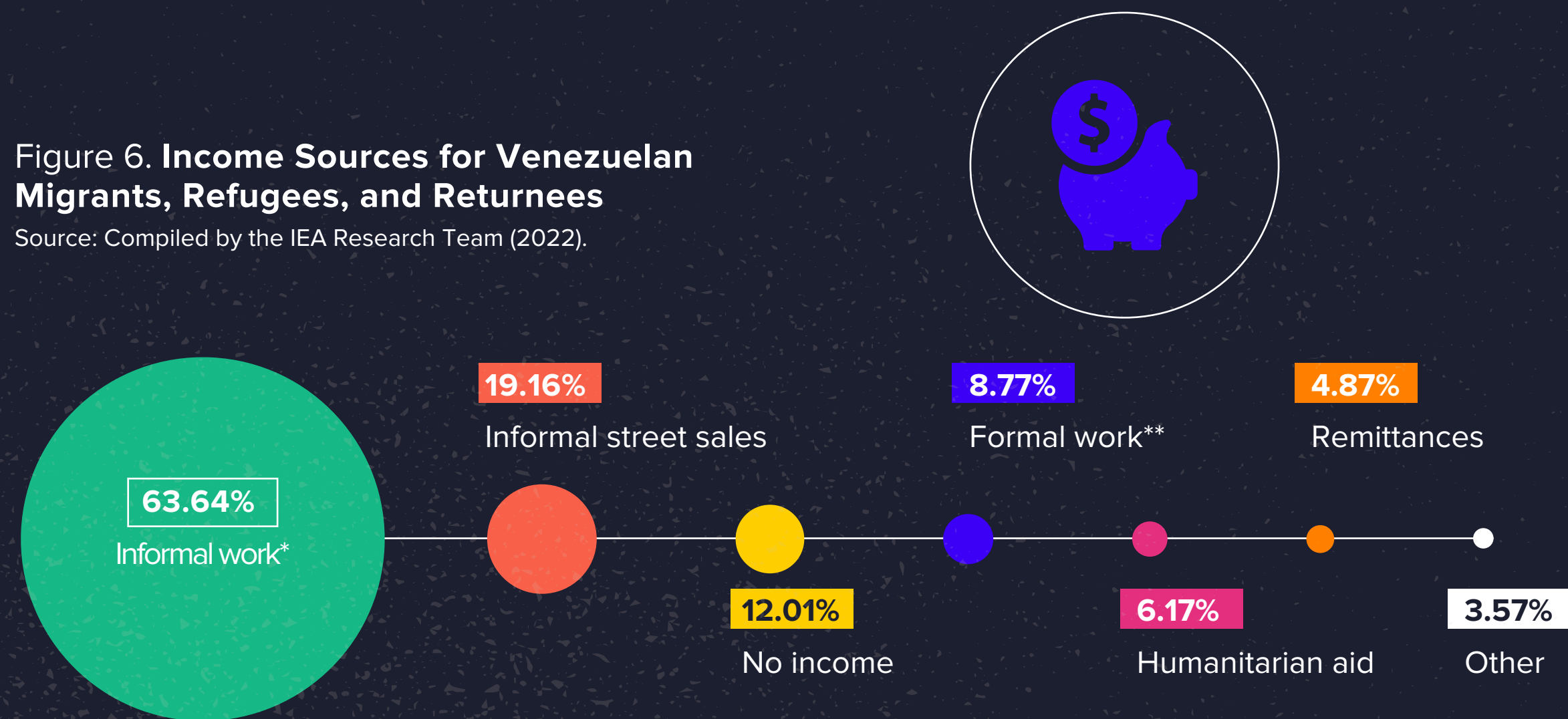


Figure 6. Income Sources for Venezuelan Migrants, Refugees, and Returnees

Source: Compiled by the IEA Research Team (2022).



* This takes into account cases where there is an "employer" who demands working hours and specific labor, but there are no social benefits and/or no contract.

** Under formal contract

EDUCATION LEVEL

Figure 5 shows the educational levels of survey respondents. For example, 44% finished secondary education, but only a small percentage completed a technical or tertiary education degree. Of the 18.7% of respondents who have a technical, undergraduate, or postgraduate degree, only 3.28% stated having completed the certification process to make their degrees valid in Colombia, showcasing the barriers migrants face in improving their economic conditions. **Survey respondents and focus group participants indicated that the high costs of degree certifications in Colombia are a major reason they have not done so, in addition to administrative challenges with the consular office.**

INCOME SOURCES AND EMPLOYMENT

Only 8.8% of survey respondents state they have a formal job. **As shown in Figure 6, most survey respondents indicated they obtain their income through informal work, which implies irregular employment interactions with no social security or decent conditions for workers.**

Income and employment results show a clear lack of protection and economic vulnerability for migrants, which leaves them exposed to labor exploitation, unfair pay, and a lack of access to the national social security system (including access to health care for workers and their families). This situation worsens when considering that 52.6% of survey respondents stated being economically responsible for three people or less.

Survey results are consistent in a city like Cali, which has high employment informality rates that appear to be more favorable for migrants. For example, between February and April 2022, DANE data show an informality rate of 48% in Cali, a rate above that in cities like Bogotá and Medellín, where the rates were 33.1% and 42.2%, respectively ([DANE, 2022](#)). **Similarly, migrants in focus groups expressed perceiving Cali as a place “with greater opportunities,” reflecting how the city’s high informality rates may allow this population to enter the informal labor market more easily.**

IV



METHODOLOGY

The objective of this study is to conduct an information ecosystem analysis (IEA) in the city of Cali. ⁶ This IEA seeks to understand and describe the relation between all dimensions of information supply and demand. The study used a mixed methodology with an explanatory sequential design, applying several quantitative and qualitative data collection techniques, including desk research, surveys, focus groups, and semi-structured interviews.

⁶ An IEA seeks to map the quantity and quality of media available to the target population (supply) and examine the way in which people—particularly migrants in Cali—find, understand, relate to, share, value, and trust the information available in their local context, regardless of whether this information comes from the media (demand).

Table 1. **Research phases**

Source: Compiled by the IEA Research Team (2022).

	LOCATION	RESPONSES BY	QUANTITY
Surveys	Cali	Venezuelan migrants and asylum seekers, and Colombian returnees	327
Focus Groups	Cali	Migrant community in general, CSO leaders, host community, and migrant community (women)	48 participants
Interviews	Cali	International NGOs, local CSOs, local authorities, academic groups, and local leaders	8 people interviewed
Desk Research	National and local (in Cali)	Traditional media, digital media, and internet access	

Through its surveys, the IEA research team collected quantitative data using a questionnaire administered in person in the urban area of Cali. It selected geographical locations to administer the survey at random, taking into particular consideration spaces where there was a greater concentration and diversity of survey participants, as shown in Table 2.

Table 2. **Survey fact sheet**

Source: Compiled by the IEA Research Team (2022).

POPULATION	VENEZUELAN MIGRANTS AND COLOMBIAN RETURNEES IN CALI OVER THE AGE OF 18
Survey administration dates	April 5, 2022, to May 1, 2022
Universe	59.571*
Sample	327 surveys
Margin of error	7%
Confidence level	93%
Sampling type	Simple random
Collection technique	In-person survey

* Number of migrants in Cali according to the January 31, 2021, report from the National Office for Migration.

In addition, the IEA research team conducted a **desk review of local media between May 2021 and March 2022 focused** on YouTube content by local public television channels. The team used the results from this review to further develop the information access section of this study.

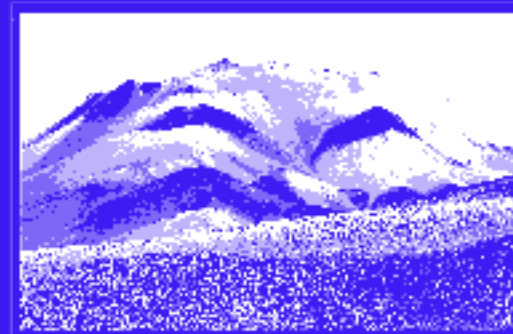
V



MEDIA LANDSCAPE

Article 20 of Colombia's Political Constitution protects freedom of speech and the right to information:

All people have a right to express and share their thoughts and opinions, to inform and receive information that is truthful and impartial, and to establish communication media. These rights are freedoms and constitute a social responsibility. The right to rectify on the grounds of equality is guaranteed. There will be no censure. (Political Constitution 1991, Art. 20)



Colombia has acknowledged the right to information as a means for people to “interrelate across different contexts, using different tools and channels (including information and communication technologies) to exchange information, ideas, and opinions for mutual enrichment” (Ministry of Information and Communication Technologies [MinTIC] 2021). Within this context, Colombia has a varied media supply that the IEA research team analyzed below, **underscoring that the material reviewed did not offer information to determine migrants’ specific access to and use of it.**

TELEVISION

In Colombia, 89.7% of households (as of 2019) have access to a television device. Access is higher in urban areas (93.8% of households with access) than in rural ones (76.3%).

Technological advances such as digital television have increased access to free-of-charge channels for consumers in rural areas. Colombia has four public television channels, two private ones, and over eight subnational ones that disseminate different types of information (MinTIC [2022](#)). The private channels are Caracol TV and RCN, which have the largest audiences. There are also paid television operators that offer both national and (additional) international channels.

RADIO

Radio has the highest national coverage, reaching all 32 departments in Colombia with 1,704 radio stations. Furthermore, 80% of stations work on an FM frequency, including 624 commercial, 756 community, and 324 public interest stations (MinTIC [2022](#)).

According to the Continuous Study on Radial Audiences (ECAR), between November 2021 and February 2022 Colombian radio audiences preferred tuning in to musical stations. This trend includes audiences in Cali, where there are 35 registered stations, most being national chains with local programming. Cali also has “pirate” radios, which are illegal stations offering musical, religious, and informative programming.



Tropicana Estéreo and Radio Uno are the most popular radio stations in Cali, with mixed programming that varies between music, information, and audience participation. Cali also has two community stations, 93.8 and 96 FM, that have a limited geographical reach. Because of this limited reach, the IEA research team could not analyze the functioning of these community stations.

PRINTED MEDIA

Only 13% of Colombians read printed newspapers, even though these have a wide national coverage ([Monitoreo de Medios 2015](#)). There are several national newspapers from large publishers, including *El Espectador*, *El Tiempo*, and *Semana*, as well as other free press, free or low-priced, and tabloid newspapers such as *Extra* and *Q'Hubo*. At the local level, Cali has one extensively recognized newspaper, *El País*, which is the fifth most popular nationally. Popular low-priced newspapers have also become a rapidly consumed information source, with limited analysis, among local audiences.

INTERNET AND CONNECTIVITY

Acknowledging the internet's influence on information supply and demand, the IEA research team considered internet and connectivity based on fixed and mobile networks. At the national level, there are 8.25 million fixed networks with a distribution of 16 networks for every 100 residents. Network quality, access, and speed depend on user payment capacity, with networks in Stratum 4 and up reporting the greatest speeds (MinTIC 2021). With approximately 20 million registered networks as of September 2021, mobile internet access exceeds its fixed counterparts and has a distribution to 39.2 per every 100 residents accessing these networks (MinTIC 2021).

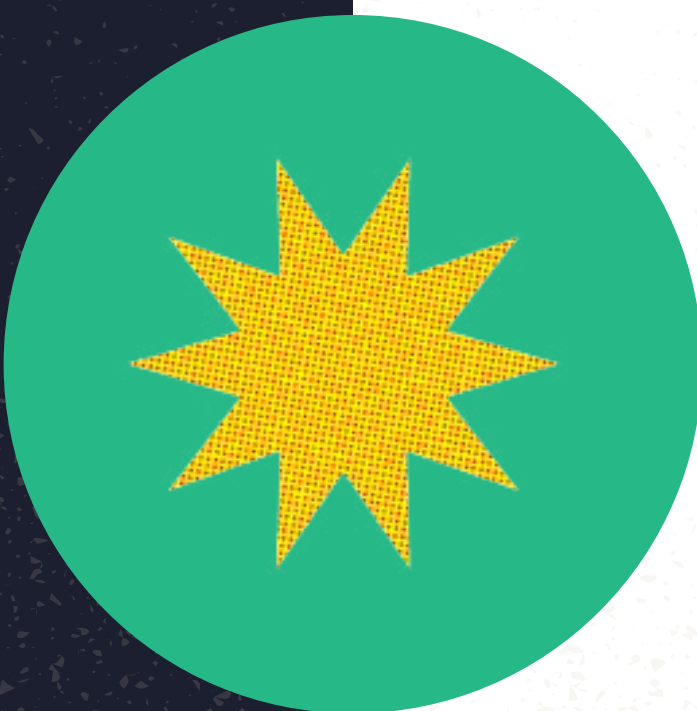
Internet services (both fixed and mobile) are primarily provided by four private operators. According to nPerf's map of Cali networks—which is based on user measurements on the ground—the 4G Tigo, Claro,

and Movistar networks have a low coverage in eastern precincts despite being the most used operators. The areas with the lowest internet access due to limited service coverage are precincts 1, 14, 15, 16, 18, 20, and 21, areas that have a greater percentage of strata 1 and 2 households. ([Nperf, 2022](#)).

Table 4. **Informative Digital Media—Cali**

Source: Compiled by the IEA Research Team (2022)

NAME	SOCIAL MEDIA	AUDIENCE
Todos por Cali	Twitter @TodosporCali_	24,400 followers
Cali noticias	@calinoticias3	405 followers
¡Qué pasa en Cali, ve!	@quepasaencalive	26,300 followers
	https://www.facebook.com/quepasaencalive/	239,972 followers
Web Noticias Cali	@WNCOCali	2,133 followers
	https://www.facebook.com/WNCOCali	7,674 followers
CaliWeb	@CaliWebCo	145,900 followers
Cali OK Noticias	@calioknoticias	22,400 followers
EIPueblo	@EIPuebloCali	26,900 followers
Cali 24 Horas	@Cali24Horas	14,700 followers
CALI ES CALI	@CaliesCaliCOL	153,900 followers
	https://www.facebook.com/CaliesCaliOFICIAL/	829,772 followers
Entérate, Cali	https://es-la.facebook.com/EnterateCali/	642,877 followers
	@EnterateCali	403,700 followers
Tu Barco	@tubarconews	40,900 followers
	https://www.facebook.com/tubarco/	597,917 followers





Internet availability guarantees access to a plethora of information. Digital media contribute to pushing forward new processes of knowledge appropriation and reframing. People are not only accessing the digital versions of traditional media but also other informative digital initiatives. In Cali, 11 digital initiatives provide information produced by local public institutions, news agencies, national and international entertainment media, and influencing figures. This information, however, lacks depth, analysis, and sourcing.

Regarding information relevant to the migrant population, public institutions alongside NGOs and local CSOs have led the sharing of relevant information through digital platforms and social media to better guide migrants and promote activities that benefit them.

PUBLIC INSTITUTION, CSO, AND NGO MEDIA CHANNELS

In Cali, several public institutions, private entities, NGOs, and CSOs have led service provision to migrants. These parties have their own digital presence to guide migrants and other target populations, offer them services, and promote activities for them using channels such as websites and Facebook pages. Table 5 shows a list of these channels.

Tabla 5. List of Public Institutions, NGOs, and CSOs offering Information for Migrants

Source: Compiled by the IEA Research Team (2022)

ORGANIZATION	ACTIVITY
Pastoral para los Migrantes - Archdiocese of Cali	Shelter, guidance center, soup kitchen, and other community services
Embassy of Venezuela in Colombia	Consular services and information on embassy activities
Project Migración Venezuela	Journalism and observatory by Semana magazine
National Office for Migration	Migration procedures, regularization services (including PPT processes), and migration data publication
Personería de Cali	Information and reporting on human rights, citizen participation and oversight, and protection services
IOM- UN- National Office for Migration	Guidance services, campaigns, information, data publication, and other resources
UNHCR- United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees	Guidance services, access to rights, international protection, humanitarian assistance, and campaigns
Cali Major's Office	Access to health care, education, guidance, and support services; campaigns and right guarantees
Colombia Check	Information, fact-checking, and audio reports
Casa Matria - Undersecretariat for gender equality	Services to prevent and address GBV, including service access road maps and legal guidance
Fupad- Fundación Panamericana para el Desarrollo	Calls for proposals, strengthening, and social development activities
Heartland Alliance	Security and justice and access to health care, protection, and well-being
Fundatransvida	Guidance and social assistance
Convenz- Colonia de Venezolanos en Colombia	Guidance and cultural, employment, sport, and social inclusion activities
Fundación Alianzas Solidarias	Guidance, campaigns, GBV prevention, education, and well-being activities
Colombia nos UNE	Valle del Cauca Office for Migrant Services
University ICESI – Legal Office	Free legal assistance and guidance

BARRIERS TO MIGRANT REPRESENTATION

The IEA desk review phase showed that the **currently available measurements, data, and surveys are potentially obscuring migrant use, access, and consumption of media and technology.**

Surveys such as ECAR take samples from people registered on national databases for public services. However, migrants are frequently not registered in these databases due to their irregular or in-process migratory status. As a result, monthly phone calls to inquire after radio audiences are unlikely to reach migrants, obscuring their access and use of this service. Similarly, prepaid mobile phone service registries do not accurately reflect migrant users. According to the most recent official data, the increase in prepaid mobile phone service registries is greater than the Colombian population growth. However, in official data, there is no reference to the migrant population, who could be contributing to increases in prepaid services but who are not purchasing these services directly themselves (rather through Colombian citizens) because their documentation is not accepted for service purchases.

In contrast to these limitations, in October 2021, DANE published its Migration Trends Survey, which took samples from migrant and returnee families identified through DANE's National Household Survey (January and June 2021). The purpose of DANE's survey was to collect information on reasons for migration, access to employment, changes in income and remittances, exposure to GBV and xenophobia, and changes in reproductive health ([DANE 2021](#)). On the question, "Through which means did you find or receive information on citizenship pathways, residence permits, and the PPT?" between 57% and 60% of survey participants responded that they use social media to keep themselves informed ([DANE 2021](#)). These data show how important social media are for the migrant population and the role they play in information access.

The IEA media landscape analysis underscores two main factors in migrant information access. First, migrants are being obscured by tools that cannot adequately capture their access and use of media. Under-registering migrants puts this population at a disadvantage because they participate in local and national economic dynamics without being seen. In turn, their obscuring prevents public institutions from designing adequate policies that consider this population, exposing migrants to a greater risk of having their rights violated as users and workers. Second, the migrant population relies significantly on digital platforms and social media to keep themselves informed. **Thus, access to trustworthy information and integrating document options on digital platforms are key first steps in migrants being able to access and exercise their basic rights.**





FINDINGS

INFORMATION NEEDS

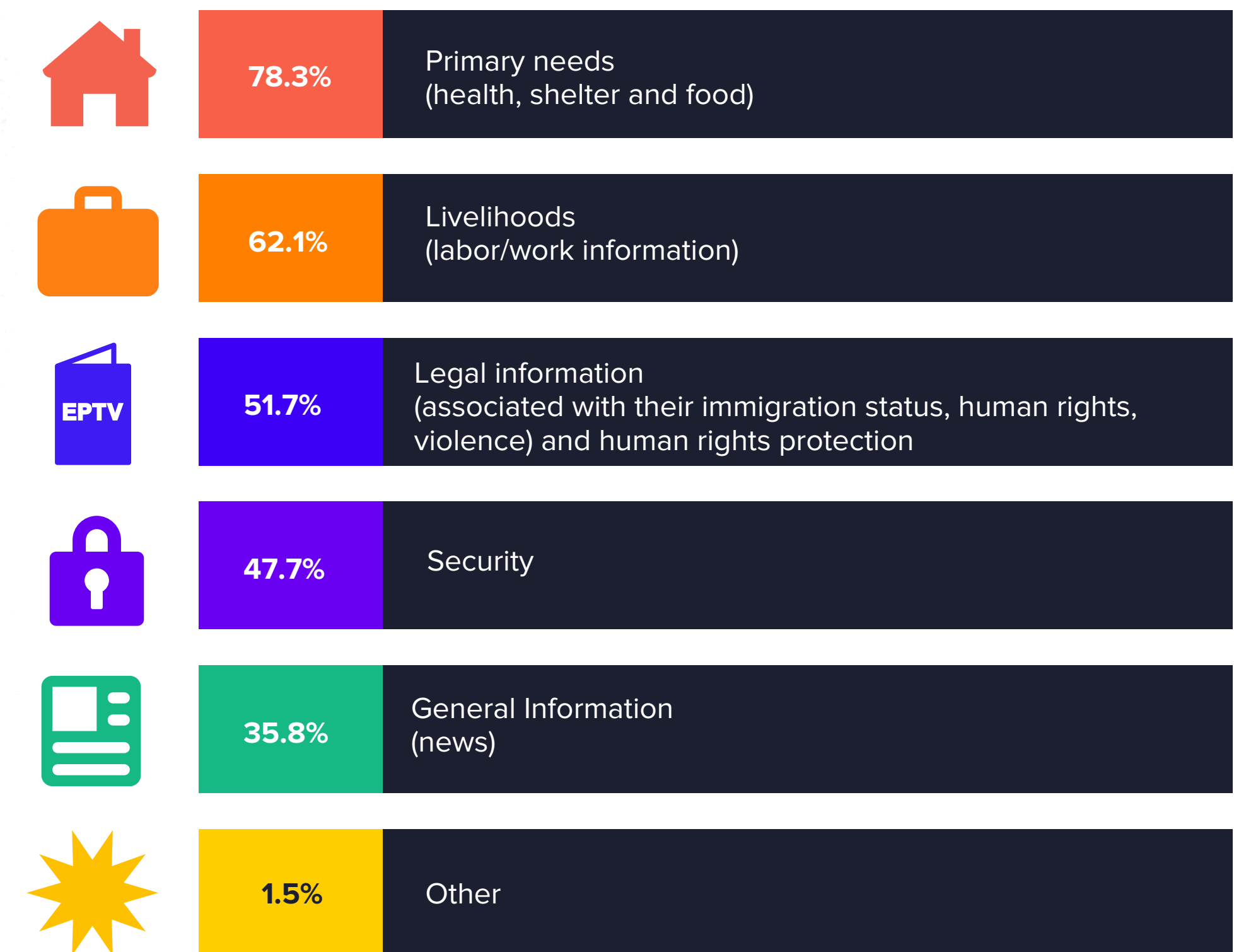
Findings from focus groups, interviews, and data collected through the survey of 327 migrants, refugees, asylum seekers, and Colombian returnees allowed the IEA research team to confirm that the main information needs for migrants in Cali are as follows: (1) **basic needs**, meaning **knowledge on how to access health care, housing, and food services**, with 78.3% of participants identifying these as a main information need; (2) **livelihoods** knowledge, especially **information on employment**, with 62.1% of participants identifying these as a main information need; and (3) **legal and rights protection knowledge**, with 51.7% of participants identifying these as a main information need.

1. TOPICS WHERE MIGRANTS REQUIRE INFORMATION

The IEA research team found information barriers primarily on topics related to health care, employment, and education, which are also migrants' main concerns in Cali, as shown in Figure 7. Both health care and education are high priorities for migrants, especially those families with minors.

Figure 7. **Priority Topics where Migrants require Information for Life in Colombia**

Source: Compiled by the IEA Research Team (2022).



INFORMATION ON BASIC NEEDS: HEALTH CARE, EMPLOYMENT, AND EDUCATION

Among survey participants, 89% responded that obtaining information on how to access medical services in Cali is one of their main priorities, as shown in Figure 8. This is relevant when considering that information on health care access is one of the main barriers identified in focus groups with migrants and migrant community leaders.

As shown in Figure 9, there is a relation between information needs on access to medical services and the high number of survey participants who are not registered with the Colombian health-care system. Most survey participants who had an irregular migratory status expressed being unable to access health-care services, primarily due to their lack of documentation to register with the subsidized health-care system⁷ and with the national database for the Identification System for Potential Beneficiaries of Social Programs (SISBEN). As of the writing of this report, there are 371,970 Venezuelan migrants registered in the SISBEN database, which represents only 17% of migrants in Colombia (SISBEN 2022).

Figure 9 shows that 2.5% of irregular migrants in Cali believe they are registered with the paid health care system, which is not possible due to their migratory status. This further underscores a lack of understanding or adaptation to the Colombian health-care system. Likewise, 26.1% of regular migrants are not registered with the health-care system, showcasing the social vulnerability facing this population, regardless of their migratory status.

⁷ Health care in Colombia is a two-tiered system. One tier, the paid regime, covers citizens who have the ability to pay for care, and the other, the subsidized regime, offers subsidized care for those unable to pay.

Figure 8. Information Migrants require on Basic Needs (Health Care, Housing, and Food)

Source: Compiled by the IEA Research Team (2022).

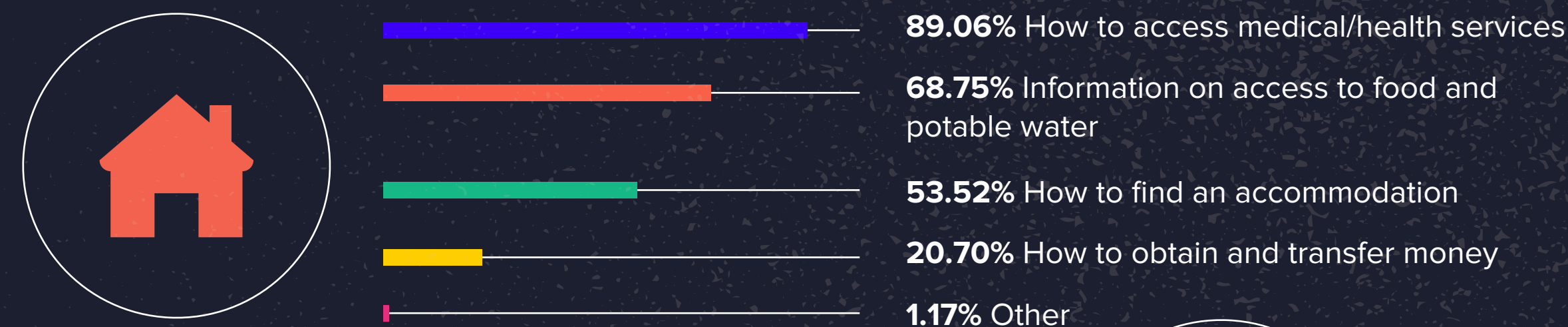


Figure 9. Survey Participant Distribution across the Colombian Health Care System and by Migratory Status

Source: Compiled by the IEA Research Team (2022).

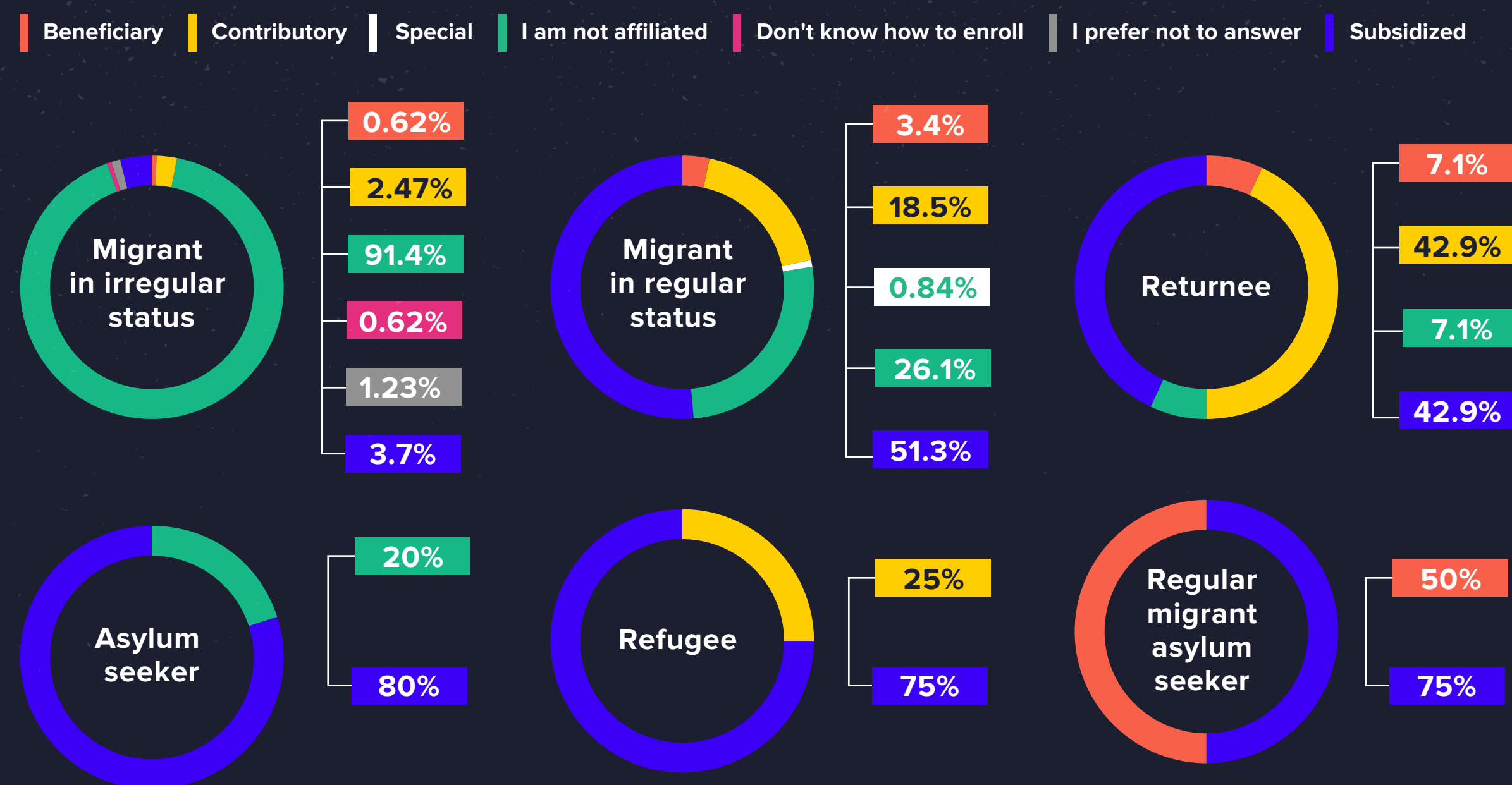


Figure 10. Information Migrants need on Livelihoods (Employment Information)

Source: Compiled by the IEA Research Team (2022).

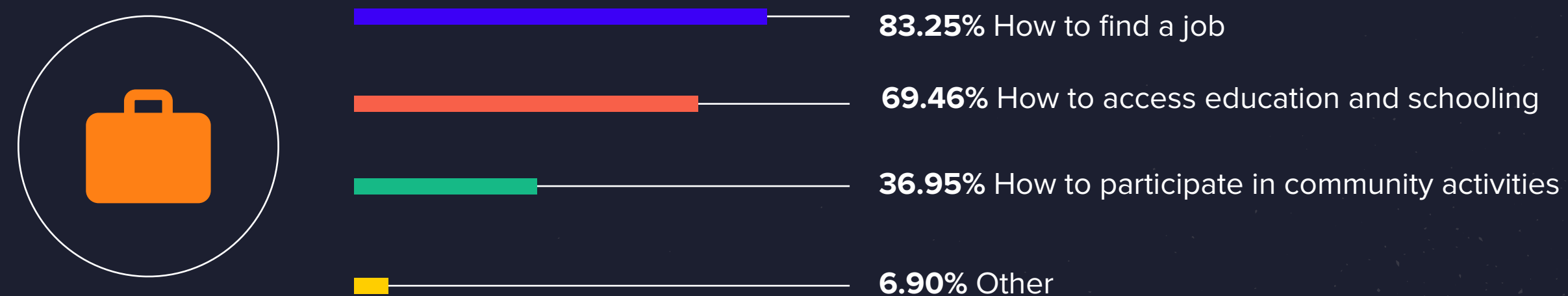


Table 6. Survey Participant Distribution by Income Source and Migratory Status

Source: Compiled by the IEA Research Team (2022)

TYPE OF INCOME	MIGRANT IN IRREGULAR STATUS	MIGRANT IN REGULAR STATUS	REGULAR MIGRANT ASYLUM SEEKER	REFUGEE	RETURNEE	ASYLUM SEEKER
Humanitary aid (Government, NGO, International cooperation)	2.5%	11.1%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Remittances	4.3%	4.4%	0%	50%	0%	0%
No income	13.6%	10.4%	33.3%	0%	0%	0%
Formal work	0%	13.3%	0%	25%	37.5%	0%
Informal work per days	74.7%	46.7%	33.3%	75%	25%	80%
Informal street vending	22.8%	12.6%	0%	50%	12.5%	20%
Other	3.1%	3.0%	0%	0%	12.5%	0%

Focus group participants reported migrants being frequently denied health-care services or being required to pay out of pocket due to their lack of a valid ID. In some cases, migrants have had to move around the entire city to receive medical services, often only managing to receive these with the mediation of a health public officer or with support from a humanitarian organization, as reported by an IOM staff member. Participants reported that the San Juan de Dios, Carlos Holmes Trujillo, Alfonso López, Carlos Carmona, and the departmental hospitals are the most popular ones for providing services to the migrant population in Cali.



At least in my case, when I got pregnant, I only received medical attention after the fourth month because the hospital needed to approve some agreements. We needed to have all our documentation in order, or we needed to pay out of pocket, which was difficult because at the time my husband didn't have a job.

—Woman, 37 years old, migrant focus group

INFORMATION ON LIVELIHOODS

Figure 10 shows how the IEA research team broke down information needs on livelihoods into four subtopics: how to find employment, how to access education, how to participate in community life, and other. **Among participants, 83.2% expressed needing to know how to find a job in Cali.**

Inclusion in job markets was a recurring topic among focus group participants. Through focus group discussions, the IEA research team observed how migrants rely on networks of family and friends to find employment, especially informal jobs because their irregular migratory status does not allow them to participate in formal work. This coincides with national figures that show the migrant population has an informality rate of 74.5%, mainly doing jobs in the service industry, customer service, and street vending (Sisbén, 2022).



I had some family here [. . .] and they said, “Come here, there are a bit more opportunities here.” So as soon as a week after getting here, [my partner] got a job in carpentry and was making more money than some of those who were already here.

—Woman, 38 years old, migrant focus group

Migrant information needs on finding employment are related to informality rates among survey participants. Informal jobs are highly unstable and frequently seasonal or hourly, becoming an unstable income source that is insufficient to cover migrants' basic needs, regardless of their migratory status. As a result, migrants are constantly searching for job opportunities.

According to survey findings, 22.3% of participants who have an informal job expressed feeling exposed to physical harm, including injury, assault, and work-related diseases. They also manifested feeling psychologically pressured, fearful, or threatened.

Several survey participants identified the informal sector as the most enabling work environment for hostilities or discrimination. Participants in host community focus group offered some reasoning behind this feature of informality. According to participants, host community members have interpreted migrants taking on informal jobs as a clear loss in opportunities for Colombian citizens.

When analyzing informality through a gender lens, the IEA research team found that of the 205 women surveyed, most expressed that their main sources of income were informal jobs, street vending, remittances, or humanitarian assistance. As shown in Figure 11, only 6.3% of women obtain their income through formal employment. **Women participating in focus groups mentioned having faced greater challenges entering and remaining in the workforce because they were pregnant or they had to take care of their children and families.** In turn, this leaves women in a highly vulnerable condition because they economically depend on their partners and families.



You tend to see many pregnant migrant women, which somewhat limits their employment access. And when we ask them if they have someone supporting them, we often cannot find anyone. Migrant families are large, with lots of children, but they have no social support when it comes to taking care of these children, and this becomes a barrier.
— Woman, interview, Fundación Carvajal

An irregular migratory status is not the only condition limiting migrant access to formal employment. Employer lack of information is also an important factor. According to Fundación Carvajal, which leads employment inclusion projects for the migrant community, an employer's lack of information on the PPT and on processes and costs to employ a foreigner constitutes another barrier to formal work. This is compounded by barriers such as age discrimination for certain job types:



For some jobs, being aged 35, 38, or 40 is already old. And this is difficult, it is depressing because it makes you wonder, "what do I do now?" You could start your own thing, but you don't have the economic capacity to be an entrepreneur. So, again, you have to figure how to make ends meet.
—Woman, 38 years old, migrant community focus group

The difficult procedures and costs of certifying tertiary education diplomas obtained abroad for practice in Colombia constitute another barrier to formal employment access. As shown in Figure 12, **most migrants who have completed tertiary education have an informal job.** Only 21.3% of surveyed participants with a tertiary education degree have formal employment, and this employment may not necessarily be in their field of study.

Figure 11. Income Sources for Surveyed Women

Source: Compiled by the IEA Research Team (2022).

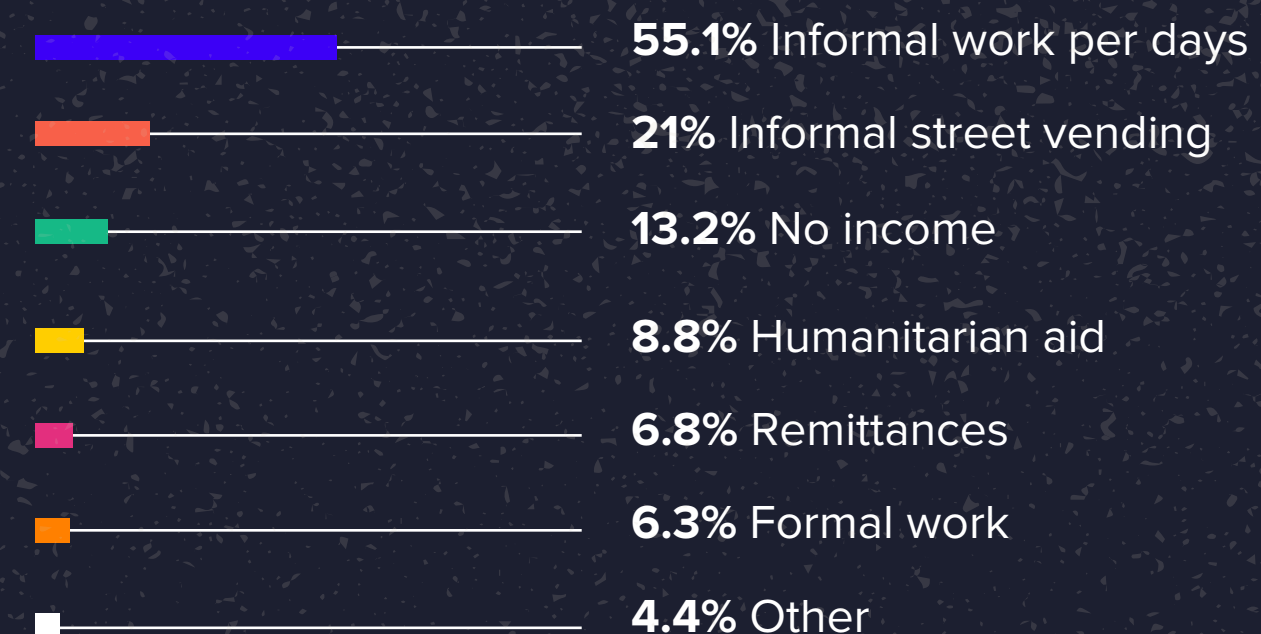
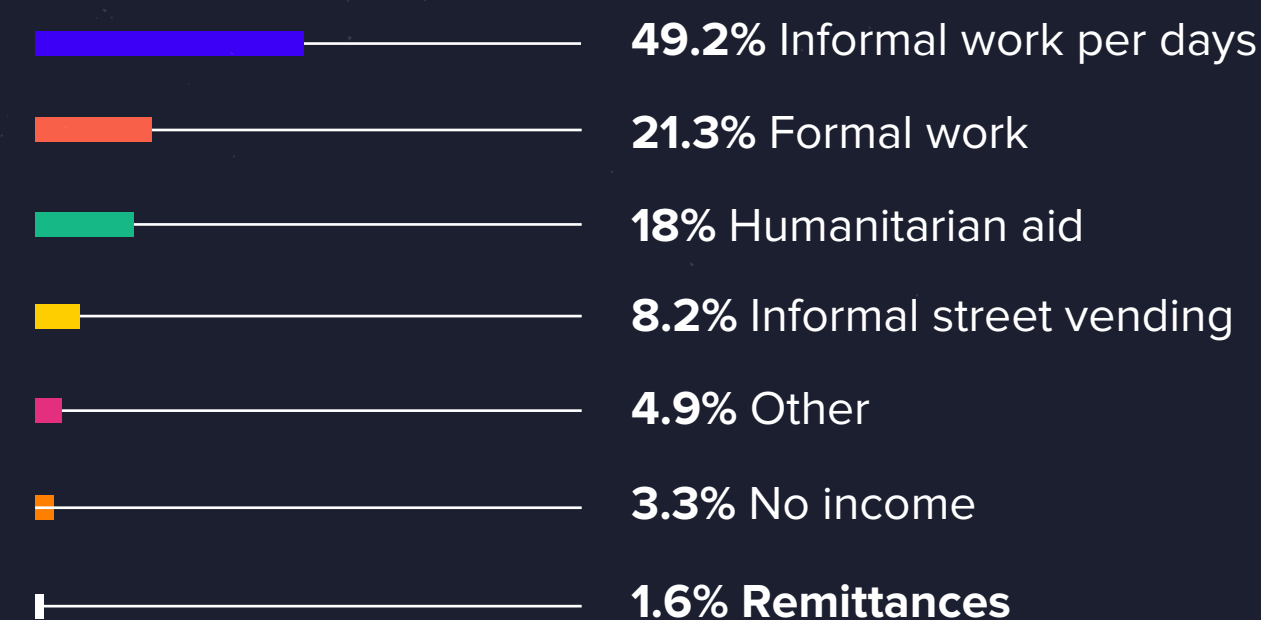
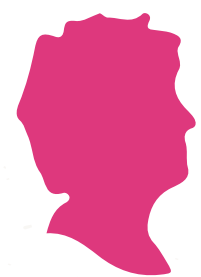


Figure 12. Income Sources for Migrants who have completed Tertiary Education Studies

Source: Compiled by the IEA Research Team (2022).



Regarding education, 69.46% of surveyed participants expressed needing information to access this service. Migrant focus groups reported (1) a lack of knowledge on the road map the Cali Education Secretariat has published to enroll minors in public schools and (2) a lack of access to education due to an irregular migratory status. Focus group participants also underscored the barriers migrant children and youth with disabilities face to enter the public school system. From **an intersectional approach, being a migrant is yet another layer that compounds the realities of a minor with disabilities, significantly increasing inequalities in education access.**



The problem was [the child's] migratory status because they were here irregularly. Even for my brother, it was very difficult to enroll his children. I mean, we had to do a multitude of things. In contrast, at least I had my special residence permit, so my children had access to education from the start.

—Woman, 38 years old, migrant community focus group

LEGAL INFORMATION

Figure 13 shows the priorities of the 169 surveyed participants who expressed interest in **legal information**, 53.8% of whom prioritized information on new migratory laws.

By triangulating the data collected, the IEA research team observed that between 2015 and 2021, migratory requirements, processes, timeframes, and interagency agreements were constantly modified, affecting everyone's

Figure 13. **Legal and Human Rights Protection Information that Migrants need**

Source: Compiled by the IEA Research Team (2022).



understanding of migration and human rights protection issues.⁸ At the national level, the Colombian government has issued many new and cumbersome administrative procedures for migrant access to public services.

However, the national government's **capacity to properly share new migratory laws, regularization mechanisms, formalization processes, and dispositions for migrant access to services and rights protection has been insufficient.** Thus, CSOs, grassroots organizations, and community leaders have taken on the role of advocating for, assisting, and supporting Venezuelan migrants, primarily by using instant messaging channels and word of mouth to reach migrant communities.



I don't know how other organizations work, but we have about 30 WhatsApp groups of 200 people each. We use these groups to send information and target migrants much more quickly.
—Migrant woman leader, 20 years old, migrant focus group

⁸ For additional information, see Unified System for Legal Information: *Protecting Migrant Rights*, <https://www.suin-juriscal.gov.co/legislacion/proteccionmigrantes.html>.

1.2 TOPICS MIGRANTS HAVE INFORMATION ON

Figure 14 shows the topics that migrants, refugees, and returnees have received the most information on in Cali. The top three topics are as follows:



1. Basic needs related with **health care, housing, and food**, with 53.5% of participants expressing they have received information on these matters. Of these participants, 78.3% manifested that they receive this information through **family and friends**, 57.1% through neighbors, and 23.4% through community or religious leaders.



2. Among survey participants, 46.8% expressed having received **general information**. Of these, 83% reported receiving general information from family and friends, 53.6% from neighbors, and 32% through digital media, including social media, email, and WhatsApp.



3. Among survey participants, 45.6% expressed having received **legal information**. Of these, 42.3% receive it from family and friends and 38.9% through digital media, including social media, email, and WhatsApp. In addition, 15% of participants also indicated the information received was clear.

The IEA research team's quantitative analysis for this report shows little difference between the topics the Venezuelan migrants in Cali prioritize. **It is worth noting that migrants**

receive information primarily through their family and friends. These communications are reinforced through instant messaging channels, such as WhatsApp, which have thus become a space for sharing information and promoting migrant inclusion.

As the Colombian government has struggled to reach the migrant population and create communication channels adapted to this population's information use and consumption, **CSOs, migrant leaders, and international agencies have had greater impact when sharing information through word of mouth and instant messaging channels.**

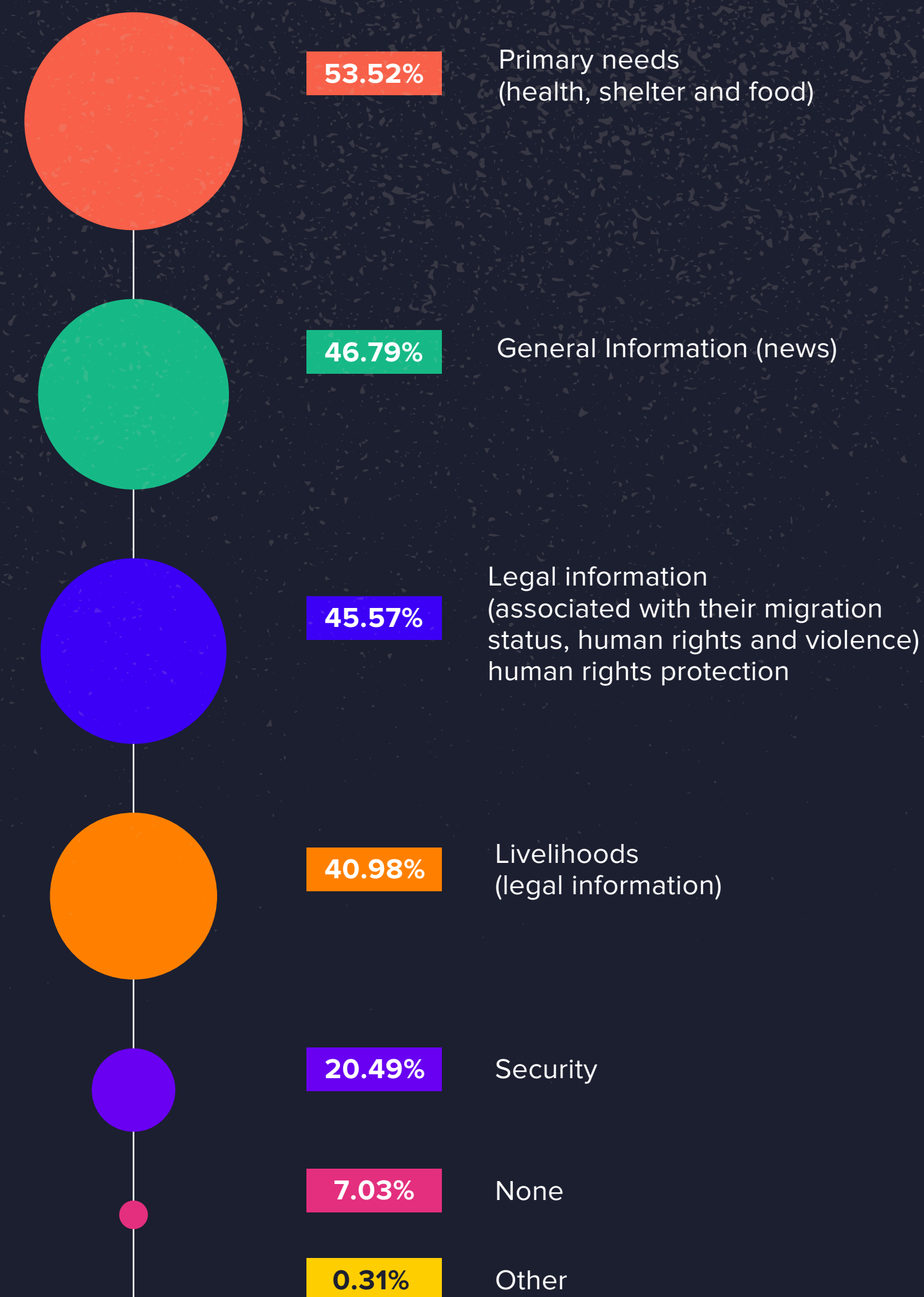


First, you seek a close relationship with some of the Venezuelan organizations in Cali that have a direct connection with the migrant population, who can mobilize information with ease so that it reaches the target population [. . .] Second, you seek relationships with organizations that have activities directly with the migrant population. And finally, word of mouth is used when you are about to launch a strategy so community leaders can share information through this mechanism, which may seem simple and not very elaborate, but it is quite effective.

—Man, interview, Border Management Office

CSOs underscore **that these top-down communication strategies work. However, they need to use WhatsApp as a channel to distribute information and coordinate activities effectively, especially in light of the COVID-19 pandemic.**

Figure 14. **Topics Migrants have received Information on**
Source: Compiled by the IEA Research Team (2022).





We work hand in hand with social leaders, even with Venezuelan leaders if they are doing community work. We work with them to promote our programs, and we also share information through our own communication channels. Because of the pandemic—and that’s the thing, programs for the Venezuelan population were just taking off right as the pandemic started—we had to turn to digital communications, communications using WhatsApp and social media.

—Woman, interview, Fundación Carvajal

Despite the joint efforts of CSOs; public institutions; host community members; and the migrant, refugee, and returnee communities themselves, migrants still face important information gaps when it comes to staying and establishing themselves in Cali. A main gap identified by focus group participants was the lack of information on how to develop skills to achieve migrant inclusion in local job markets.



I would’ve liked to know, when I first got here, and I still would like to know more, about employability. Especially how to fill out forms, how to complete a CV, and how to fill out the ‘Minerva’ form, which is still difficult for me. I have been to workshops, gone to the National Institute for Learning, and participated in a workshop to fill out this form.

—Woman, 38 years old, migrant focus group

1.3 COMMUNICATION WITH LOCAL AUTHORITIES

For this section, the IEA research team analyzed information access dynamics in terms of frequency and communication forms between local authorities and migrants, returnees, and refugees. For the purposes of this study, the IEA research team considers local authorities to be the Cali Mayor’s Office, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Ombudsman’s Office, the Office of the Valle del Cauca Governor, the National Office for Migration, the Office of the Local Legal Representative, and the police.

According to survey data, **communication between the migrant population and local authorities is neither frequent nor permanent, and the main tool for this communication is attending events in person at the relevant local office.** When asked with what frequency migrants communicate with local authorities, **most of the migrant population expressed never communicating with most of these institutions**, as shown in Table 7. The main exceptions to this communication pattern are the National Office for Migration, the police, and the Cali Mayor’s Office.

Table 7. Migrant Communication Frequency with Local Authorities

Source: Compiled by the IEA Research Team (2022).

	ALMOST NEVER	ALMOST ALWAYS	NEVER	OCCASIONALLY	ALWAYS
Cali Mayor’s Office	9.23%	1.85%	82.15%	6.46%	0.13%
Foreign Relations Ministry	3.08%	1.23%	90.46%	4.92%	0.31%
Ombudsman’s Office	3.38%	0%	94.15%	2.15%	0.31%
Valle del Cauca Governor’s Office	4.00%	0%	92.00%	4.00%	0%
Migration Colombia	13.54%	14.46%	15.69%	51.69%	4.62%
People’s Ombudsman	3.38%	0%	94.46%	2.15%	0%
Police	7.08%	0%	86.15%	6.46%	0.31%

Figure 15 shows that 44% of participants prefer to reach out to local authorities by directly going to local offices in person, followed by reaching out using the phone and, to a lesser degree, via email. **Migrant communication preferences are in line with the local authorities they seek out the most because institutions such as the National Office for Migration conduct in-person sessions to pre-register migrants and collect their biometric data or send communications via email on migrant registration processes.**

Figure 15. Migrant Communication Mechanisms with Local Authorities

Source: Compiled by the IEA Research Team (2022).



* Whatsapp, Facebook Messenger, Telegram, other

** Facebook, Instagram, WhatsApp, YouTube, TikTok

When analyzing survey data, migrants' self-reported use of CSOs and NGOs as intermediaries to communicate with local authorities is inconsistent with the IEA research team findings from its focus groups and interviews. In focus groups and interviews, migrants, local authority representatives, CSOs, and NGOs all agreed that CSOs and NGOs play a key role in mediating communications between local authorities and the migrant community in general. However, the survey data show only a small percentage of migrants who consider these organizations as a communication mechanism with local public institutions. The IEA research team observed that a possible reason for this inconsistency is a general lack of knowledge of local authorities and how CSOs and NGOs interact with them. This compounds the low percentage of survey participants who identified community events as a way to communicate and interact with local authorities, revealing low migrant knowledge of these events, regardless of these events being limited due to the pandemic.

As shown in Table 8, **19.6% of survey participants identified the National Office for Migration as the authority from which they receive information almost always, whereas 44.2% expressed they receive information from this office occasionally.**

Table 8. Frequency with which Migrants receive information from Local Authorities

Source: Compiled by the IEA Research Team (2022)

	ALMOST NEVER	ALMOST ALWAYS	DON'T KNOW	NEVER	OCCASIONALLY	ALWAYS
Cali Mayor's Office	8.90%	2.15%	0.31%	78.83%	7.98%	1.84%
Foreign Relations Ministry	2.76%	0.92%	0%	89.26%	6.44%	0.61%
Ombudsman's Office	2.76%	0.31%	0%	94.17%	2.45%	0.31%
Valle Governor's Office	2.76%	0.31%	0%	89.57%	6.44%	0.92%
Migration Colombia	9.20%	19.36%	0.31%	19.94%	44.17%	6.75%
People's Ombudsman	3.99%	0%	0%	93.87%	2.15%	0%
Police	5.21%	0.92%	0%	86.81%	6.75%	0.31%

The IEA research team also identified that low communication with local authorities is in part because local offices did not have an existing capacity to service the high

volume of migrants arriving in Cali. In response to this challenge, **local public institutions have channeled migrant services through undersecretariats or divisions specialized in providing services to vulnerable population and victims of the Colombian armed conflict, meaning there are no specific channels to support migrants.** Migrant community leaders have acknowledged this limitation, advocating for the implementation of dialogue and joint action mechanisms before local authorities.



We also want public institutions to listen to us and create a space to establish a roundtable to address our concerns because they are missing many things, and we have to let them know of our needs.

—Woman, community leader focus group

As shown in Figure 16, the communication channels through which migrants **receive information** from local authorities coincide with the channels they themselves prefer to use: **in-person attendance, phone calls, and communication via email.** This is in great part because these are the channels that local authorities, particularly the National Office for Migration, have established for communicating with and providing services to migrants.

Survey data also revealed migrant challenges when seeking out communication with local authorities. As a result of low interactions with local authorities, **93.3% of survey participants expressed not having problems reaching these institutions.** However, when analyzing the section of participants who reported having problems communicating with local authorities, the IEA research team found **50% of them do not know how to contact these institutions, whereas 45.5% report receiving no answer, and 36.4% report not even knowing about them** (Figure 17).

Through its focus groups, the IEA research team **identified that the migrant community faces a major challenge understanding the complexities of Colombian bureaucracy, so they do not know which institutions to seek out, nor are they aware of the responsibilities of each one.** Thus, the migrant community requires clear and accessible road maps to understand how each institution works and their responsibilities to better seek out their services.



Figure 16. Communication Channels to receive Information from Local Authorities

Source: Compiled by the IEA Research Team (2022).

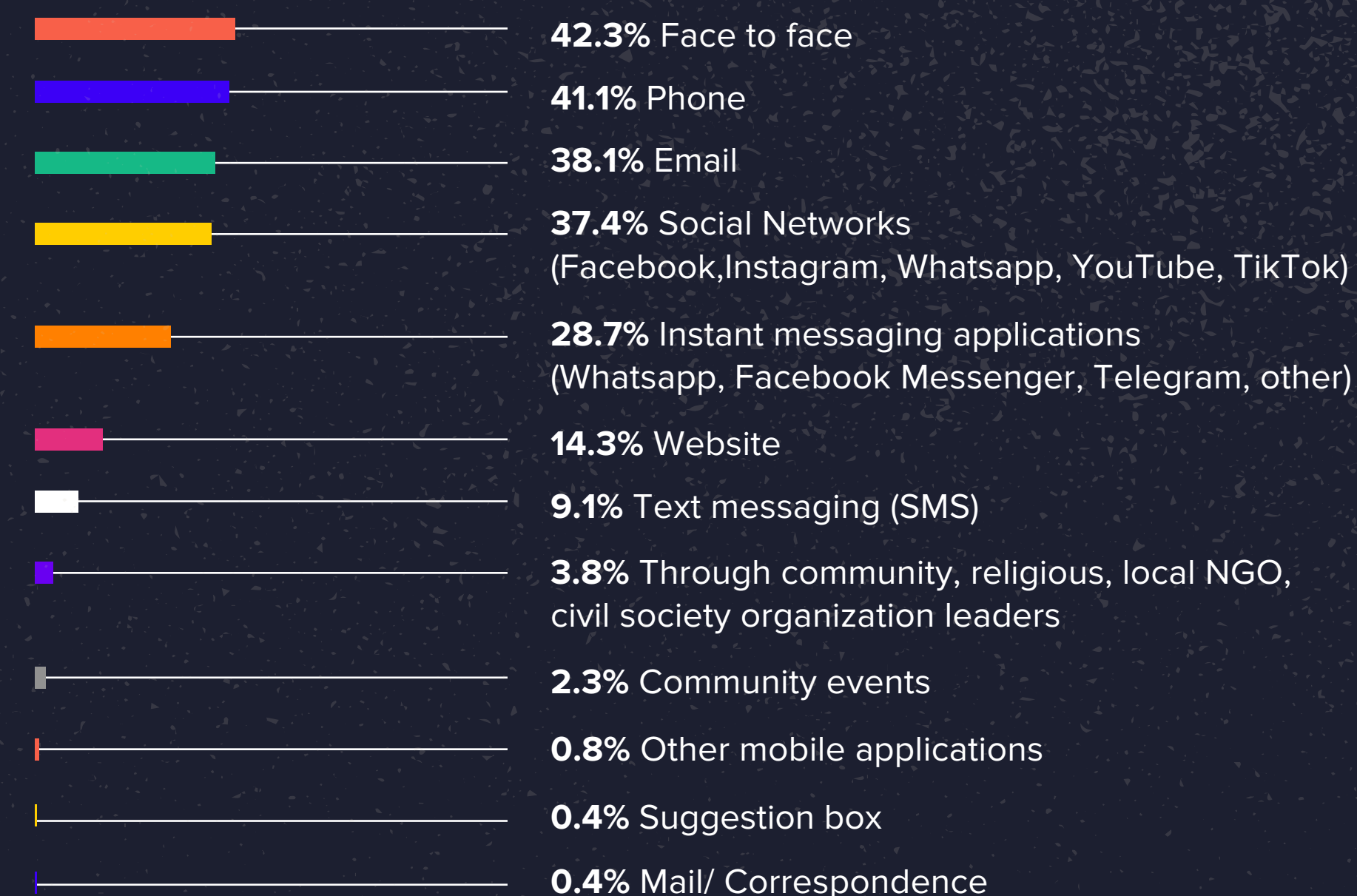
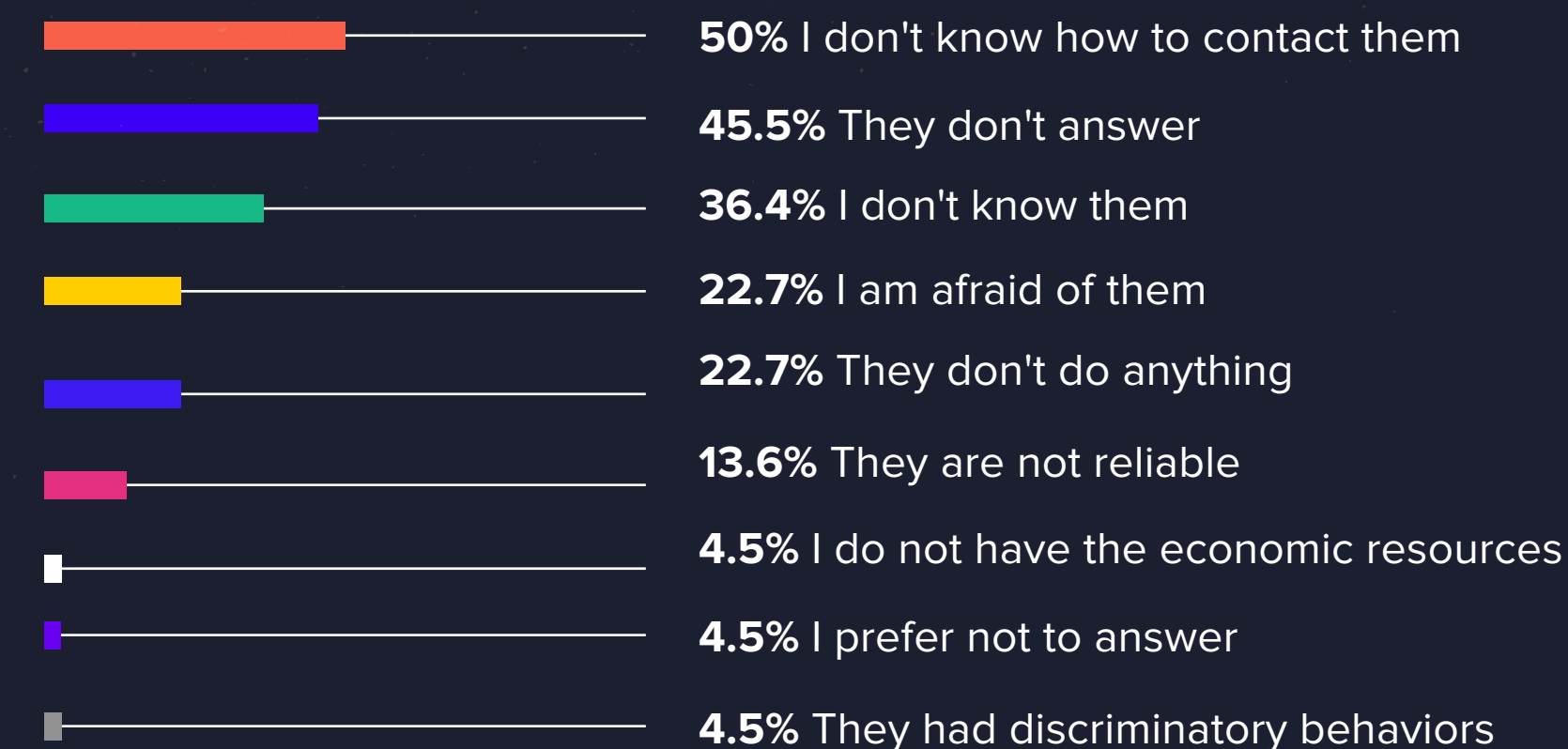


Figure 17. Communication Issues with Local Authorities

Source: Compiled by the IEA Research Team (2022).

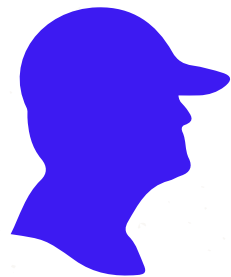




Some of us can understand the entire regularization process, what is a health-care provider and all that. But there are other migrants who are not even aware of health-care providers or who think being registered in the SISBEN database is the same as being registered with a provider.

—Woman, community leader focus group

In addition, a lack of coordination between local authorities and other levels of government—despite the existence of road maps and legal dispositions to service the migrant population—has resulted in **migrant services being limited by bureaucracy challenges and a lack of knowledge and even poor service on behalf of local public officers.**



Lack of information has made us suffer because the Colombian Government from the top says “yes, you have to provide services to Venezuelan migrants, to pregnant women, to everyone.” But then many things happen [at the local level], like institutional agreements not being in place and so on.

—Man, 20 years old, migrant community focus group

In interviews with public institution representatives, **the IEA research team identified that public officers lack clarity regarding how many migrants are in the city, who they are, and where they are. This presents challenges when communicating with this population and when designing and implementing public policies to better address migration.** In the face of these challenges, public officers expect the ETPV will significantly contribute toward identifying and characterizing migrants across Colombia.



Today, for example, we do not know exactly how many migrants live in Cali. Some sources say it's 60,000, others that it's 80,000, and others, the most dramatic ones, say it could even be 100,000. The fact that there is no concrete and consolidated information on the number of migrants, their characteristics, and other details makes designing and implementing relevant and feasible public policies very difficult.

—Man, interview, Border Management Office (Gerencia de Fronteras in Spanish)

As of the writing of this report, the main response from the Colombian government and international agencies such as USAID has been to promote migrant social and economic inclusion through “[Centros Intégrate](#).” In these centers, Venezuelan migrants and refugees receive guidance regarding where they may go to seek specific services and what processes they must complete to access them ([Proyecto Migración Venezuela, 2022](#)). However, these centers face challenges of their own, including (1) local capacity to provide services to the migrant population, (2) political will to maintain centers once international resources are no longer available, and (3) clear road maps for migrant services being available at the centers.

BARRIERS TO INFORMATION ACCESS

Access to justice is one of the barriers most mentioned in study focus groups, not only because migrants lack knowledge of Colombian institutions but also because their migratory status constitutes a barrier in and of itself. Only 3.9% of survey participants reported having sought legal action. Of these, 41.7% have presented legal actions on the

basis of migrants’ right to life, 41.7% have presented rights to petition, 25% have requested guarantees to protect the right to personal safety, and 25% have sought asylum.

When migrant rights are violated, legal actions for the protection of fundamental rights are key for promoting migrant access to rights enshrined in the Colombian constitution such as health care. Nevertheless, migrants frequently do not know of these legal actions, how they work, or when to present one. In these cases, CSOs and NGOs are able to point migrants toward legal counsel offices that can support them in taking such actions.

Regarding access to justice, as the IEA research team identified through its focus groups, **migrant women are particularly vulnerable as their lack of knowledge of Colombian institutions and their migratory status limit their ability to access justice, increasing their risk of GBV.** Although it is true that even Colombian women face challenges when reporting GBV, challenges are worse for Venezuelan migrants because the first step in receiving care in the case of GBV is having a valid ID.



Many women are suffering GBV. And what happens to them? Many cannot even report their case only because they do not have a valid ID here in Colombia. So what happens then? Women simply cannot report GBV because of their lack of a valid ID, and there is nothing they can do except wait for someone else to help them.

—Woman, migrant women focus group

1.4 TRUST AND INFLUENCE

This section analyzes the influence of trusted information sources and the ways in which trusted sources manage credibility and confidence.

GUIDANCE AND SUPPORT

As shown in Figure 18, **the family and friends of survey participants are migrants' first source of guidance and support when reaching Cali, reinforcing the role family and friends play as points of attraction and support for migrants in the city.** Survey participants also underscore the guidance and support they receive from other migrants, community leaders, CSOs, and international agencies, although to a much lesser extent than the support received from family and friends.

The IEA shows that because migrants are in irregular conditions, they have low reliance on public institutions for guidance and support at the moment of arrival, leading them to prefer to turn to trusted individuals or humanitarian assistance over government institutions. In this context and through its focus groups and interviews, the IEA research team has identified ***the rise of other types of actors that play a key role within migrants' information ecosystem: community leaders, migrant CSOs, and international agencies.***

Figure 19 shows the type of guidance or support that they have received since arriving in Cali. Survey participants report in similar percentages having received support in matters such as migratory status, access to social and health-care services, and employment road maps, which coincides with the main information needs the IEA research team identified earlier in this chapter.

Figure 18. **Actors providing Guidance and support to Migrants from their Arrival in Cali**

Source: Compiled by the IEA Research Team (2022).



Figure 19. **Type of Guidance or Support That Migrants Have Received since Arriving in Cali**

Source: Compiled by the IEA Research Team (2022).



INFLUENCING ACTORS

Community leaders serve as a bridge for the migrant population, connecting them to relevant information and making it more accessible to them.

Leaders may be Colombian or Venezuelan migrants who are leveraging useful information to help other migrants.



Community leaders are entry points for the migrant population. There are idiosyncratic habits, tones of voice, comments, and situations that may cause cultural shocks. Thanks to these community leaders, we have gotten closer to the [migrant] community.

—Man, interview, IOM

Community leaders are also the people migrants tend to seek out when they experience discrimination or are victims of violence. After family, friends, and neighbors, community leaders are the individuals migrants seek out to obtain information on basic needs. Word of mouth is the main communication channel between these leaders and the migrant community.



[. . .] Everything you say is ‘word of mouth.’ When we are about to launch a strategy, it is community leaders who take charge. Using this mechanism, which seems simple and not very elaborate, is quite effective when it comes to ensuring information is shared.

—Man, interview, Border Management Office

The CSOs in which many of these community leaders participate are also protagonists in the Cali information ecosystem because public officers and migrants alike acknowledge the importance of their work. CSOs have played a fundamental

role in connecting migrants to local authorities, enabling the local government and other organizations to better focus their efforts and share relevant information with the migrant community.



Simply because we do not know what to do or where to go, we see [public institutions] as being very distant. How can I go to the Ombudsman’s Office, or the Cali Archdiocese, or the SISBEN Office? Because we don’t know the country, because we are just starting to adapt, CSOs and NGOs have been key because they are connecting migrants and public institutions; they are offering this help.

—Man, 20 years old, migrant community focus group

In CSOs and local NGOs, migrants find clear information, helping them overcome the challenge of understanding Colombian institutions. Moreover, CSOs and local NGOs help migrants find other community members or people in similar situations, which fosters trusts among this population, especially if other migrants are also part of the organizational staff.



It’s not about the benefits they provide but the information and training we receive from CSOs and NGOs. Many will say, “all you have to do is go there, and they will give you money,” but that is a lie. We receive training because, in the future, this training becomes knowledge that we can use to face any situation

—Woman, 37 years old, migrant community focus group

These CSOs and NGOs not only play a key role in producing and sharing useful information for the migrant community, but they also support public institutions in conducting activities for this population. **An example of this was the National Office for Migration sessions to deliver PPTs, conducted on April 26, 27, and 29, 2022, in Cali, where representatives from actors such as IOM, the Cali Mayor’s Office, the SISBEN Office, and USAID participated.**



There are migrant CSOs that not only play a role in sharing information, but also, for example, there are CSOs that have supported pre-registration and biometric data processes. These CSOs have participated in international agency projects, and through this participation they are providing services because they are the ones that can easily reach communities, the ones operating in neighborhoods, etc. So they can do this type of thing. They have also implemented some projects, for example, in economic development.

—Man, interview, Border Management Office

The CSOs that survey participants mentioned the most were Alianzas Solidarias and Fundatransvida. This coincides with focus group findings, where participants also underscored the work and commitment of these organizations toward supporting Venezuelan migrants in Cali. Figure 20 shows the CSOs that migrants highlighted as part of the IEA.

Figure 20. CSOs from which Migrants have received Support or Guidance

Source: Compiled by the IEA Research Team (2022).



Figure 21. International Agencies from which Migrants have received guidance or information

Source: Compiled by the IEA Research Team (2022).



Overall, migrants tend to seek out these CSOs because their families, friends, or neighbors recommend them or because migrants find themselves in urgent need of assistance. As will be discussed in the following chapter, **WhatsApp groups are the main channel through which migrants seek out CSOs.** In turn, **CSOs’ constant sharing of fact-checked information is the way through which organizations gain migrants’ trust.** After benefiting from CSO activities, several migrants report getting involved with these organizations as volunteers, expanding organizational reach.



When I first got to Cali, I was working on the street and was pregnant, about four months pregnant. I was at a traffic light, and a lady in a car went by and gave me a card from Alianzas Solidarias, saying, “You write to or call that number, they help pregnant women.” And of course, I had my doubts. I had just arrived, so I wondered if they wanted to take my baby away or something like that. Later, I did write, and I joined a group for pregnant women. And when I saw all the information they shared for pregnant women, I said, “Oh, there are several Venezuelan women here.” They also invited women to information sessions, and I went to all of them. And then I stayed, until I became a beneficiary, until my daughter was born, and then I became a volunteer.

—Woman, 21 years old, migrant community focus group

Despite the key role CSOs play, their reach can be limited due to insufficient resources because their operations depend on dispositions set out by or international agencies or local, departmental, or public institutions.

In this context, **international agencies have become key players in terms of investing resources and providing services to address the migration crisis in Colombia, with their actions going from cash transfers to funding service centers for the migrant population.** Figure 21 shows the agencies that survey participants mentioned the most as providing guidance or information.

International agencies have been working together in Cali, as demonstrated by their donation of a Migrant, Refugee, and Returnee Service Center to the Mayor’s Office, located in Cali’s main bus station. This center is a one-stop shop for migrants, refugees, and returnees, financed through the Interagency Group on Mixed Migratory Flows (GIFMM), which includes organizations such as the UNHCR, Save the Children, PADF, the Norwegian Refugee Council, Plan International, Medecins du Monde, and IOM ([Cali Mayor’s Office 2021](#)). Despite these efforts, in an interview with a public officer, the IEA research team observed there is still a need for international agencies to better coordinate their agendas and align these with the agendas of the national and subnational governments to achieve more effective interventions.

2. INFORMATION ACCESS

This section analyzes Venezuelan migrant information consumption habits in Cali, including consumption of traditional and digital media as well as internet sources. In focus groups and interviews, the IEA research team observed that migrants have transformed their information consumption habits based on how access and barriers change between Venezuelan conditions and the new dynamics they face living in Colombia.

2.1. TRADITIONAL MEDIA: USE AND TRUST

When analyzing survey participants' relationships with traditional media (radio, television, and printed sources), the IEA research team found that 85% of respondents trust what they see on television. **Television is by far the preferred traditional media, followed by radio and printed sources, which are consulted by 12% and 3% of survey respondents, respectively.**

Table 9 shows the frequency with which survey participants use traditional media. The use frequency is in line with findings on trust in traditional media because 75% of survey participants expressed watching television every day. Similarly, 21.8% of participants manifested listening to radio every day, whereas only 3.23% of participants said they consulted printed media on a daily basis.

Table 9. **Traditional Media use Frequency**

Source: Compiled by the IEA Research Team (2022).

TRADITIONAL MEDIA	ALMOST NEVER	ALMOST ALWAYS	NEVER	OCCASIONALLY	OCCASIONALLY
Printed sources	21.43%	3.45%	54.14%	7.50%	3.23%
Radio	41.07%	20.69%	34.40%	41.25%	21.77%
Television	37.50%	75.86%	11.47%	51.25%	75.00%

Focus group participants **manifested having experienced a drastic change in their use of traditional media.** In Venezuela, they used mainly daily printed media, with television and radio also having ample audiences. In contrast, internet access in Venezuela was limited due to low coverage, high costs, deficient service provision, and frequent power cuts.



In particular, back in Venezuela, La Región was my daily newspaper, and I would read daily news. At noon, I would listen to radio news, and in the morning, I would put on the TV while getting myself and my kids ready for the day so I could hear the news early. I consumed news in the morning, at noon, and at night before bed, and it was important. Sometimes you would discuss the news at work, someone saying “this happened” or “they announced that other thing.

—Woman, migrant community focus group

In Colombia, **however, migrant news consumption has changed radically due to multiple factors. These include significantly different daily routines, increased economic barriers to buying printed newspapers or accessing television or radio devices, and the ease of accessing information through the internet.**

IEA participants expressed that a **main reason for not consuming traditional media frequently is that migrants are not as interested in news about their host country (Colombia) as they are about still seeking information on how to meet their basic needs.** Thus, migrants are more often looking for information on health care, food, employment, housing, and migratory status—as discussed in the Information Needs section of this report—which they can seldom find in traditional media.



Here, precisely because of the condition we face, we spend our days taking care of the children, looking for something to do, trying to find a job, trying to figure out how to make ends meet, and how to do that on a daily basis. And when it's like this, suddenly, the news isn't as interesting or as primordial for Venezuelans. News here is about the country, about Cali, and as a migrant, you say, “I don't care about what's happening.” Even though, obviously, we should care because we are part of this society. But as migrants, we live on a day-to-day basis . . . Here, [internet access] is broader, and access to communication is through a phone or a laptop. You log in and do some research. It's not like that in Venezuela; over there you had to listen to and watch the news daily.

—Woman, migrant community focus group

Understanding that television is the traditional media that migrants consume most frequently, and based on migrant information needs, the IEA research team **conducted a local media consumption analysis comprising** public television channels' content available on YouTube **between May 2021 and March 2022** (Canal Institucional, Señal Colombia, Telepacífico, Cali TV y Canal 2).

The goal of this overview was to identify what kind of information related to the migrant population is available through these channels. Table 10 shows the migrant-related content published in local media in Cali over the 10-month period between May 2021 and March 2022. During this period, only the channel Telepacífico published content related or relevant to the migrant population in its 90-minute news and noon segments.

When analyzing the content shown in Table 10, the IEA research team observed that of the seven published pieces, only two present specific information that is of interest to the migrant population. These pieces are on the ETPV implementation and sessions to register for or hand out PPTs.

Another two pieces highlight migrant profiles and their contributions to the workforce. One piece reports violence against migrants; another piece presents the concerns of city council members over the economy and employment in the city in the face of the arrival of new migrants for Venezuela and Haiti. The last piece is on a city report against migrants at the National Office for Migration, with no introduction by the channel.

Table 10. Media Overview Results for Local Channels in Cali: Content Relevant to Migrants

Source: Compiled by the IEA Research Team (2022).



January 25, 2022

Cali makes progress delivering PPTs to migrants



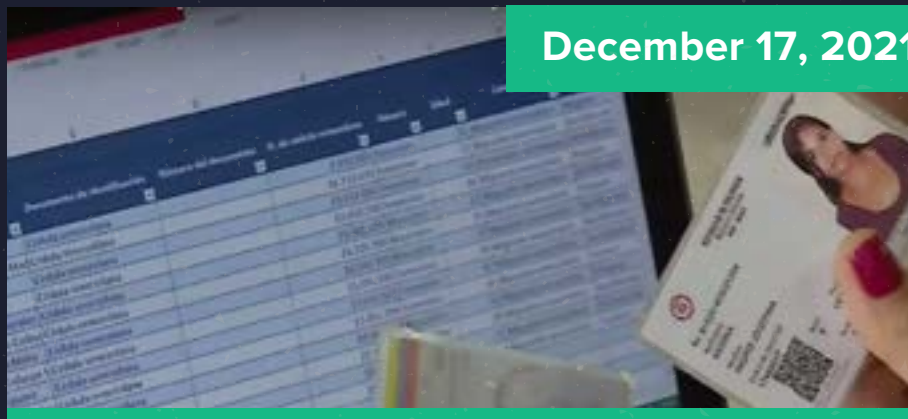
January 13, 2022

Venezuelan migrants face problems in the La Flora neighborhood



January 4, 2022

Three Venezuelans murdered in the Jamundí district



December 17, 2021

The National Office for Migration is prioritizing PPTs for Venezuelan children



September 15, 2021

Crislander Bustamante, Venezuelan talent in Valle del Cauca



August 11, 2021

Some members of the Cali city council manifested concerns over the arrival of new migrants in the city

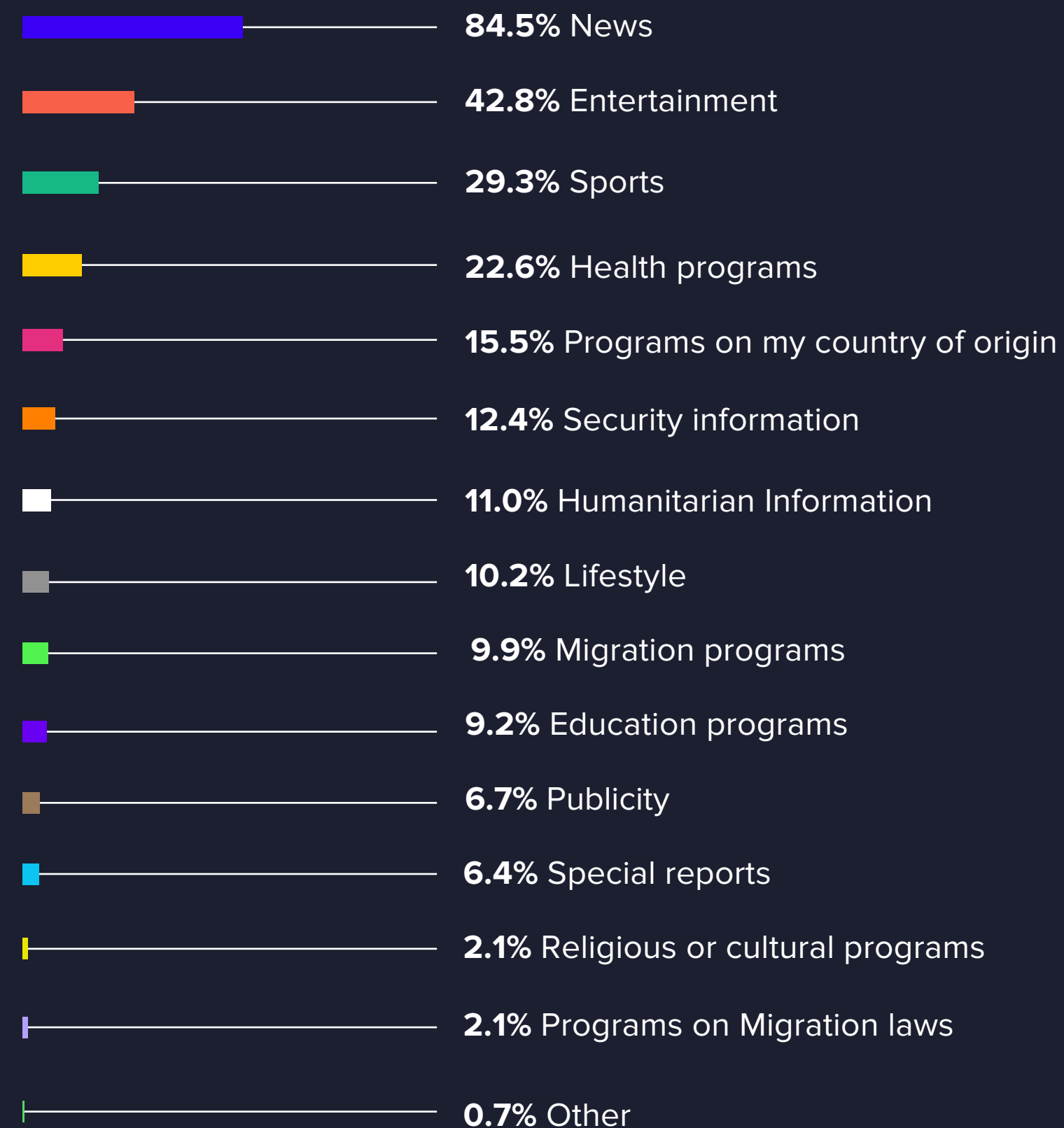


August 10, 2021

More than 1.7 million migrants are estimated to live in Colombia, with approximately 60,000 in Cali

Figure 22. Type of Information that Migrants prefer consuming from Traditional Media

Source: Compiled by the IEA Research Team (2022).



Based on this overview and understanding that its sample does not cover all published content by the selected media channels, the IEA research team infers that the information shared on local television does not cover the information needs of the migrant population, especially on matters of how to cover migrants' basic needs and livelihoods. This coincides with focus group discussions.

Survey participants who mentioned consuming traditional media at least occasionally were also asked about the type of information they consume the most. Figure 22 shows that **84.5% of respondents prefer consuming news (television or radio) over any other type of traditional media programming.** These data differ from focus group discussions because respondents manifested continuing to consume traditional media, despite it not providing the information most relevant to them and despite migrants' lack of knowledge of Colombian institutions. A possible explanation for this is that traditional media broadcasts their programs during times that coincide with meals, feeding into migrant preexisting habits, among other factors.

MOST CONSUMED MEDIA

Figure 23 shows that the television channel migrants watch the most is Caracol TV, along with its news segment. This coincides with national results presented in the Media Landscape section of this report, which show that Caracol has the largest audience at the national level.

Figure 24 shows radio consumption among migrant survey participants. Survey results on radio consumption also coincide with ECAR 2022 national figures (discussed in the Media Landscape section of this report). Both at the national and local levels, the migrant community indicated that the station they listen the most is Olímpica Estéreo, along with its news segment.

Figure 25 shows that printed media are one of the least consumed media among migrants, with only 8.8% of survey participants reading printed sources. Of these, 10 participants mentioned reading the *Q'Hubo* newspaper, possibly due to its low cost especially when compared to other publications such as *El País* or *El Tiempo*.

Figure 23. Television Channels and Programming most watched by Migrants

Source: Compiled by the IEA Research Team (2022).



Figure 24. Radio Stations and Programming most watched by Migrants

Source: Compiled by the IEA Research Team (2022).



Figure 25. Printed Media most read by Migrants

Source: Compiled by the IEA Research Team (2022).



2.2 USE OF DIGITAL MEDIA

This section presents the IEA research team analysis of study participants' relationship with digital media, contemplating their access to communication and technology services and the ways in which they use these services and their use frequency. The IEA research team found that migrants interact more frequently with mobile phone services, although it is important to acknowledge that a person may have multiple services in their household.

Among survey participants, 93.57% expressed having acquired a mobile device, whereas 92.66% manifested using a cell phone signal frequently. As well, 74.01% of participants have mobile internet, whereas 50.45% prefer a fixed network in their household.

A main IEA finding is that overall, **the migrant community frequently uses the internet**. Migrants who use the internet the most are seniors between the ages of 74 and 81, for whom the internet is their only source of information. This group is followed by adults between the ages of 26 and 33, who manifested consulting the internet on a daily basis to stay informed. Furthermore, 87.8% of adults between the ages of 34 and 41 consult the internet, whereas 80.4% of adults between the ages of 42 and 49 and 80.6% of youth between the ages of 18 and 25 do so.



Figure 26. Survey Participant Distribution based on Age and Internet Use

Source: Compiled by the IEA Research Team (2022).

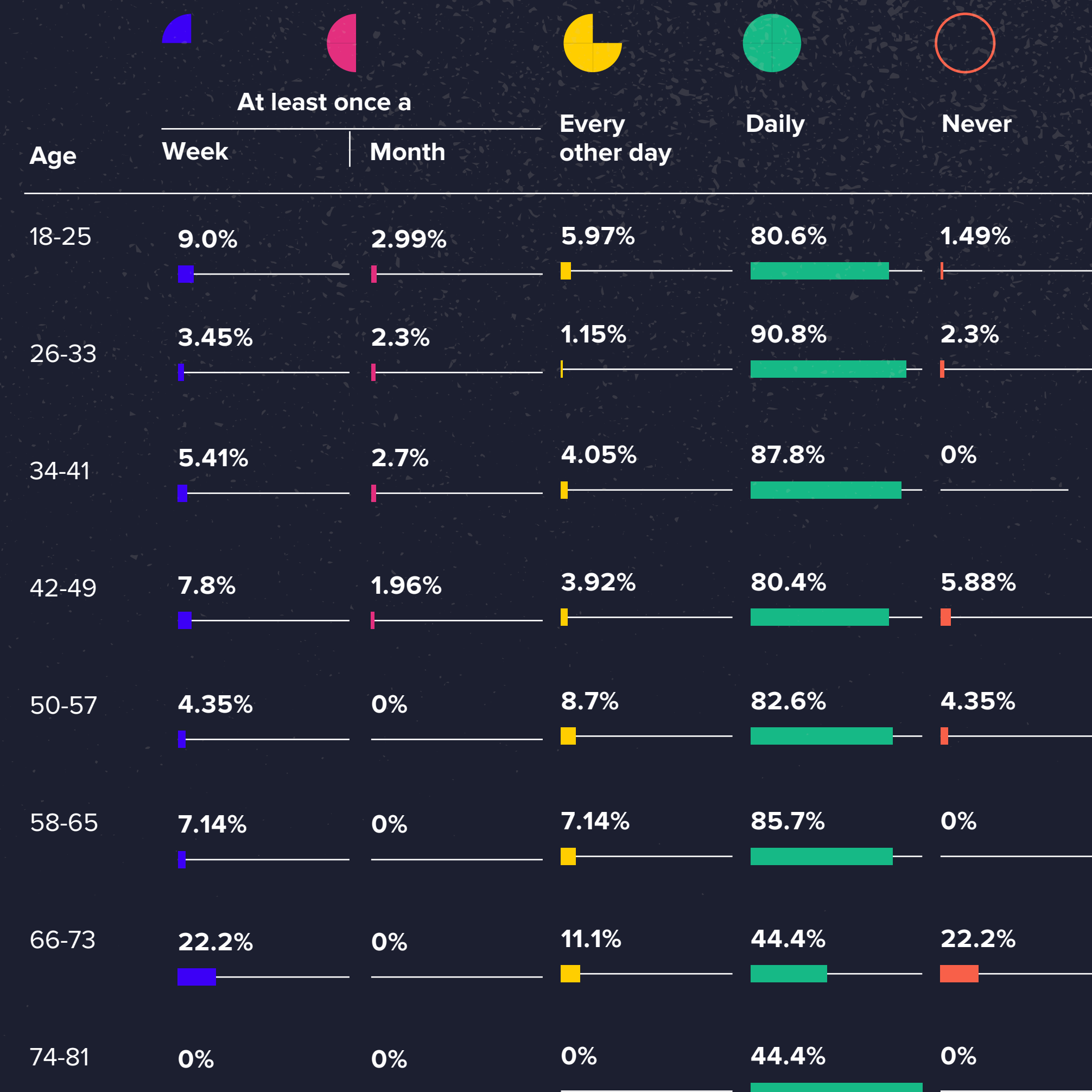


Figure 27. Survey Participant Distribution Based on Age and Internet Use Purposes

Source: Compiled by the IEA Research Team (2022).

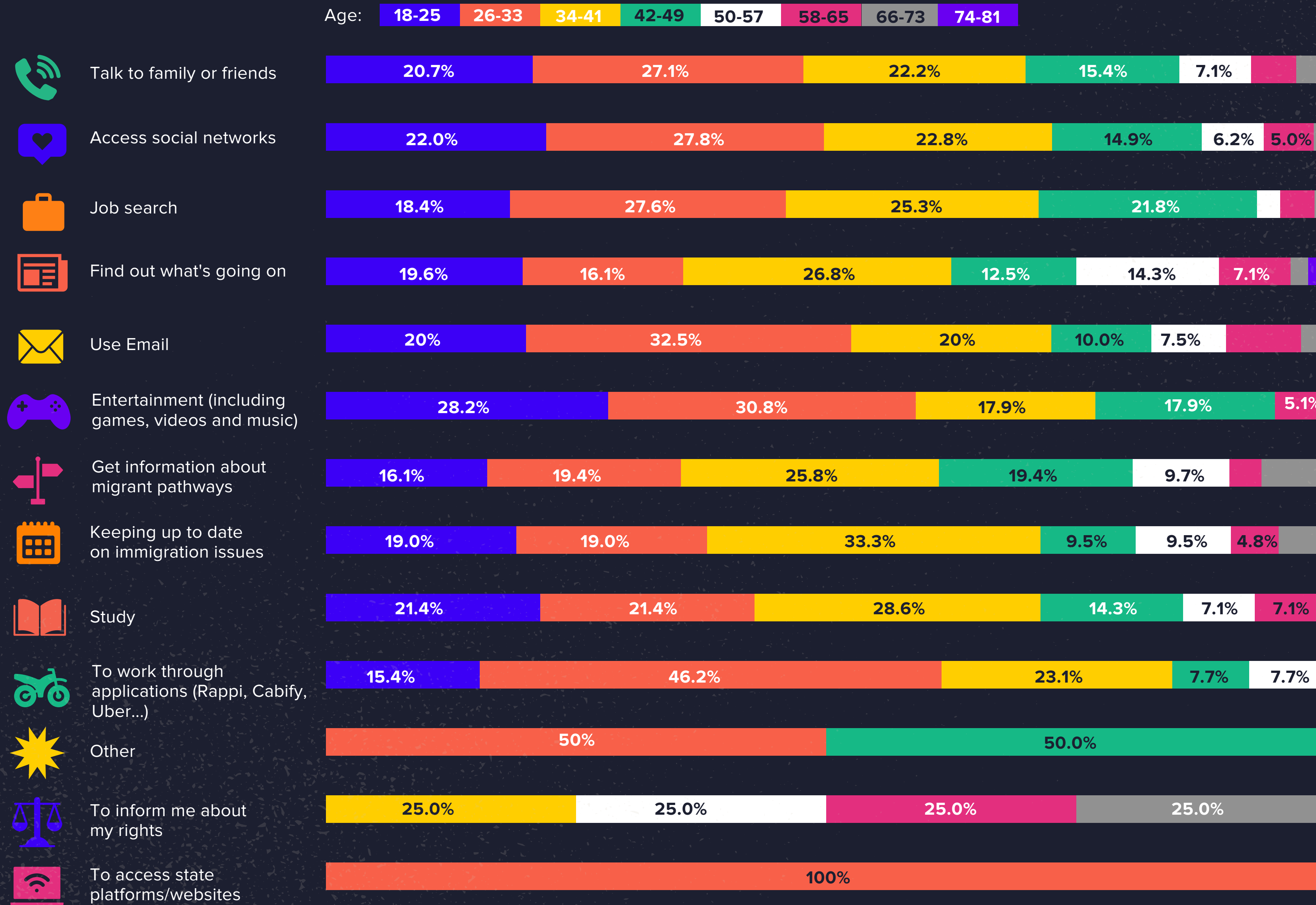
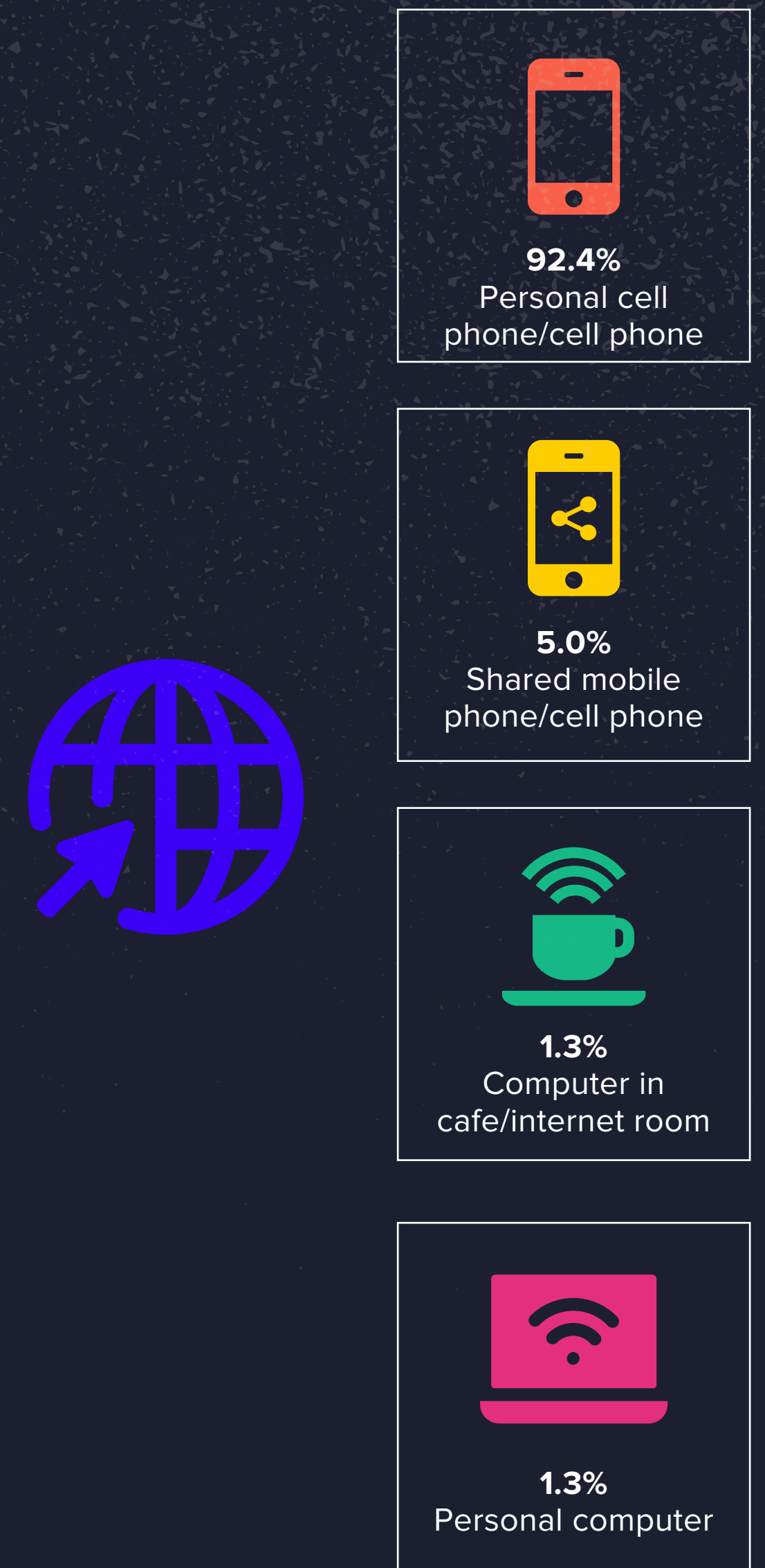


Figure 28. Migrant Internet Access means

Source: Compiled by the IEA Research Team (2022).





I think, over here, what we use the most to stay informed is the internet. Through social media or directly through news websites; other websites; or WhatsApp, Facebook, and Instagram. Most Venezuelans are using WhatsApp the most right now, especially WhatsApp groups, since information is shared through these.

—Woman, migrant community focus group

Study participants manifested using the internet not only to stay informed but also for other purposes. As well, **83.9% expressed using it to reach out to family and friends, 76% to access social media, and 27.4% to look for employment.** Most participants using the internet for these varied purposes are between the ages of 26 and 41. **Using the internet to stay informed on migratory matters, service access, and information on rights is more relevant for migrant adults over the age of 24, as shown in Figure 27.**

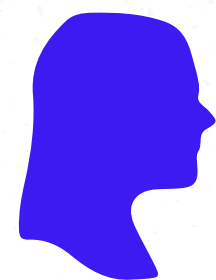
The IEA survey shows migrants have a high percentage of internet access, despite existing barriers to legally access this service, whether through a mobile or fixed network. These barriers include migrants' inability to register networks under their name due to a lack of adequate documentation as requested by service providers. These barriers are forcing migrants to find different ways to hire internet services, for example, by having contracts register under a Colombian citizen or through local providers that do not request any form of ID.



We usually have to find a Colombian who can help us [sign the contract]. At least where I live, Movistar fiber internet is already available, and we have even had several house calls to install it. But because we only have a Venezuelan ID, we have not been able to access this service.

—Woman, women's migrant community focus group

It is important to underscore that 5% of participants expressed accessing the internet through a shared mobile device, including 12 women. This means that **three out of four people who share their phone with someone else are women. This coincides with the Sociodemographic Characteristics and Information Needs sections of this report. In this section, the IEA research team explored how women have greater economic dependence on their partners and families due to their age and roles as caretakers.** Understanding the importance of mobile devices to access the internet and receive information relevant to migrants, the IEA research team observes that migrant women may be in an even more vulnerable position due to their communication barriers.



Here in Colombia, if you don't have WhatsApp, you are not staying informed. If you don't have internet, you are not informed at all. At least here, everything is through a [social media] group, everything. I stay informed on Cali news through WhatsApp groups, through Facebook, through Twitter. These are the media we use. If you don't have a phone, if you don't have internet access, then you are completely cut off from the rest of the world.

—Woman, migrant focus group

Migrants consider that their adaptation to Cali and Colombia is an ongoing process, which they must contend with on a daily basis and that cuts across different aspects of their lives, from cultural and linguistic differences to routine changes. In this adaptation process, mobile devices have become essential for migrants, especially when they have just arrived in the city. **This is because mobile devices represent migrants' only link to their country of origin and to the lives and family left behind. Moreover, these devices are also a means for migrants to build a new life in their host country.** This explains why many among the migrant community put acquiring a phone a primary need.



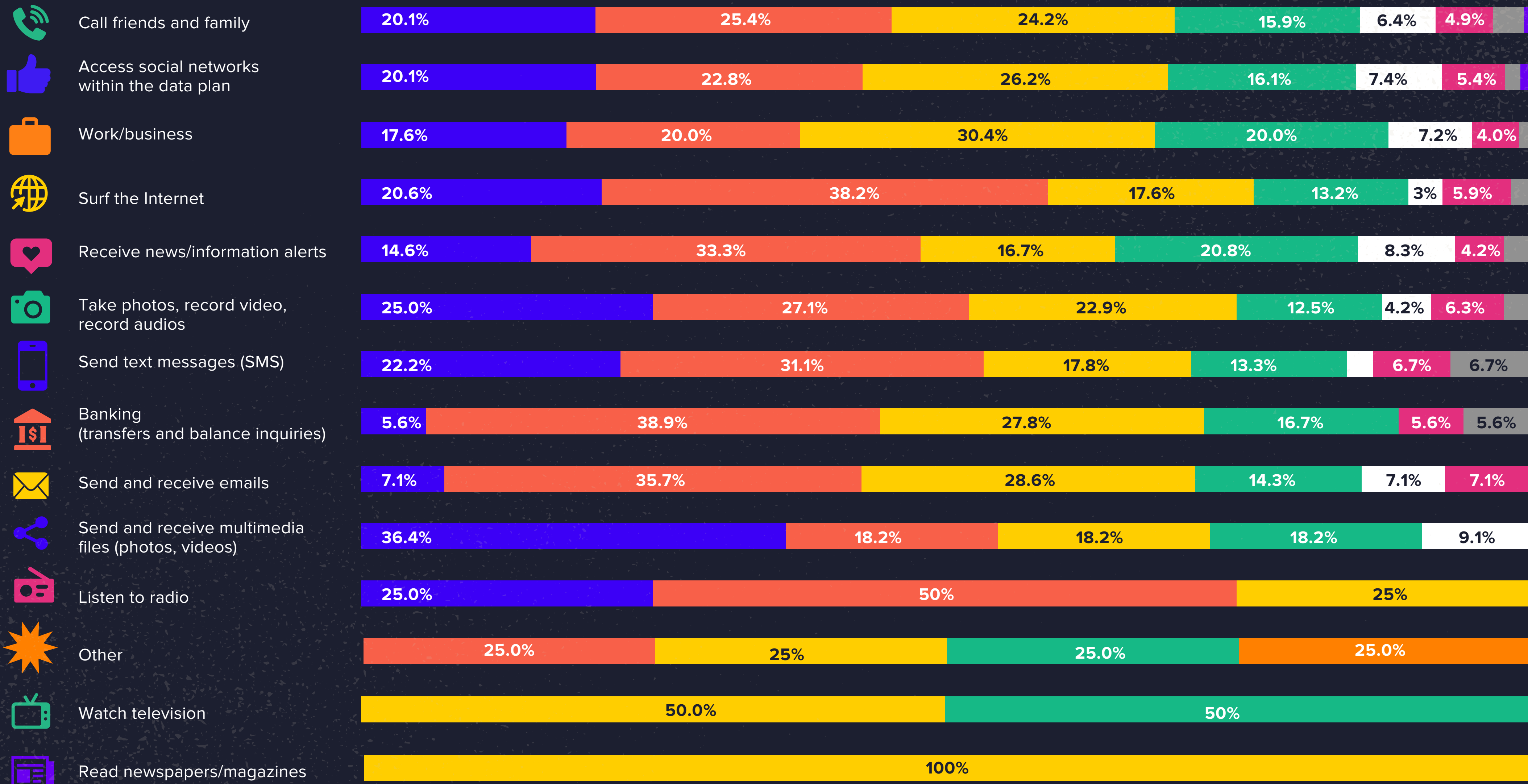
At least I put having a phone before getting food or anything else. I mean, I was able to make 200,000 COP in 15 days selling fried food, and they offered me a phone. I was left with nothing, but I had my phone. Personally, it changed my life because through that phone I met the woman who is now my wife, and thanks to it, too, I'm in Cali. So you can imagine the importance of having bought my phone when I did.

—Man, migrant focus group

Figure 29. Migrant Mobile Phone use by Age

Source: Compiled by the IEA Research Team (2022).

Age: 18-25 26-33 34-41 42-49 50-57 58-65 66-73 74-81



IEA survey results show that **one of the main migrant uses of mobile devices is to call family and friends, with 88% of participants reporting this use. As well, 49.7% of participants reported using their phones to access social media, whereas 41.7% reported using it for work or business.**⁹ Migrants between the ages of 18 and 41 primarily make use of their phones in these ways. Migrants between the ages of 26 and 33 also use their mobile phones for banking activities, to send and receive emails, and to listen to the radio. As shown in Figure 29, youth are the ones primarily conducting activities related to multimedia files, such as photos and videos. For their part, adult migrants more frequently use their phones for activities related to staying informed and receiving news alerts.

Having a phone with internet access has also become important to complete ETPV processes because migrants receive emails and instant messages from the National Office for Migration.



We understand that there is a significant portion of Venezuelans who do not have a regular status and that those who have arrived have a limited time to pay for their phone. So this is an urgent matter, as many do not have a passport, and not everyone can transfer their phone line or Gmail address. So what happens then? Many people lose communication through WhatsApp. And this has happened with the National Office for Migration, as they try to reach migrants, but migrants have lost their internet access or access to their emails. This is not even counting the people migrants paid to help them with their processes and who did not help them all the way.

—Woman, migrant community focus group

Regarding social media and instant messaging Apps, **42.7% of survey participants responded that they use WhatsApp on a daily basis, followed by a 32.4% using Facebook.** However, 29.4% reported never using Twitter, and 22.7% reported never using YouTube. It is worth noting that survey participants provided answers on their use of multiple social media and instant messaging apps.

⁹ Participants could select more than one answer in this survey question..

Table 11. Social Media and Instant Messaging App Use Frequency

Source: Compiled by the IEA Research Team (2022)

SOCIAL MEDIA	ALMOST NEVER	ALMOST ALWAYS	NEVER	OCCASSIONALY	ALWAYS
Facebook	6.25%	38.27%	1.97%	22.89%	32.36%
Instagram	12.50%	13.27%	19.08%	20.48%	13.09%
TikTok	22.92%	5.61%	26.10%	15.66%	4.73%
Twitter	29.17%	3.06%	29.39%	9.64%	1.45%
WhatsApp	0%	30.10%	0.77%	6.63%	42.73%
YouTube	29.17%	9.96%	22.70%	24.70%	5.64%

Similar to cell phone use and coinciding with focus group discussions, **95.8% of survey participants expressed using their mobile device to talk with family and friends, followed by 29.8% of participants who manifested using it to share their personal life.** In the survey, participants could select more than one answer. These two activities are more common among migrants between the ages of 18 and 41. Activities related to staying informed on migrant rights and migratory issues are more common among migrants between the ages of 34 and 49, as shown in Figure 30. These trends show that mobile device use is intrinsically related to the use of social media and instant messaging apps, demonstrating how important internet access is for migrants to remain in touch with their family and friends.

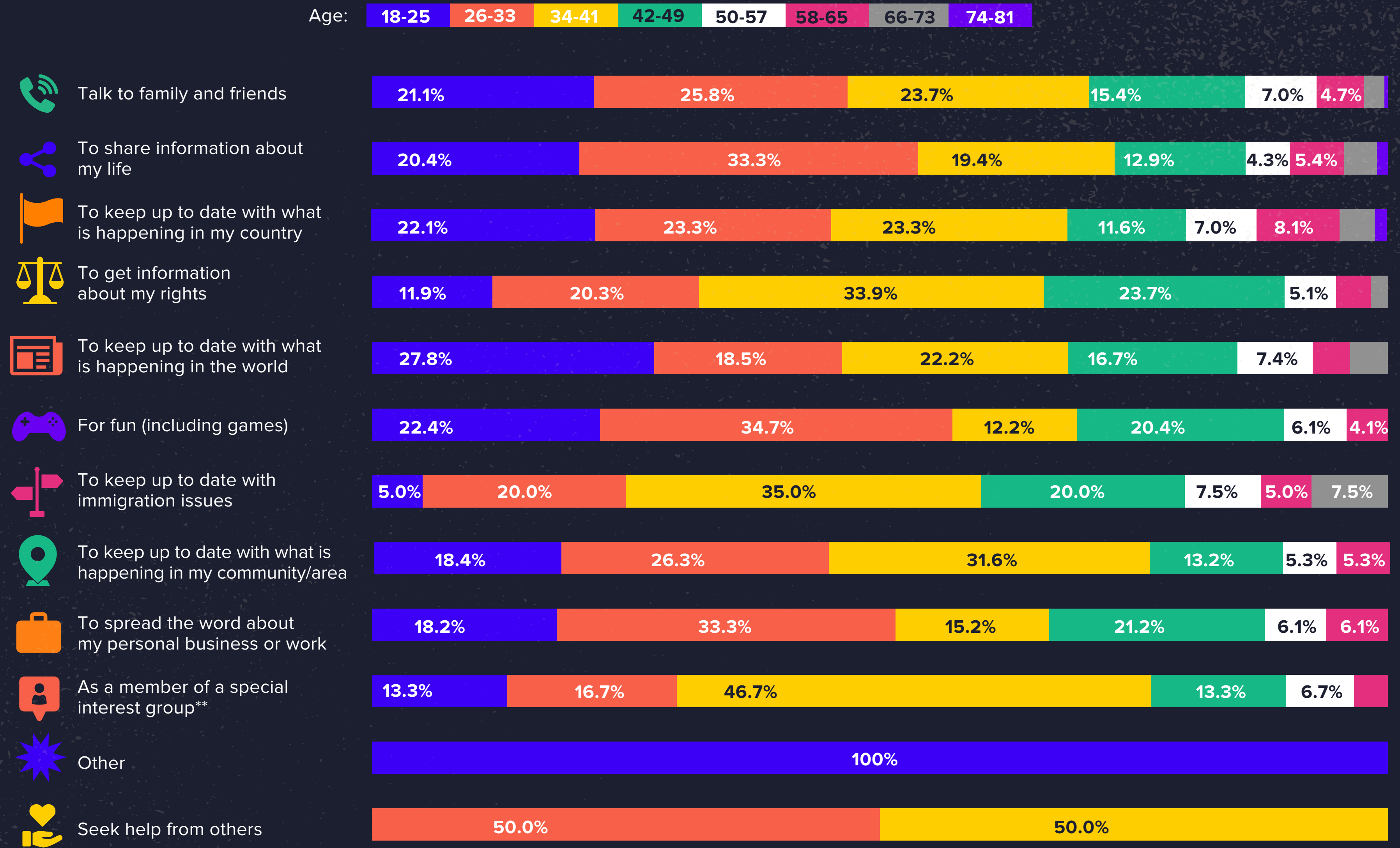
For the migrant population, communication with family and friends is a basic need, turning mobile devices into a primordial item to the point where migrants will prioritize acquiring a phone over satisfying other basic needs, such as food. **For migrants, mobile phones serve two purposes. On the one hand, migrants use their phones to feel closer to their lives back in Venezuela. On the other hand, phones help migrants navigate their host cities because these devices help them move around and find employment and housing, among other uses.**



[Phones] are absolutely indispensable for communicating with our families. I have siblings in the United States, in Chile, and family in Panama, and I'm here in Colombia. So my only means of communication is WhatsApp and social media. So I think, for Venezuelans, [phones are necessary], no matter how precarious their lives are.
—Man, 52 years old, CSO leader focus group

Figure 30. **Migrant Social Media use by Age**

Source: Compiled by the IEA Research Team (2022).



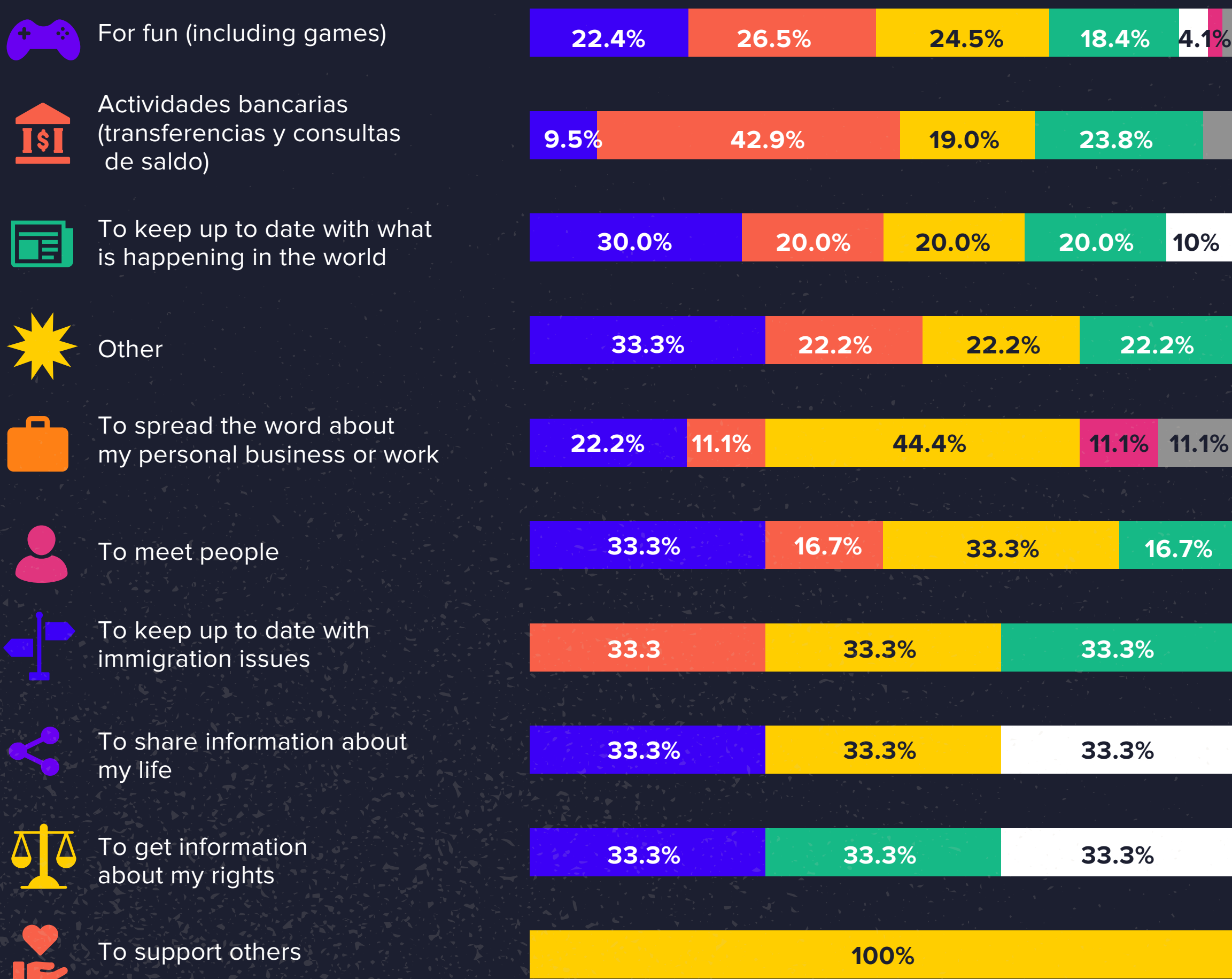
**Community/work/entertainment groups

Figure 31. Migrant Mobile Application use by Age

Source: Compiled by the IEA Research Team (2022).



Age: 18-25 26-33 34-41 42-49 50-57 58-65 66-73 74-81



Regarding the use of other mobile apps not related to social media, only 22% of survey participants expressed using these. Of these participants, 68.1% use other apps for fun, followed by 29.2% who use them for banking purposes, and 13.9% who use them to stay informed or catch up on the news. As shown in Figure 31, using mobile devices to share information on a personal business or stay informed regarding migratory and migrant rights matters is more important for older migrants.

By contrast, 78% of survey participants expressed not using mobile apps for any other purpose than access to social media such as WhatsApp, Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, YouTube, or TikTok. Of these, 48.3% of participants were not willing to download a mobile app to stay informed on their rights as a migrant, refugee, or returnee. As well, 77.8% of survey participants do not download other apps because they do not consider it necessary, whereas 20.9% do not know how to use them, and 20.3% do not know what kind of other mobile apps exist. These figures show that most survey participants prefer zero-rating apps such as WhatsApp and Facebook that do not come with additional costs to stay in touch. In Cali, WhatsApp is the app that provides migrants in the city with the most information. Thus, mobile devices, internet connection and the use of WhatsApp play a fundamental role in the lives of migrants, especially in their information access.

Not having access to a phone is one of the main barriers migrants face, especially when first arriving in Colombia. This is because their phone services usually expire soon after entering Colombia, leaving migrants unable to make or receive calls and access their emails. This situation compounds migrants' economic conditions and constant movements because it limits the ability of institutions—such as the National Office for Migration—to reach them and inform them of the status of their different processes. Within this context, word of mouth through family, friends, or neighbors becomes the most important mechanism for migrants to stay informed, as analyzed under the Information Needs section of this report.



In the CSO Alianzas Solidarias, we have a WhatsApp group per precinct. Why? Because often people lose information like phone numbers and names, or they even lose their phones or have their services cancelled, and then they lose all communication. So we realized that by having a WhatsApp group per precinct, those who lose communication may go to a neighbor or friend who is also in the Alianzas Solidarias WhatsApp group to stay informed.

—Woman, Fundación Alianza Solidaria, community leader focus group

3. MISINFORMATION

This section analyzes the procedures and practices migrants use to receive, share, and verify information through different media. **According to the IEA research team, survey data, social media, instant messaging apps, and word of mouth are the means through which rumors and misinformation circulate the most.** This may end in petty crimes, rights violations, and the reinforcement of negative stereotypes and prejudices against migrants, further excluding migrants from host communities.

3.1 VENEZUELAN MIGRANT PERCEPTIONS IN CALI

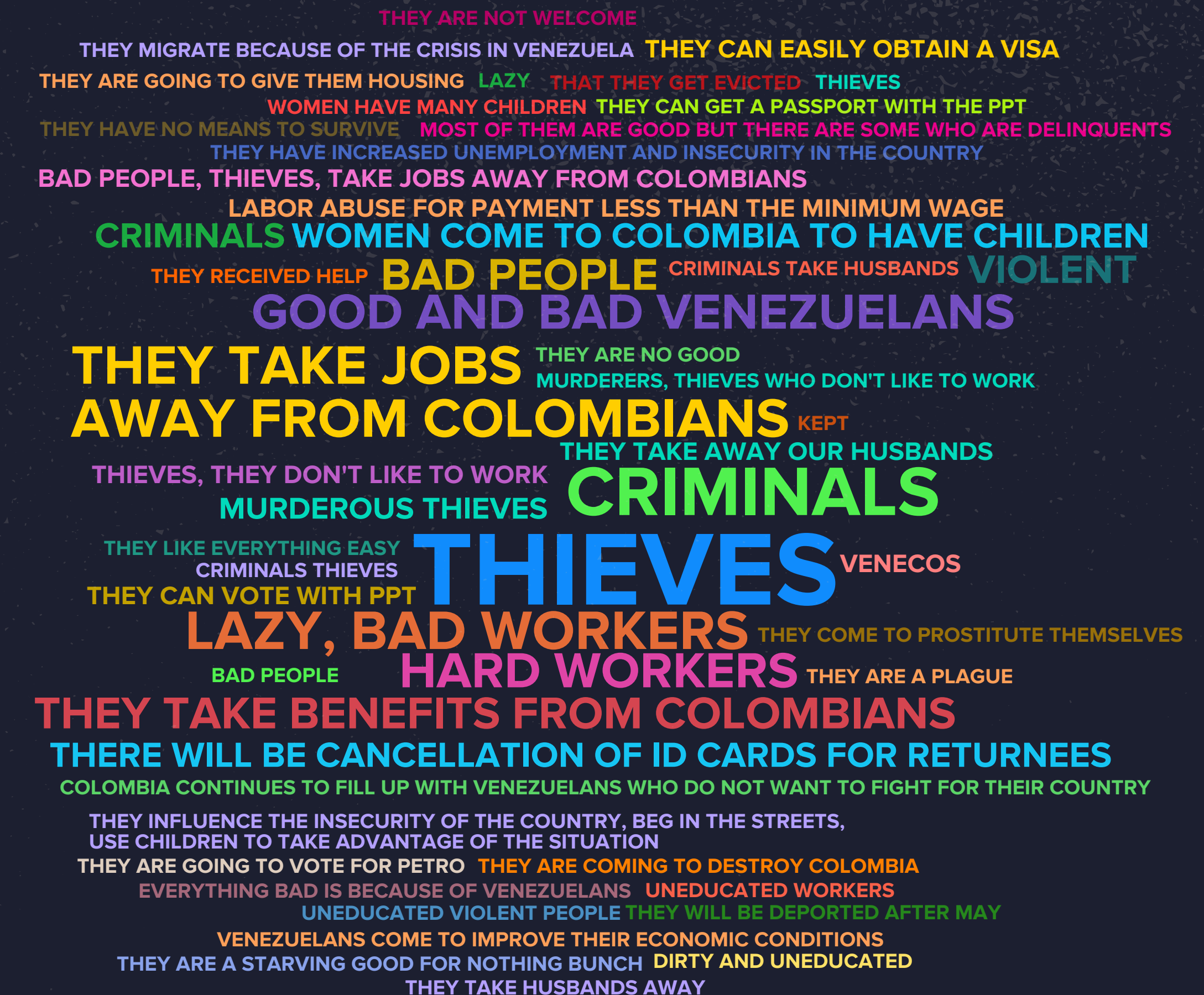
Among survey participants, **41.3% stated having read or heard rumors about Venezuelan migrants, refugees, and returnees.** These rumors are associated with negative comments, such as the following: Venezuelans are thieves, criminals, lazy, and poor workers that are taking jobs or benefits away from Colombians. Figure 32 shows some of the most frequent expressions against migrants.

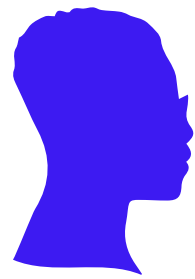
The rumors identified by survey participants coincide with those discussed in focus groups with migrant and host communities. The most common rumors are as follows: unemployment for Colombians has increased due to the informal hiring of Venezuelans, the national budget spent to service migrants, and the handout of Colombian IDs to migrants so they can influence Colombian elections, and there is a perception that crime and poverty in Cali have increased due to migration.



Figure 32. Rumors Migrants have heard or read about Venezuelan Migrants, Refugees, and Returnees

Source: Compiled by the IEA Research Team (2022).





Now with Venezuelans, I have also noticed that those who have settled in different neighborhoods have sort of taken away [jobs]. I mean, the owners of bakeries and local shops have fired many Colombians and replaced them with Venezuelans. Why? Because with the salary they pay one Colombian they can hire two Venezuelans, meaning they are also saving a bit of money.

—Man, 60 years old, host community focus group

In the face of these rumors, **migrant community members have raised the need for media and for the national and local governments to clearly inform the population on matters such as funding sources to address migration and provide services to the migrant population in Colombia.** This is because there is a lot of misinformation surrounding how social, health-care, and subsidy programs for migrants are financed. As a result, host communities believe these programs are financed exclusively with national resources, even though they also come from international agencies such as the World Bank and USAID ([Banco Mundial 2021](#)).



Many Colombians believe all this aid, even for health care, comes from the national budget. This is general misinformation. So when we have a chance to speak, we say, “No, this and that comes from international aid and has nothing to do with the budget allocated to you as Colombian citizens.

—Woman 50 years old, migrant community focus group

A main concern regarding these rumors and disinformation among host communities is that these influence local ideas about the migrant community, increasing xenophobia and discrimination across all levels of society. Moreover, rumors and disinformation may negatively affect how migrants perceive themselves and their dignity.



After people are victims of xenophobia, they are objectified, dehumanized, and become objects. As objects, they lose specific characteristics and elements that are key to being a human, and this is reinforced by those who are xenophobic. So it is important to raise awareness. The most important thing . . . is that words create irreparable wounds, and [host community members] can make the difference in the life of a person by saying a positive or negative word.

—Man, interview, IOM

3.2 WORD OF MOUTH IS THE MAIN MEANS THROUGH WHICH RUMORS AND MIGRANT STIGMATIZATION SPREAD

As shown in Figure 33, 41.28% of survey participants have heard rumors about migrants, returnees, or refugees. Further, 80.6% of participants said word of mouth is the source from which most rumors spread and the one they trust the least. This is followed by social media, with 46.76% of survey participants reporting receiving rumors from these, and instant messaging apps, with 28.36% of survey respondents saying rumors spread through these.

Figures 33. Sources from which Rumors spread according to Migrants

Source: Compiled by the IEA Research Team (2022).

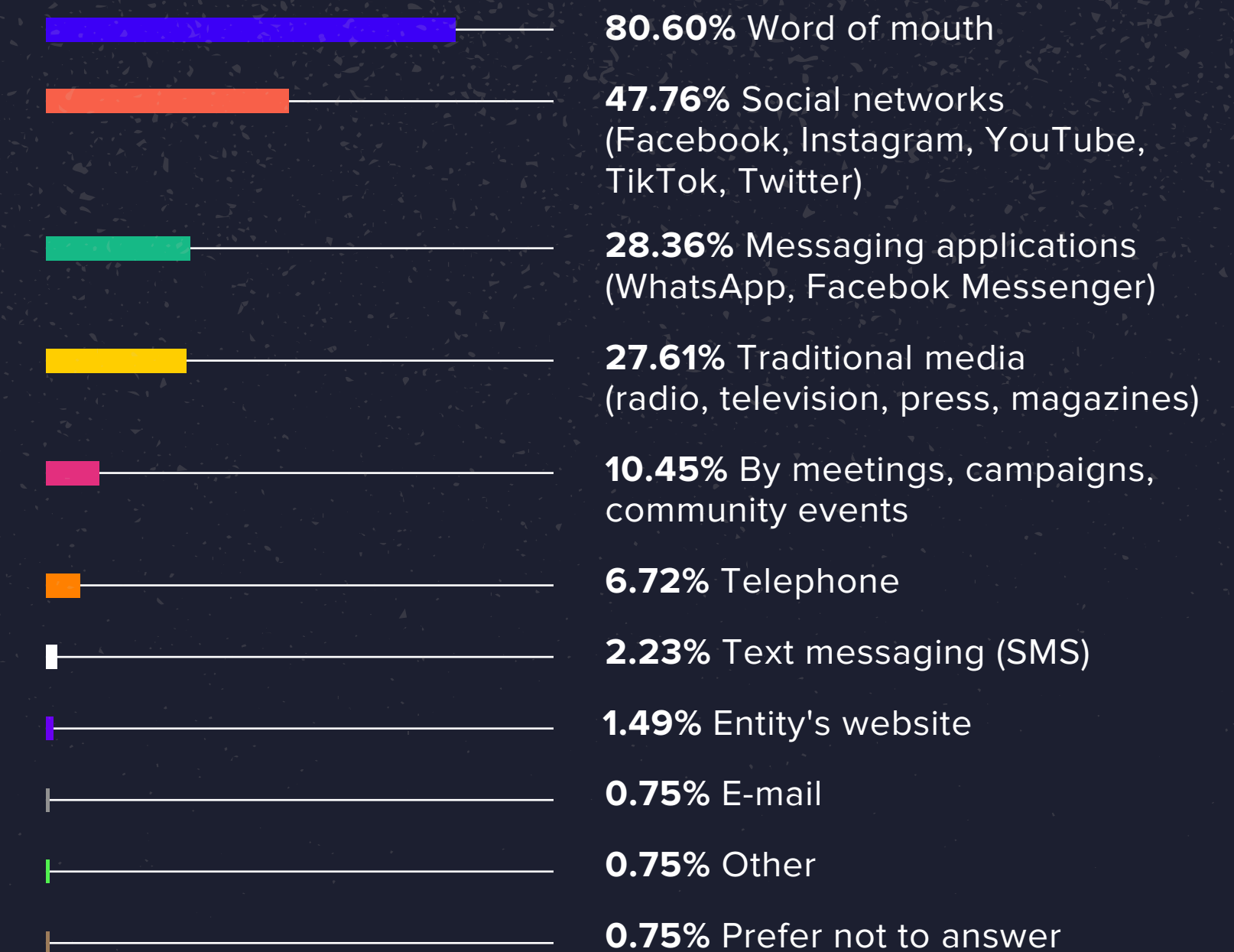
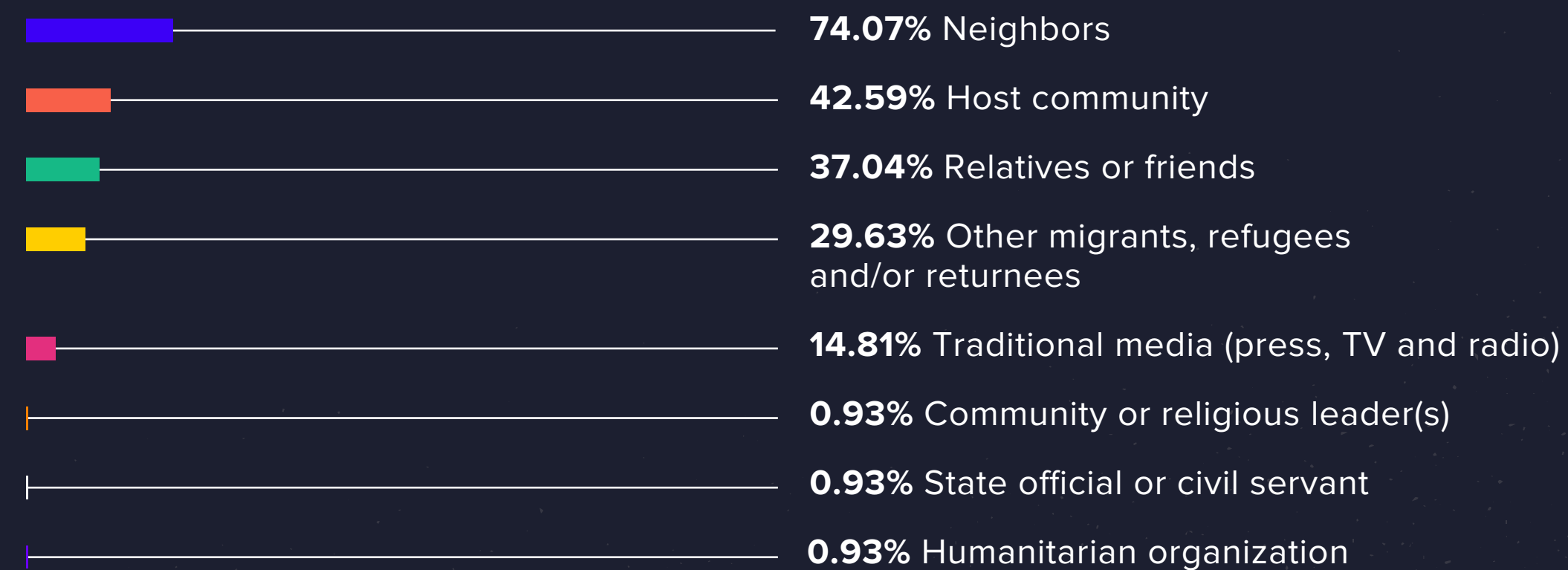


Figure 34. **Source from which Word of Mouth Rumors spread**

Source: Compiled by the IEA Research Team (2022).

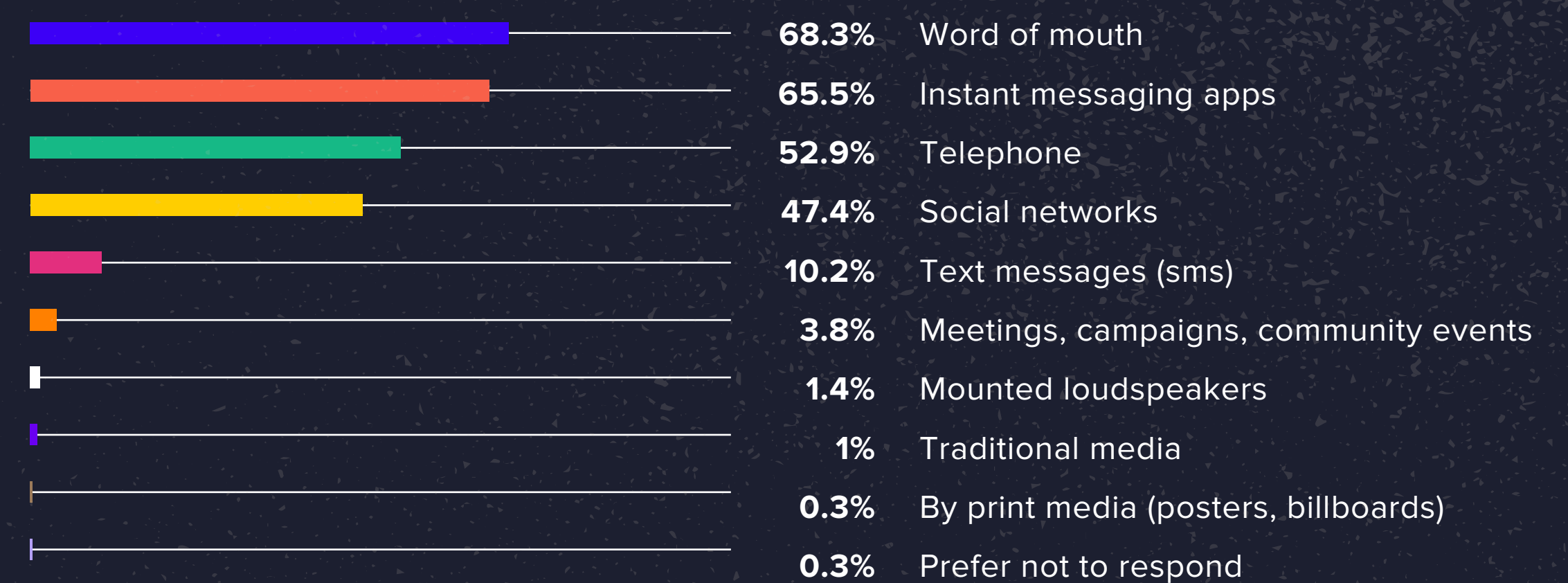


Word of mouth is the most common medium to spread rumors or stigmatizing comments that have not been adequately fact-checked or that are taken to be common knowledge. Word-of-mouth rumors typically come from neighbors, host community members, family, or friends, as shown in Figure 34.

This reveals the importance and complexity of interpersonal relationships for the migrant community, especially their relationships with other migrants and host community members who are part of their families and close circle of friends and neighbors. This is because rumors circulate the most within these relationships, but it is also through these relationships that migrants have access to the information they need the most for life in Cali, as discussed under the Information Needs section.

Figure 35. **Means through Which Migrants prefer sharing Relevant Information for Other Migrants, Refugees, or Returnees**

Source: Compiled by the IEA Research Team (2022).



3.3 FACT-CHECKING AS A PROTECTIVE MEASURE

Through its survey, the IEA research team **established that sharing information relevant to other migrants, refugees, or returnees is an important activity for 89.6% of survey participants.**

Most survey participants preferred sharing relevant information with other migrants person to person, followed by using instant messaging apps, phones, and social media in fourth place (Figure 35). This further confirms the fundamental role interpersonal relationships and instant messaging apps play in migrants' information ecosystem.

Sharing information primarily through word of mouth or instant messaging apps such as WhatsApp has become common practice for migrants and returnees, as discussed under the Information Access section of this report. In this section, the IEA research team analyzed the significance of WhatsApp when sharing content relevant for the migrant population.

Within this context, there is a high risk of making fake news go viral and spreading scams and other content that may be harmful to migrants' physical and digital well-being. Regarding these risks, 80.1% of survey participants reported fact-checking the information they receive, as shown in Table 12.

Table 12. Ways in which Migrants verify distrustful Information that may be relevant for other Migrants, Refugees, or Returnees

Source: Compiled by the IEA Research Team (2022).

Ways to verify information	Percentage
Try to confirm the origin and/or date of publication of the information (audio, video or text) by asking other migrants or the host community.	66.03%
Explore whether other sources such as organizations, well-known media (radio, TV, press) or reliable websites are reporting the same information	46.18%
Check through social networks the trustworthiness of the person, organization or media outlet publishing the information	42.37%
Search the internet for the website separately and compare the URLs to check that it is not a fake address.	36.64%
Identify phone number and calls the organization or person in question to ask for more information.	29.77%
Other	0.76%

Participants in the focus group with migrant women acknowledged gaining fact-checking skills through [Colombiacheck](#), communication and training strategy, Conectando Caminos: [Migración Venezuela](#)¹⁰. This strategy, sponsored by USAID's Conectando Caminos por los Derechos program, consists of fact-checking stories and data shared through WhatsApp audios, newsletters, events, places where migrants gather, and other printed sources. Thanks to this strategy, focus group participants expressed having modified their information use practices, especially their use of personal data and images.

[Fake news] no longer circulates. At least not as much. And when we see it, we know

¹⁰ Colombiacheck is a project by Consejo de Redacción, a CSO that brings together more than 100 journalists across Colombia to promote investigative journalism. Colombiacheck is an open and collaborative digital platform that publishes articles to promote the



immediately how to verify it. There [on the Colombiacheck Migración Venezuela website], the news will be labeled as false, and that's it. So now, when we get messages saying to send our documents here, or to share our data there, or other fake information . . . we now know we cannot do that. That is why the first thing I do now is ask, "Where are you reaching out from? Which organization do you represent, and where is it? What kind of place is this?"

Woman, migrant community focus group

In an interview with a journalist who participates in Colombiacheck and who also actively partakes in activities with the migrant community, the IEA research team observed that **migrants' vulnerability and unsatisfied basic needs are key factors contributing to this community being victim of frauds, scams, and personal data thefts** through messages that offer them aid or benefits, especially on social media and WhatsApp.



So migrants usually turn to me or other journalists to verify if the information is true. We make a call, and there is always some work to do here, such as fact-checking the information with organizations, because [scammers] sometimes pretend to represent these [organizations] through links, message chains, or other means to send the information.

—Journalist, interview, Colombiacheck

3.4 MISINFORMATION AND THE ETPV

Despite organizational efforts to fight misinformation among the migrant community, **4.32% of survey participants expressed a payment was demanded of them when applying to the ETPV to be registered with the RUMV.**¹¹

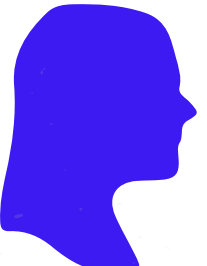
Regarding the ETPV, 40 out of 100 survey participants have heard rumors about the benefits this ID provides. The two most popular rumors surrounding the ETPV are having access to government subsidies and the possibility of entering and leaving the country with no restrictions, as shown in Figure 36. Accessing government subsidies is one of the rumors

verification of facts and data based on fact-checking practices across the globe.

¹¹ Among survey participants, 279 (or 89.7%) said they had applied to the ETPV. This percentage does not include the 16 cases of Colombian returnees.

fact-checked through the Colombiacheck strategy. While there is a possibility for migrants to receive economic aid from the government, this would only be possible for migrants holding a PPT and who have been registered with the SISBEN system, which identifies vulnerable populations who require this type of aid.

In addition to rumors listed in its survey and those identified through interviews and focus groups with migrants, the IEA research team identified that another major rumor circulating is the possibility of massive deportations for migrants who have yet to begin their PPT process after the period of RUMV registration closures. This rumor gained force during Colombian elections, especially as a result of some remarks made by presidential candidates.

 *Migrants have heard they will deport those who do not have [a PPT]. And they have said that [word]: deportation. Meaning that Venezuelan who do not have it, who do not have this document, may be deported.*
—Woman, migrant community focus group

4. INFORMATION IMPACT

When discussing the impact of information on the Venezuelan migrant, refugee, and returnee communities in Colombia, the IEA research team refers to the effects that a given situation, event, or attitude has on individuals, limiting their actions and personal development while also influencing their decisions and view of life.

In particular, this section analyzes the effects of discrimination and xenophobia, the most common types of discrimination and violence, as well as the actors committing these actions and the places where migrants would go to report these. The IEA research team also analyzes the impact of information shared during Colombian presidential elections and delves into some of the fears and expectations among the migrant community during the said election process.

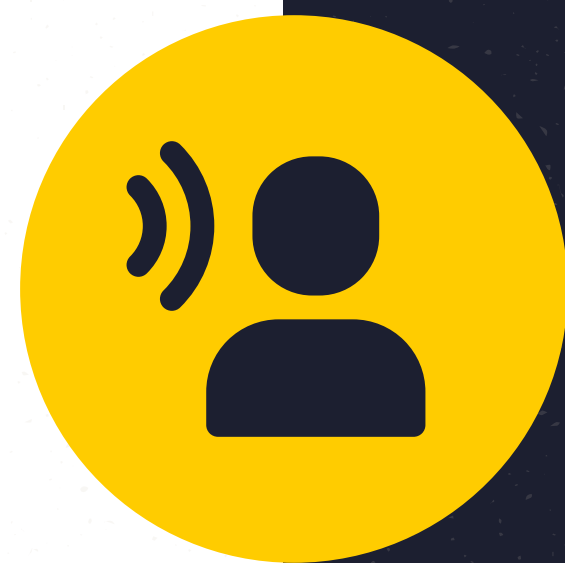


Figure 36. **Rumors Migrants have heard about the Benefits of the ETPV for Venezuelan Migrants**

Source: Compiled by the IEA Research Team (2022).

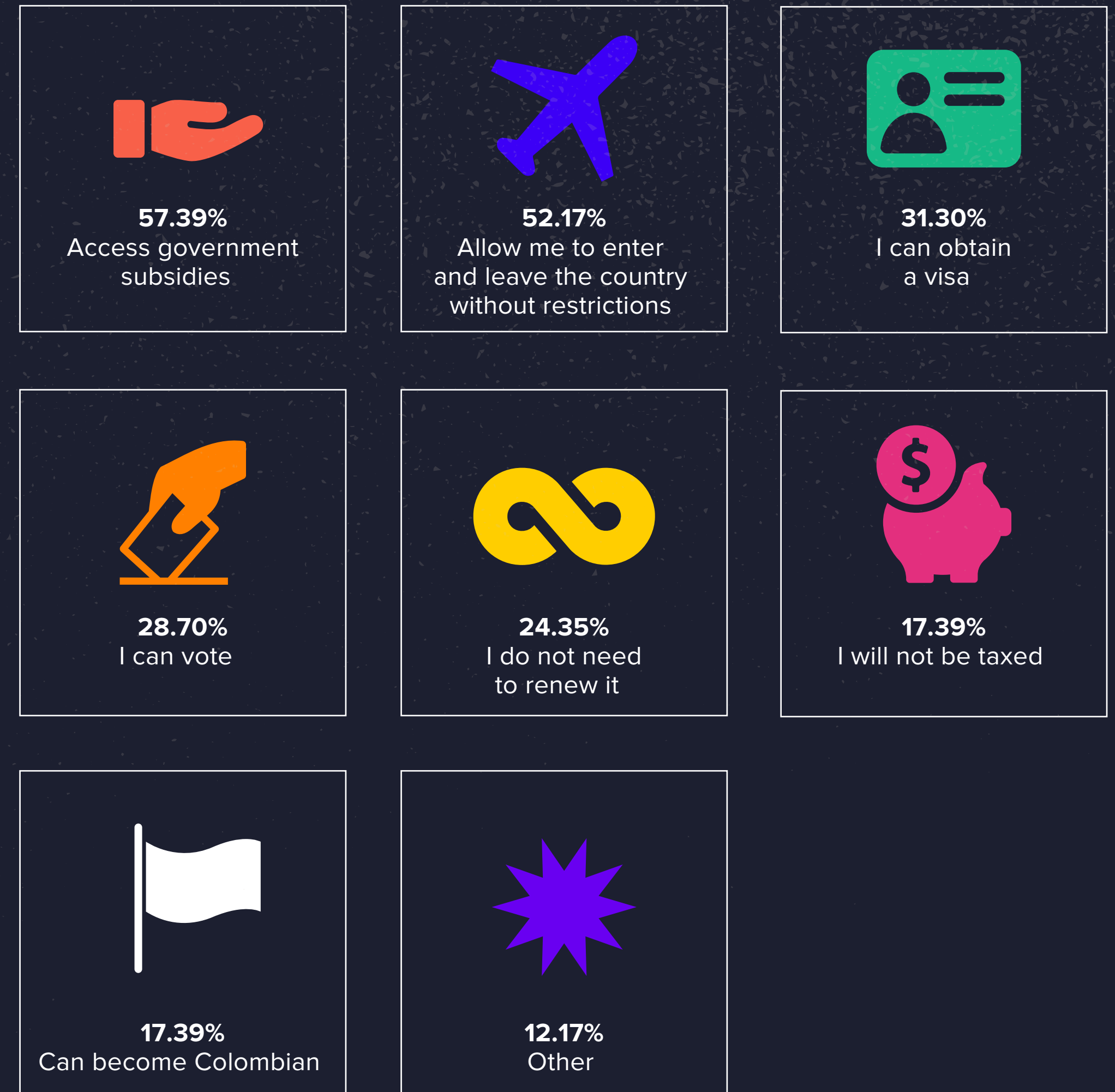


Figure 37. Migrants in Cali who have experienced, heard of, or Witnessed Discrimination, Violence, or Aggression based on their Nationality, distributed by Gender

Source: Compiled by the IEA Research Team (2022).

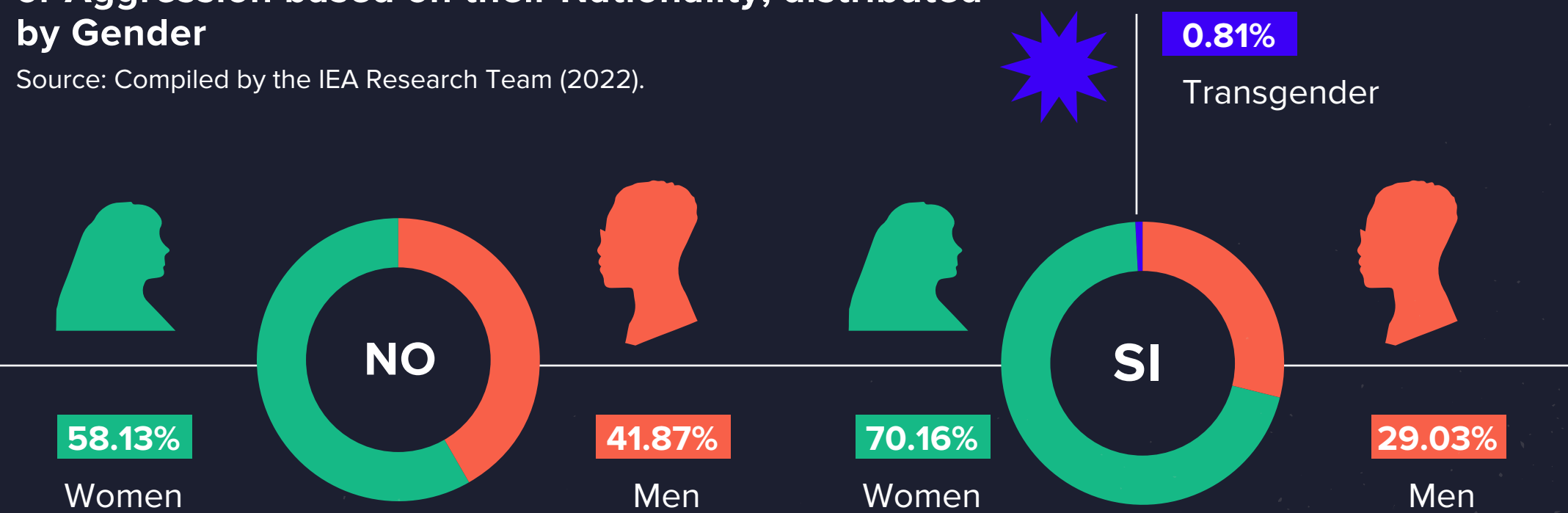
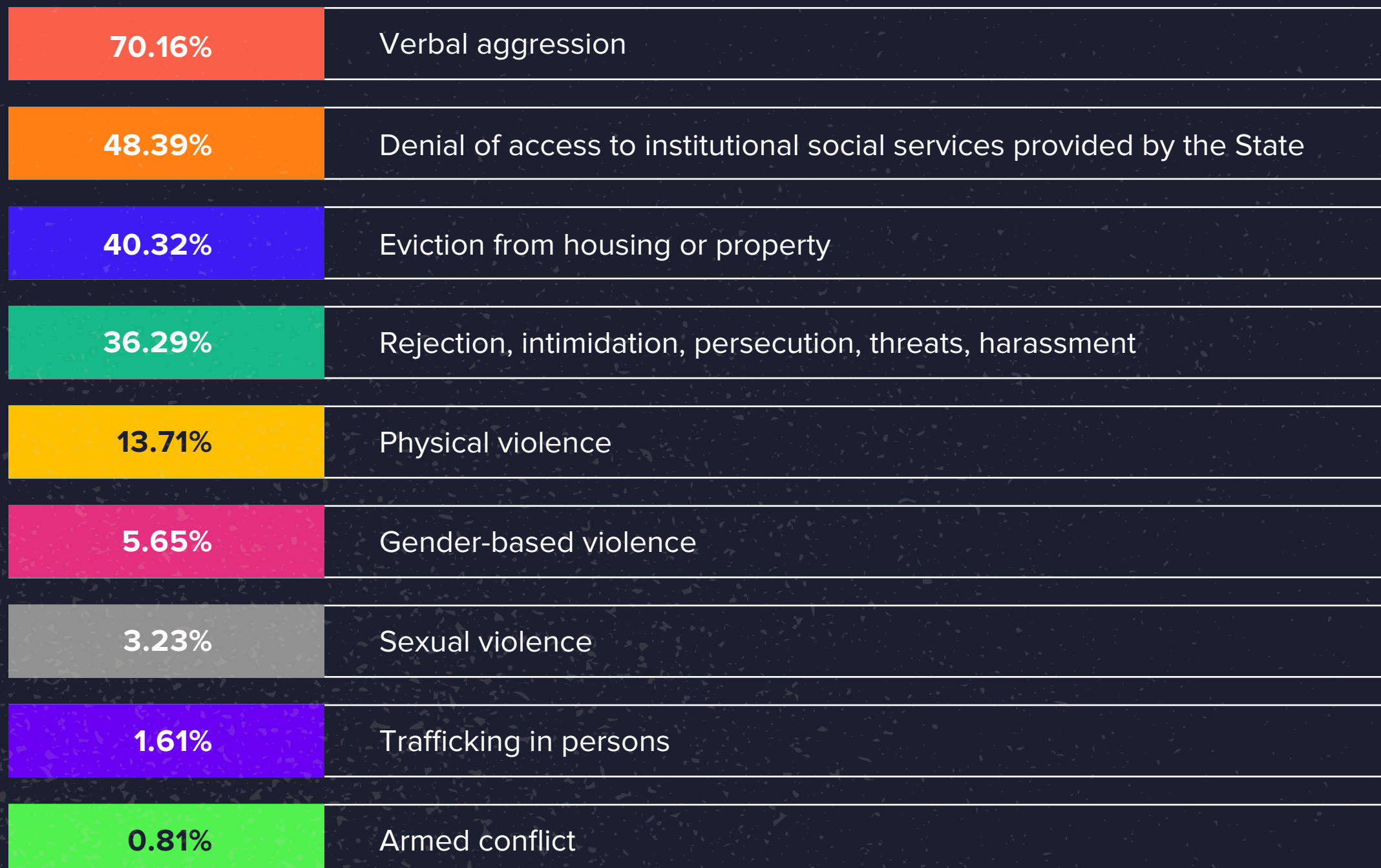


Figure 38. Types of Discrimination, Violence, or Aggression Based on Nationality That Migrants Have Experienced, Heard of, or Witnessed in Cali

Source: Compiled by the IEA Research Team (2022).



4.1 TYPES OF DISCRIMINATION

IEA study findings indicate that most participants—both in focus groups and interviews—identify that Cali is one of the cities where migrants experience less xenophobia. Despite this, **37.9% of survey participants expressed having experiences, heard of, or witnessed discrimination, violence, or aggression based on migrants' nationality in Cali.** It is worth noting that the only person who self-identified as transgender in the IEA survey also manifested experiencing or witnessing discrimination, as shown in Figure 37. This points to a need to address discrimination, violence, and aggression against migrants through a gender lens to consider how these actions intersect with other population characteristics and vulnerabilities.

Figure 38 shows different types of discrimination affecting migrants, with verbal aggression being the most common. People verbally discriminating against migrants tend to be host community members.

The second most reported type of discrimination is being denied institutional services, including health care and access to documentation, protection, justice, and education. This type of discrimination is particularly concerning because it involves the violation of human rights that the Colombian government must guarantee for all people, regardless of their nationality. Focus group participants reported having been denied services such as newborn birth certificates and access to health care and education for minors. Participants also mentioned several instances of discrimination against pregnant women at health centers.

4.2 MAIN DISCRIMINATION ACTORS

When researching who commits acts of discrimination or violence against migrants, the IEA research team found that host community members are the main aggressors, as shown in Figure 39. This coincides with findings under the Information Use section, where the IEA research team analyzed that host communities were a main source of rumors that play a key role in fueling xenophobia and acts of discrimination.

Migrant stigmatization and negative stereotypes often lead sectors of host communities to consider this population as subjects with no rights in Colombia. In turn, this deepens polarization, fostering an “us versus them” mentality that promotes scenarios of struggle against the migrant population.



The problem is that Venezuelans who come here already feel like they have our national rights, and they want to demand these, and this is not well received . . . So whenever I hear something like this, I say, “Damn! Where is this going to lead us?” Because, at any moment, there could be a civil confrontation in a fight for survival because, in the long run, that is what we are all looking for, survival.

—Man, 50 years old, host community focus group

Following a similar trend to discrimination types experienced, heard, or witnessed by migrants, survey participants identified public officers as the second most common aggressor. The IEA research team **extensively confirmed this data point during the qualitative phase of this study, where participants reported multiple acts of discrimination and xenophobia by public officers, especially those working for the National Office for Migration.**

It is worth noting that the National Office for Migration being so amply recognized as an aggressor is correlated with the fact that this is the local authority with which migrants interact the most, meaning its public officers are in constant contact with the migrant community.



In a session that I participated in, [public officers] were xenophobic against me, thinking I was a Venezuelan migrant. I let them say all their negative, pejorative comments. They treated me like a person incapable of thinking, and kept saying, “In your country this, in your country that.” I remained silent. My husband was also a victim of xenophobia, and they insulted him. It was awful! It’s true. But after their xenophobic acts, we told them we are actually Colombians and that their treatment of Venezuelan migrants is not right, especially when [the National Office for Migration] is the one responsible for receiving migrants and giving them all the relevant information. In that moment, they completely changed their attitude.

—Woman, CSO leader focus group

Figure 39. Actors Responsible for Acts of Discrimination, Violence, or Aggression against Migrants, Refugees, and Returnees

Source: Compiled by the IEA Research Team (2022).

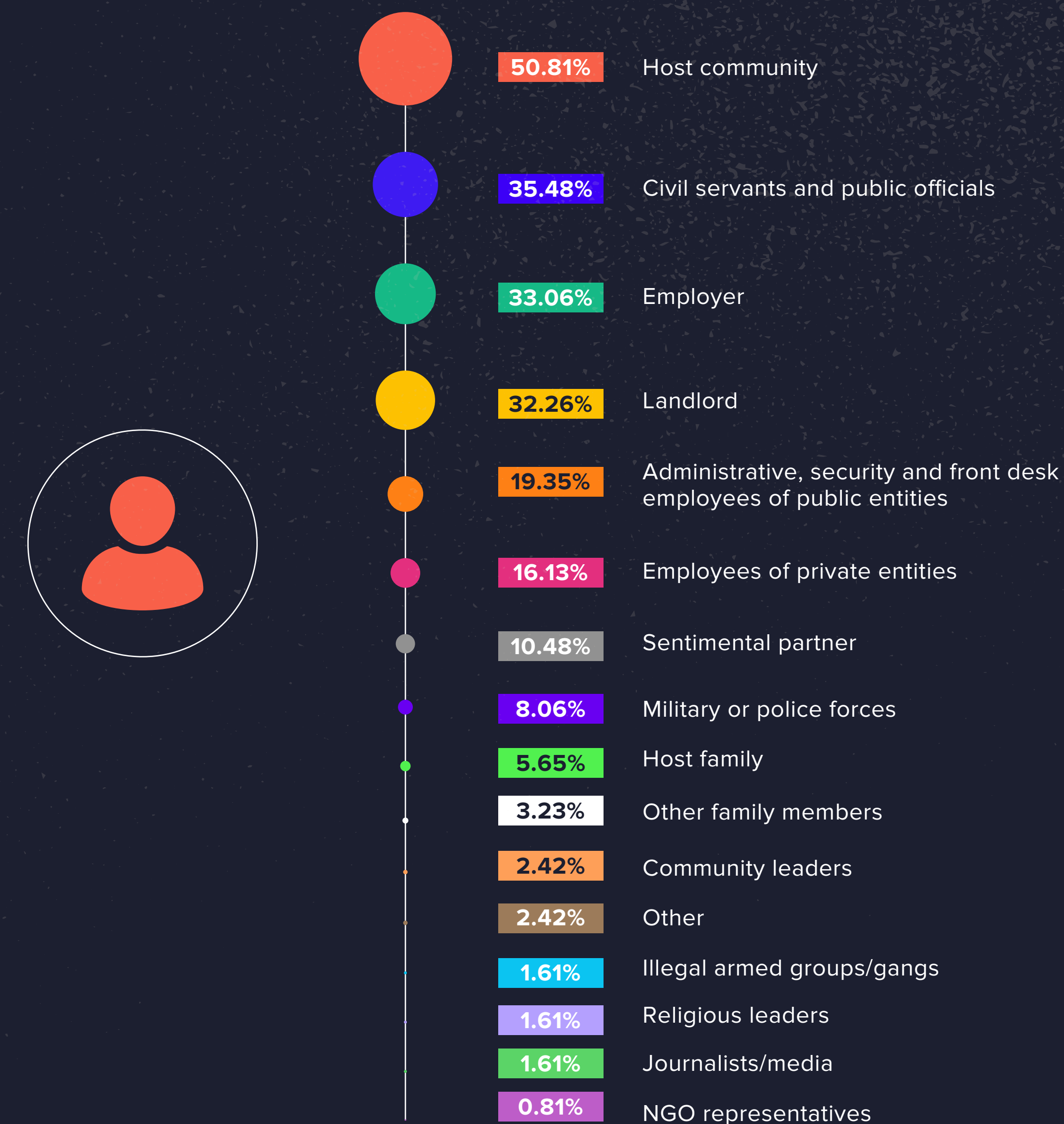
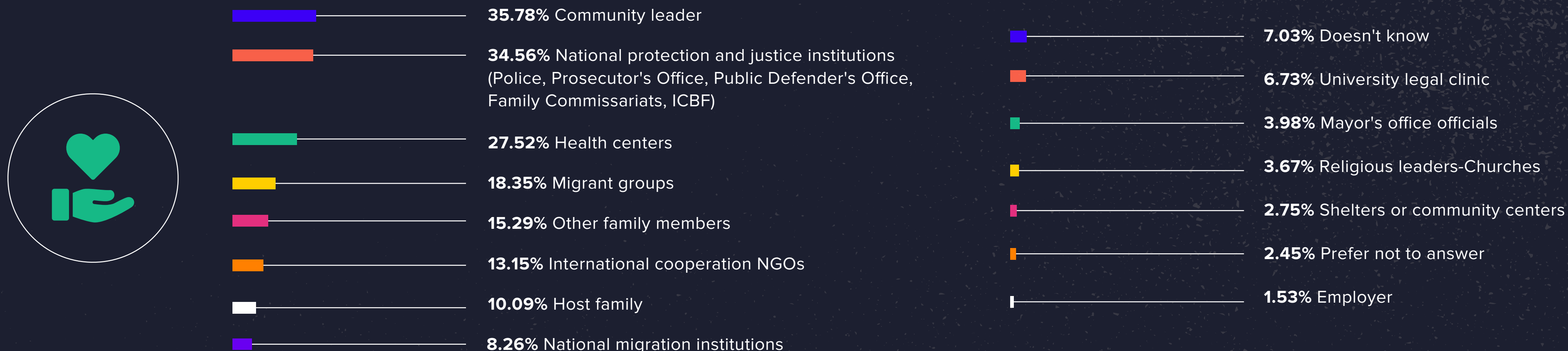


Figure 40. People or Institutions that Migrants would seek out in Case of Violence or Discrimination

Source: Compiled by the IEA Research Team (2022).



Public officers' aggression against migrants points to an urgent need to raise awareness and train these officers in humanitarian treatment toward migrants, refugees, and returnees. Raising awareness and providing training helps public officers become aware of the effects of their xenophobic acts, giving them tools to fight and prevent stigmatization and discrimination against migrants. Throughout the IEA, community leaders expressed their willingness to work on public officer trainings because they understand the migration crisis in Colombia is a completely new phenomenon that has taken by surprise the general population, public institutions, and officers.



So I know for them, [National Office for Migration officers], it is also, let's say, difficult to handle everything. Because it is the first time that Colombia has faced a situation like this. Colombia is used to people migrating out but not to hosting immigrants. So I think we can also give them a hand and let the know and see the needs we have. I say "we," meaning CSOs but also migrants organizing ourselves, so we can reach them in a kinder way.

—Woman leader, migrant community focus group

4.3 MIGRANT GUIDANCE AND SUPPORT IN CASES OF DISCRIMINATION

As shown in Figure 40, **35.8% of survey participants expressed preferring to seek a community leader when experiencing violence or discrimination.** This confirms findings under the section Information Needs, where the IEA research team identified community leaders as key actors that migrants trust, whose organization capacity and humanitarian treatment are acknowledged not only by the migrant community but also by local authorities and institutions.

Figure 41. **Migrant Communication Method to report an Act of Violence or Discrimination**

Source: Compiled by the IEA Research Team (2022).



* WhatsApp, Messenger de Facebook, Telegram, other

** Facebook, Instagram, WhatsApp, Youtube, TikTok

Interestingly, survey participants do identify Colombian institutions as a second option to seek out for protection and justice in cases of experiencing aggression, despite the fact that migrants acknowledge that their communication with institutions such as the police is not frequent. The IEA research team observes that this may be due to these institutions being responsible for intervening in or investigating aggression and violent acts. However, study participants expressed that, **in practice, migrants face several barriers to accessing justice, including migrants' lack of knowledge of Colombian institutions and their responsibilities as well as an irregular migratory status.**

When it comes to reporting an aggression, most survey participants expressed preferring to go directly to the local offices of the relevant institution, as shown in Figure 41. This data point coincides with findings under the Information Needs section of this report, which shows migrants prioritize in-person communication when it comes to local authorities.

4.4 MIGRANT FEARS AND EXPECTATIONS REGARDING THE NEW COLOMBIAN GOVERNMENT (2022-2026)

The Venezuelan migration to Colombia, as any other social phenomenon, may be subject to politization and polarization ([Garcés 2019](#)). Tensions between Colombia and Venezuela have been high since the end of all relations between the two countries in 2015. This event has been compounded by Colombia's acknowledgement of Venezuela's interim government in 2019, increasing political tensions and bureaucratic barriers for Venezuelans seeking to complete administrative procedures.

In a host community focus group, the IEA research team observed how Colombian presidential elections were contributing to increasing uncertainty about the future of migrants in the country, the reopening of diplomatic relations between Colombia and Venezuela, or even effects on administrative procedures between the two countries, depending on who became the next president.



What would happen if the next president decided to reestablish financial, trade, and other relations? Would a significant number of Venezuelans return to their country? Would anything happen at all? [. . .] I think we are facing uncertainty. Is it a yes, or is it a no?

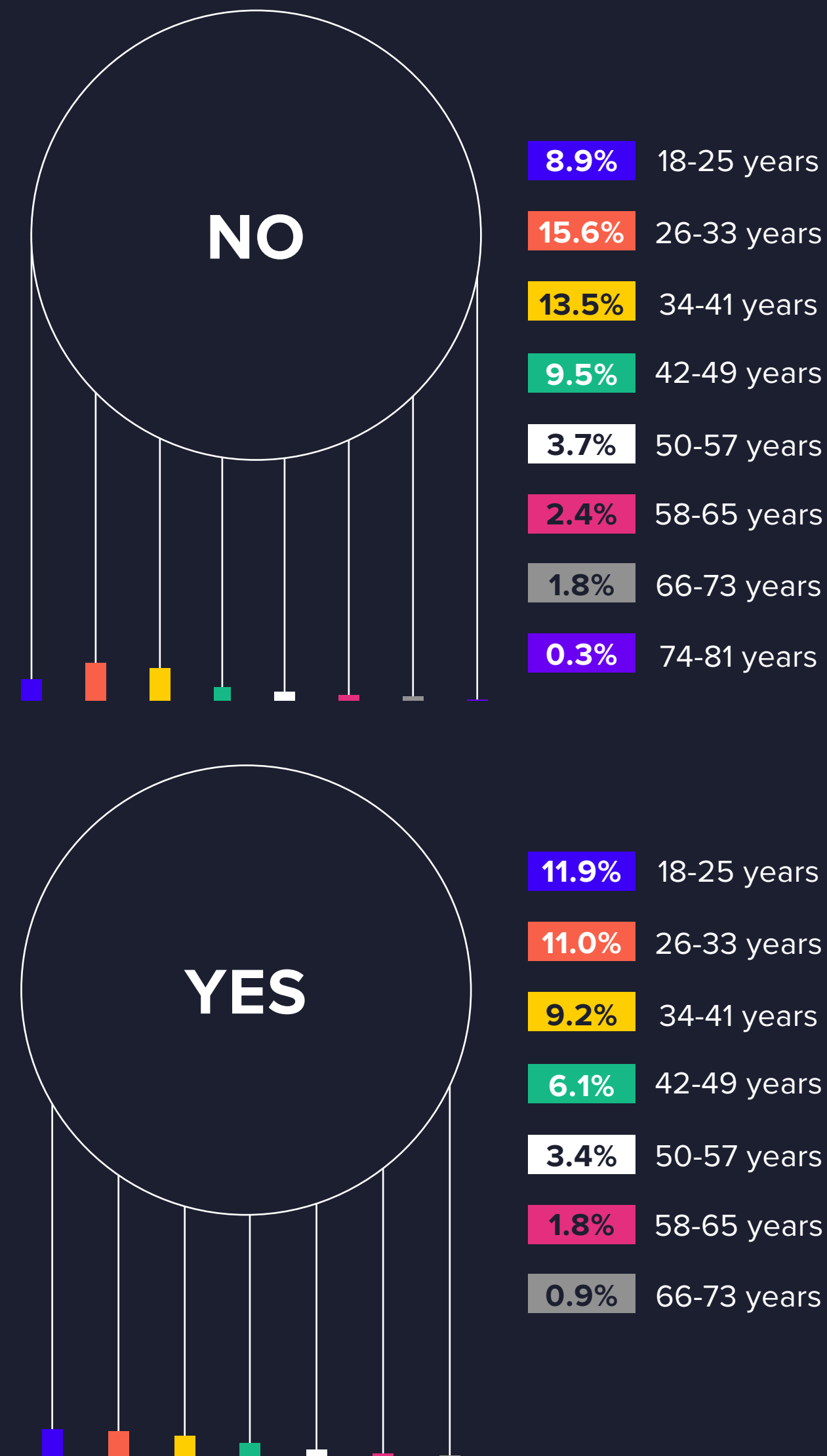
—Man, 66 years old, host community focus group

In the IEA survey, we asked 327 migrant respondents about the possible effects of a government change in Colombia on their migratory situation. **Consequently, 55.7% of respondents expressed believing the 2022 elections would have no effect on their migratory situation.** Nevertheless, when breaking down answers by age, the IEA research team found that 11.9% of surveyed youth between the ages of 18 and 25 do believe elections will affect their migratory situation. This age group feels the most vulnerable in the face of political changes in Colombia (Figure 42).

Colombia has a solid judicial system and is a guarantor of international instruments to protect the right to migrate, especially due to the unprecedented migratory crisis it has faced in the past seven years. However, there are concerns among certain groups regarding migration policy implementation. In its interview with the ICESI University Legal Counsel Office, the IEA research team observed that **the responsibilities acquired by the Colombian government on migration must be progressive and cannot be reduced, limited, or eliminated to implement a lesser migrant protection framework.**

Figure 42. Migrant Perceptions of the Effects of the 2022 Colombian Presidential Elections on their Migratory Situation, distributed by Age

Source: Compiled by the IEA Research Team (2022).



I think it is unlikely that a new government will be able to backtrack on Colombia's commitments to [the migrant] population, which have been made public on an international stage. I don't think that would be easy; I think it would be a blunder. What a new government should do is build on what already exists to improve it, especially to find more international funds to provide services for this population.

—Man, interview, ICESI Legal Counsel Office

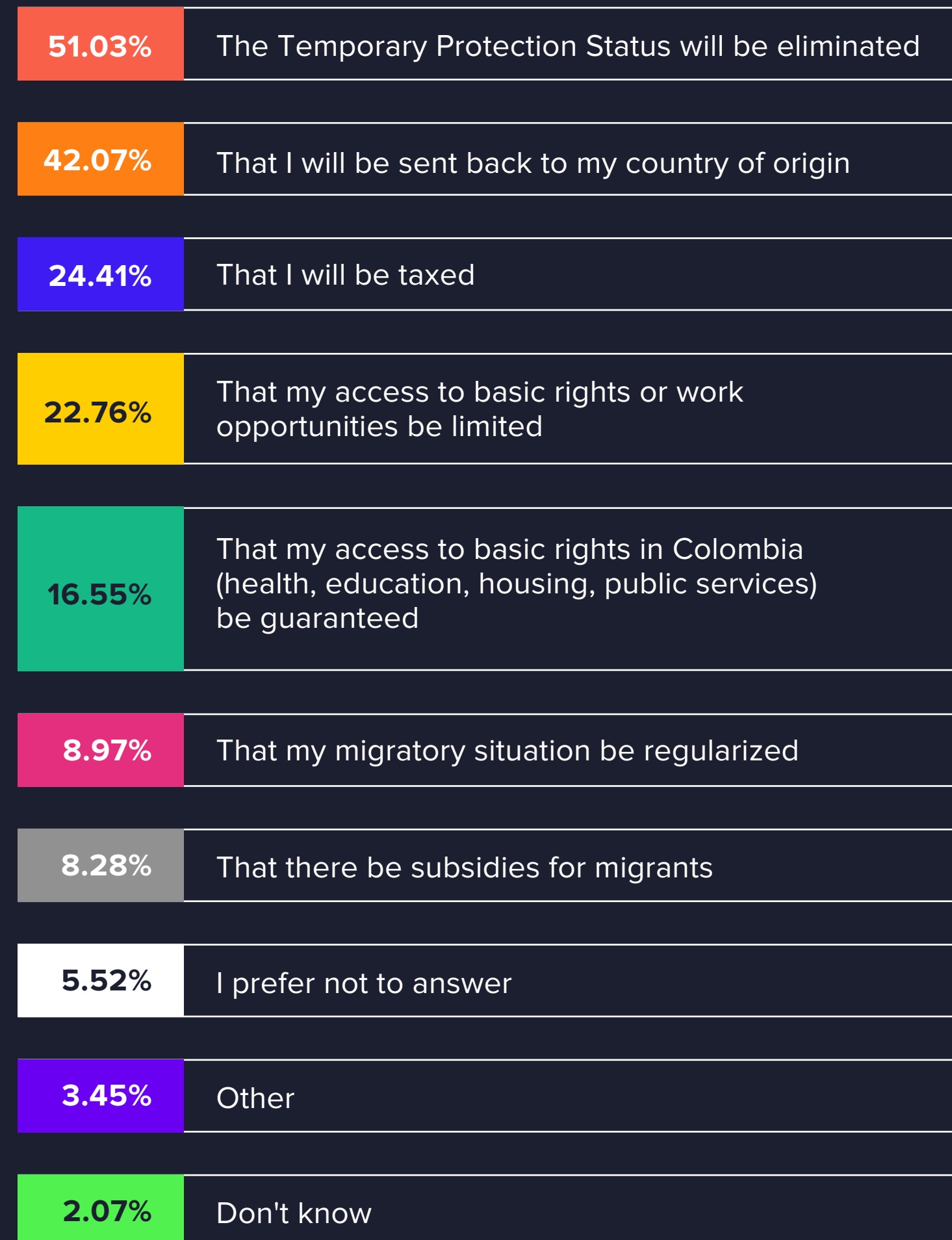
However, survey respondents are not aware of this information. Instead, they are affected by fears and expectations created by misinformation, rumors, and politization surrounding political campaigns. **Of the 145 survey participants who consider presidential election results to have an effect on their migratory situation, participants mostly mentioned their concerns of a potential ETPV elimination and an increase in deportations.**

Presidential elections have also generated positive expectations among migrants, with the most mentioned ones being a guarantee of basic rights in Colombia, migratory regularization, and access to subsidies, as shown in Figure 43. These expectations represent a continuity of current dispositions in Colombia for migrant inclusion.

Another notable fear within the context of Colombian presidential elections is the consequences of a change in political party. In focus groups with migrants, participants often mentioned **the downturn of economic conditions in Colombia, with constant comparisons to conditions in Venezuela.** Economic conditions in Colombia have raised uncertainty among migrants because poor conditions may push migrants to either return to Venezuela or migrate to

Figure 43. Possible Effects of the 2022 Colombian Presidential Election on Migrants' Situation

Source: Compiled by the IEA Research Team (2022).



another country. This would imply starting over and losing any progress made in terms of gaining stability, employment, and community.



[Migrating] again. Meaning, starting over from scratch. Because in Venezuela, I never did any of the things I have done here. Here, I have achieved plenty. People say we're worse off here than in Venezuela. But then, us Venezuelans wouldn't be here now. If this was like Venezuela, we would not be here.

—Woman, migrant focus group

Focus group participants also underscored how public opinions, politicians, and the broader community use Venezuela as an example of poor governance, poor administration, and the implementation of ideals contrary to individual freedoms.



That terror campaign is the one generating fear among people. Because now, people get stability from their jobs, their own individual economies, their education, and [their] health, and you see that. So Venezuelans become the poster children of misery.

—Woman, migrant focus group

Beyond campaign discourses, we asked survey participants whether acts of xenophobia, violence, or discrimination had increased during elections. As a result, 21.4% of respondents expressed that during this period, discrimination against migrants increased, especially in the form of censorship of political opinions and verbal and physical aggression against migrants, refugees, and returnees. Similar to the data shown

in Figure 42, surveyed youth between the ages of 18 and 25 believe aggression against them has increased during elections.

Regarding migrants' political participation, **only 6% of survey participants expressed knowing of a situation in which a migrant was paid or pressured into campaigning for or against a candidate or political party.**



I heard from some friends, two Venezuelan women and their husbands, that they were paid 50,000 COP to get on buses to say, "Colombian citizens, do not vote for [the candidate] Petro because you will become Venezuela, you will be just like us."

—Woman, migrant focus group

The IEA research team found another instance of indirect political participation in the conviction of some migrants that everything must be done to stay away from political phenomena that are similar to the ones that forced them to leave their country. This shows that among the migrant population, there are also discourses that influence public opinion scenarios.



When my sister-in-law sees something on Facebook that resembles news from Venezuela, she thinks this very specifically will become like Venezuela. "Don't go voting for him because we'll become worse than Venezuela" . . . And she has this fear with everyone who speaks about the same things. I mean, she is not getting paid, but she is campaigning. So she's doing it for free.

—Woman, host community focus group.

5. ETPV PERCEPTIONS

As discussed under the Information Needs section of this report, migrant status conditions migrants' access to rights and becomes a barrier for their economic and social inclusion. Because of the challenges raised by the Venezuelan migrant crisis, the Colombian government adopted the ETPV, an instrument that allows for migrants' identification and characterization at the same time that it grants this population access to basic services and employment and economic inclusion for a 10-year period.

5.1 MIGRATORY STATUS AND IDS

As per IEA survey results, **50.15% of respondents were migrants with an irregular status in Colombia, as shown in Figure 44.** This represents a high number of people when considering the survey was administered a few weeks before the ETPV registration period closed.

A smaller percentage of survey participants, only **3.7%, identified themselves as asylum seekers (five people), refugees (four people), and regular migrants seeking asylum (three people).** To identify themselves in Colombia, these respondents use a safe-conduct pass and their Venezuelan ID, as shown in Table 13. Among these twelve respondents, **the IEA research team found two of them reported having felt pressured by officers from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the National Office for Migration into renouncing their safe-conduct passes to register with the ETPV. One of these respondents expressed having been denied their PPT request for having a safe-conduct pass as an asylum seeker.**

Regarding IDs, most survey participants manifested preferring to identify themselves with their Venezuelan IDs, even in cases where the Colombian government has already issued their documentation. This is true not only for Venezuelans but also for Colombian returnees, 75% of whom expressed continuing to use their Venezuelan ID in the IEA survey.

According to participants in focus groups with migrants and community leaders, migrants continue using their Venezuelan IDs in Colombia because many public

Figure 44. Survey Participants' Legal Status

Source: Compiled by the IEA Research Team (2022).

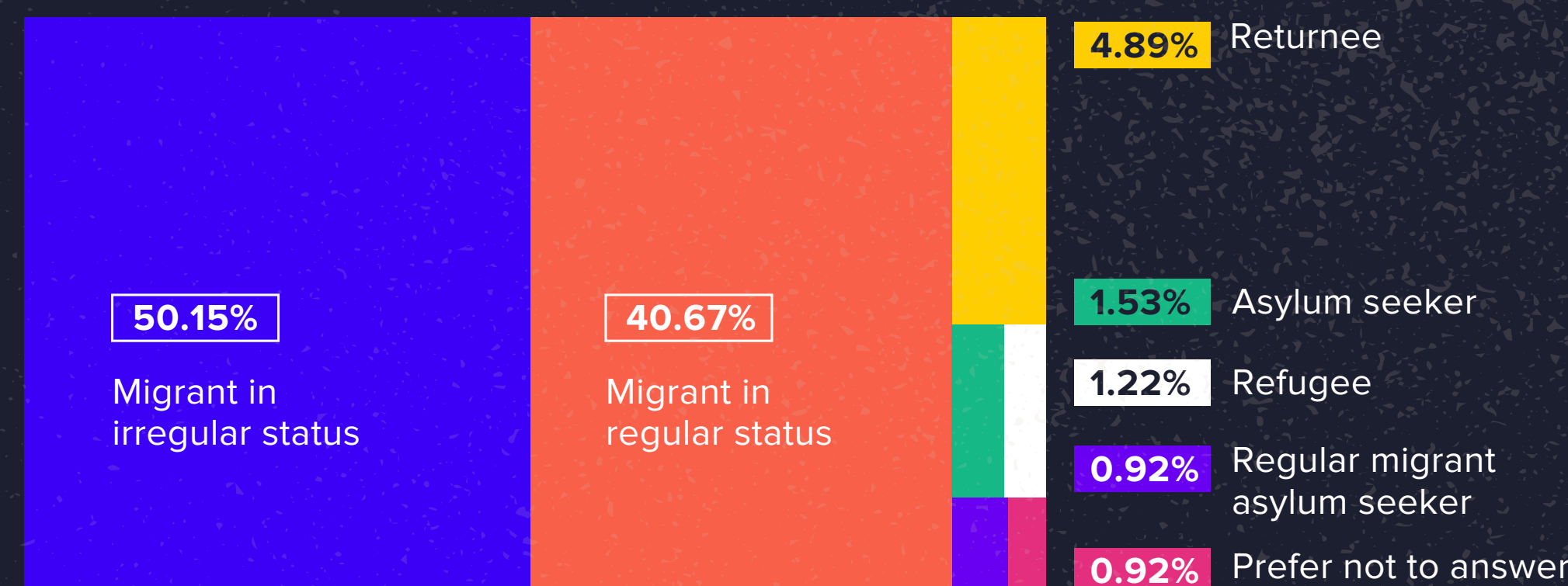


Table 13. Legal Migratory Status of Survey Participants, distributed by the ID they use

Source: Compiled by the IEA Research Team (2022)

TYPE OF ENTRY	MIGRANT IN IRREGULAR STATUS	MIGRANT IN REGULAR STATUS	REGULAR MIGRANT SEEKING ASYLUM	REFUGEE	RETURNEE	ASYLUM SEEKER
Colombian ID card	0%	3.0%	0%	0%	100%	0%
Alien Registration Card	0%	1.5%	0%	25.0%	0%	0%
Venezuelan ID card	98.8%	93.3%	66.7%	75.0%	75.0%	100%
Birth Certificate or Birth Registration	14.8%	1.5%	0%	25.0%	0%	0%
Passport	8.0%	28.9%	0%	25.0%	12.5%	0%
PEP	0.6%	34.8%	0%	0%	0%	0%
PEPFF	0%	0.7%	0%	0%	0%	0%
PPT	0.6%	68.1%	66.7%	0%	0%	0%
Refugee/asylum laissez-passer	0.6%	1.5%	100%	75.0%	0%	80%

officers and host community members are not aware of the processes and adoption of measures such as the ETPV. This compounds technical barriers to adopt the ETPV on platforms for migrant identification and access to rights and services.



Sometimes, people come and say, for example, domestic workers, the police stopped them and asked for their ID, but their PPT is not updated on their [online] database. So the police can't find them, and end up saying, "OK, you can go." I mean, it is atrocious because here is where we keep saying the same thing. The community feels like what is the point of having this documentation if it won't work wherever they go?

—Man, interview, IOM

The IEA shows the great challenges the Colombian government faces in ETPV implementation because it requires a technological and data infrastructure—not just for public institutions but also for private ones—that allows for migrant inclusion. In particular, these measures are key in the medium term for the government to leverage migratory flows to grow the Colombian economy.

5.2 CSO AND COMMUNITY LEADER MEDIATION

An irregular migratory status places multiple barriers for the migrant population because it conditions how migrants relate with local authorities and may affect the quality of information they can access to meet their basic needs and resolve their migratory condition. Within this context, **CSOs and community leaders play a fundamental role in guiding, supporting, and enabling migrant inclusion.**



Migrants always come to us because other institutions end up sending them here. So we end up being the people who receive them, guide them, and support them.

—Woman, CSO leaders focus group

As previously discussed, migrant communication issues with local authorities stem from a lack of knowledge of national and local Colombian institutions. Some of the most frequent challenges are knowing how to contact institutions, not considering them to be trustworthy, or the perception that these institutions cannot provide legal protection services to migrants in need. IEA focus groups, community leaders, and CSOs stressed the importance of the mediating role they have assumed, especially between the National Office for Migration and migrants. **Leaders and CSOs reported having worked on basic matters that often represent barriers to many migrants, such as technical language and the sharing of information to obtain a regular migratory status.**



In the case of the National Office for Migration, we have faced pressure due to new ETPV and PPT dispositions, though this does not mean the Office has a direct communication line. Their communication is low. What they do is issue information at the national level. It is CSOs doing the interpreting of this information and then sharing this with the migrant population because not even the discourse [the Office] uses, the grammar it uses with us, is apt for migrants to understand.

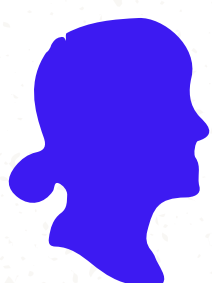
—Woman, leaders focus group



5.3 IRREGULAR MIGRATORY STATUS: THE MAIN BARRIER TO SATISFYING A MIGRANT'S BASIC NEEDS

Figure 45 analyzes the relationship between migrants' legal status and access to health care among survey participants. As observed in this figure, having a PPT does have an effect on migrants' health care access. Out of the 311 migrants surveyed, 38.2% have a PPT and are registered with the national subsidized health-care regime¹². When comparing migrants' access to health care based on whether they have a PPT, the data show a lack of this documentation constitutes a barrier to satisfying migrants' basic need of receiving health services.

Since the start of the migrant crisis in 2017, **the Colombian government has been progressively adapting its instruments and legal frameworks to provide services to migrants and promote their inclusion.** Focus group participants—especially those who arrived in Colombia early on and have lived through different stages of overcoming barriers to satisfy their basic needs—underscored this process.



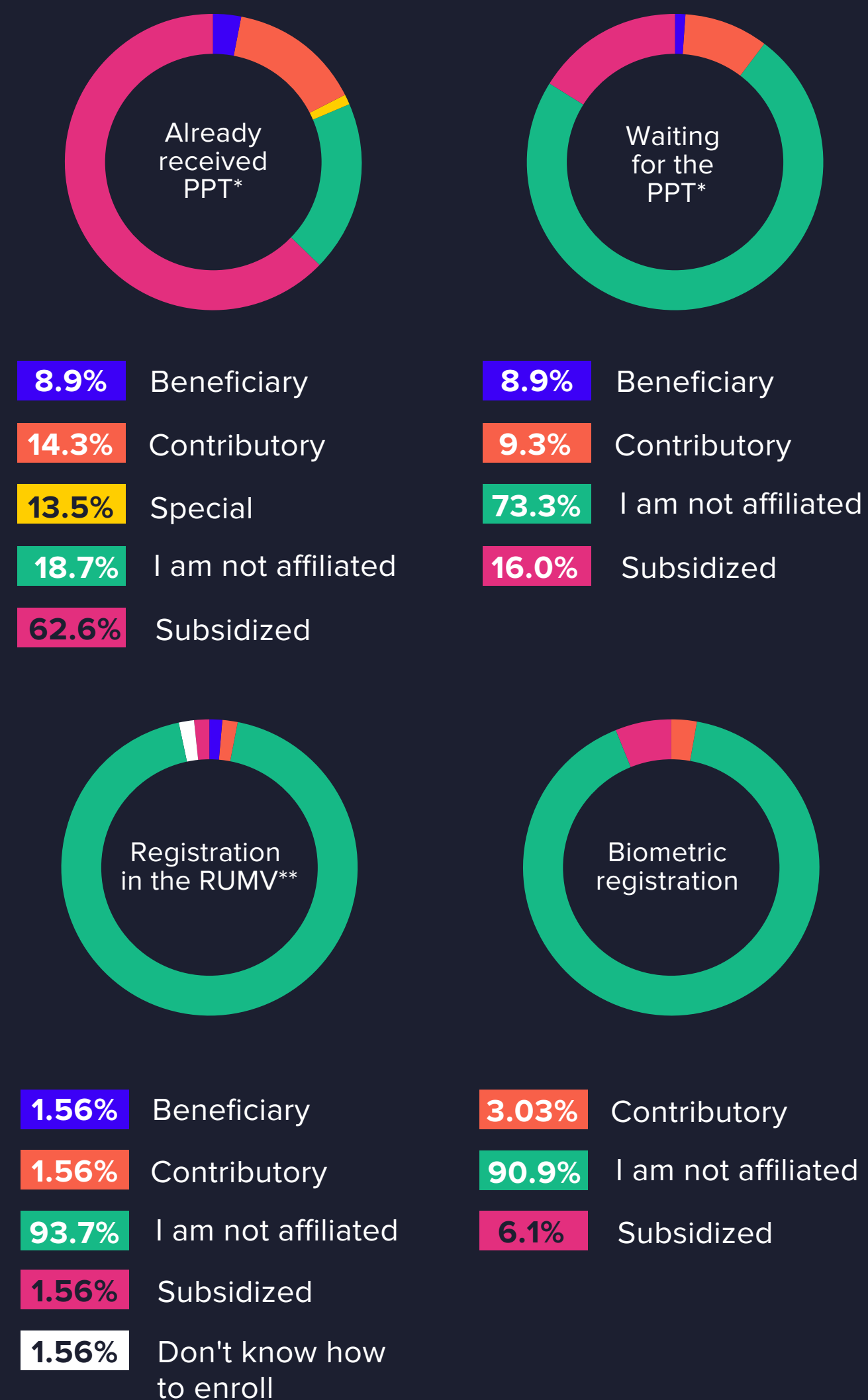
There was also time when those of us with an irregular status had to get safe-conduct passes. We couldn't work, but you could get registered with a health-care provider, so you had health-care access. So it's like we have been overcoming barriers since, well, since migration. I think there are people who have been here for five or six years. So, since then, we have been making progress on overcoming barriers.

—Woman, 20 years old, migrant focus group

¹² Out of the total of 327 survey participants, 16 were Colombian returnees who do not require a regularization of their legal status in Colombia. Thus, the survey question reflected in Figure 45 only applied to 311 migrant respondents.

Figure 45. Migrants' ETPV Process against their Registration in the Colombian Health-Care System

Source: Compiled by the IEA Research Team (2022).



* Temporary Protection Permit

** Registro Único de Migrantes Venezolanos (Registro Único de Migrantes Venezolanos)

Likewise, the IEA research team observes that focus group and interview participants expect that migrants will more easily overcome barriers to service access beyond health care with the generalized adoption of the PPT. For example, participants mentioned expecting migrants to now access financial services, especially the opening of bank accounts, which are necessary for formal employment and entrepreneurship, and telecommunication services to register mobile devices and internet plans under their own names.

5.4 DIFFICULTIES IN ACCESSING A PPT

A portion of the IEA survey was administered during National Office for Migration sessions for ETPV pre-registration between April 26 and 29, 2022, in Cali. At the time, there was only a month left before the deadline for RUMV pre-registration and to complete a socioeconomic characterization survey, both of which constituted the first phase of ETPV registration. During these sessions, the IEA research team administered its survey to 81 migrants, 71.6% of whom were registering with the ETPV. Of these, 58.21% expressed they were in the RUMV registration stage, 16.4% in the biometric registration stage, and 11.9% already expecting to receive their PPT.

The IEA research team asked those in the RUMV registration stage why they had not sought to register before. Migrants gave the following main explanations: lack of resources to attend in-person sessions, lack of internet access to complete the online portion of the process, lack of time, bugs with the National Office for Migration website, lack of information on sessions, and lack of ETPV understanding. The IEA research team found **17 migrants**—who also had not applied to the ETPV until then—who gave reasons other than those

mentioned for not applying before. These reasons are shown in Table 14 and include technical failures in the pre-registration system, which coincides with findings from focus group discussions.

Table 14. Other Reasons for Not Previously Registering with the RUMV

Source: Compiled by the IEA Research Team (2022)

ANOTHER REASON FOR NOT PERFORMING THE RUMV	PERCENTAGE
Has dual nationality	35.29%
The system was failing	17.65%
Had the PEP, but did not know that it would cease to function	5.88%
Lack of time	5.88%
Falta de tiempo	5.88%
Intention to return to Venezuela	5.88%
Recently arrived in the country	5.88%
Did not consider it important	5.88%
Has a foreigner's identity card	5.88%
Traveled to another country	5.88%

Migrants expressed facing difficulties in accessing their information and files as well as experiencing technical failures that limited their ability to complete the different phases of ETPV registration. In turn, this has led migrants to describe ETPV registration as a trial-and-error process.



I think the platform lacked strength, lacked consistency for the number of people who would access it on a daily basis. This was the case to



To access the ETPV, there are migrants who say they paid someone to help them with the process, but these people never gave them the email address used for registration. So how are they getting the information the National Office for Migration sends them? Where is [this information]? Basically, the person the migrants paid has the email used and the password, and they don't give the migrants this information.

—Man, community leader focus group

the point where even National Office for Migration officers did not have full access to it. There were days, or still are days because we are still in this process, in which the platform just wouldn't work because it was down.

—Migrant woman, community leader focus group

When discussing the final stages of RUMV registration, migrants, community leaders, and CSOs expressed their concerns, limitations, and issues with obtaining a PPT, which they hoped relevant authorities would address. These included the following:

1. Increasing the platform technical capacity to reduce waiting times between each process phase.
2. Receiving clear information on uploaded documents and process updates.
3. Guaranteeing technical capacity and connectivity during registration sessions.
4. Publishing clear information on what will happen with migrants entering Colombia after ETPV time frames.
5. Opening new registration sessions for those who, for various reasons, could not make it during before the current ETPV deadline or for those who were victims of PPT scams.

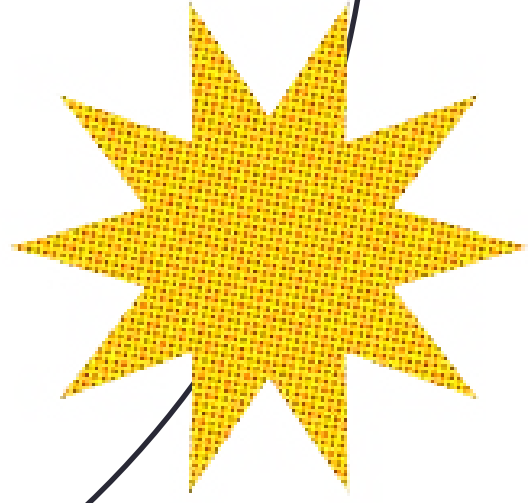


Right now, actually, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs is exerting psychological pressure, calling asylum seekers almost every two days to say, "You have to give [your request] up; you have to give it up," and "When are you giving it up?" So people don't know what to do, and they stay stuck.

—Woman, migrant focus group

Focus group participants who are also asylum seekers expressed feeling pressured by relevant authorities into renouncing their asylum requests to register with the ETPV. This situation has created a lot of confusion among migrants, who in many cases do not have enough knowledge to make an informed decision on what would be best for them and what would grant them access to services and rights, based on their own social, legal, and political conditions.

VIII



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