



INTRODUCTION

The Regional Coalition against Trafficking in Persons and Smuggling of Migrants (CORETT) is responsible for the adoption and promotion of regional standards, policies and processes to combat and prevent trafficking in persons and the smuggling of migrants and to improve care for victims of human trafficking. CORETT also works as a body responsible for advising the governments of the countries that require it.

CORETT has a Chair and a Technical Secretariat, and is made up of the following institutions:

- The Anti-Trafficking in Persons Council of Belize
- *Coalición Nacional Contra el Tráfico Ilícito de Migrantes y Trata de Personas* of Costa Rica
- *Consejo Nacional Contra la Trata de Personas* of El Salvador
- *Secretaría contra la Violencia Sexual, Explotación y Trata de Personas* of Guatemala
- *Comisión Interinstitucional Contra la Explotación Sexual Comercial y la Trata de Personas* of Honduras
- *Comisión Intersecretarial para Prevenir, Sancionar y Erradicar los Delitos en Materia de Trata de Personas y para la Protección y Asistencia a las Víctimas de estos Delitos* of Mexico
- *Coalición Nacional contra la Trata de Personas* of Nicaragua
- *Comisión Nacional Contra la Trata de Personas* of Panama
- *Comisión Interinstitucional de Combate a la Trata de Personas y el Tráfico Ilícito de Migrantes* of the Dominican Republic

During 2020, and in the context of COVID-19, the countries of the region reported a decrease in the capacity to carry out raids and prosecutions due to the restrictions imposed to prevent the virus. Likewise, it was noted that return processes were put on hold due to travel restrictions, and there were readjustments in shelters and care centers for victims of human trafficking.

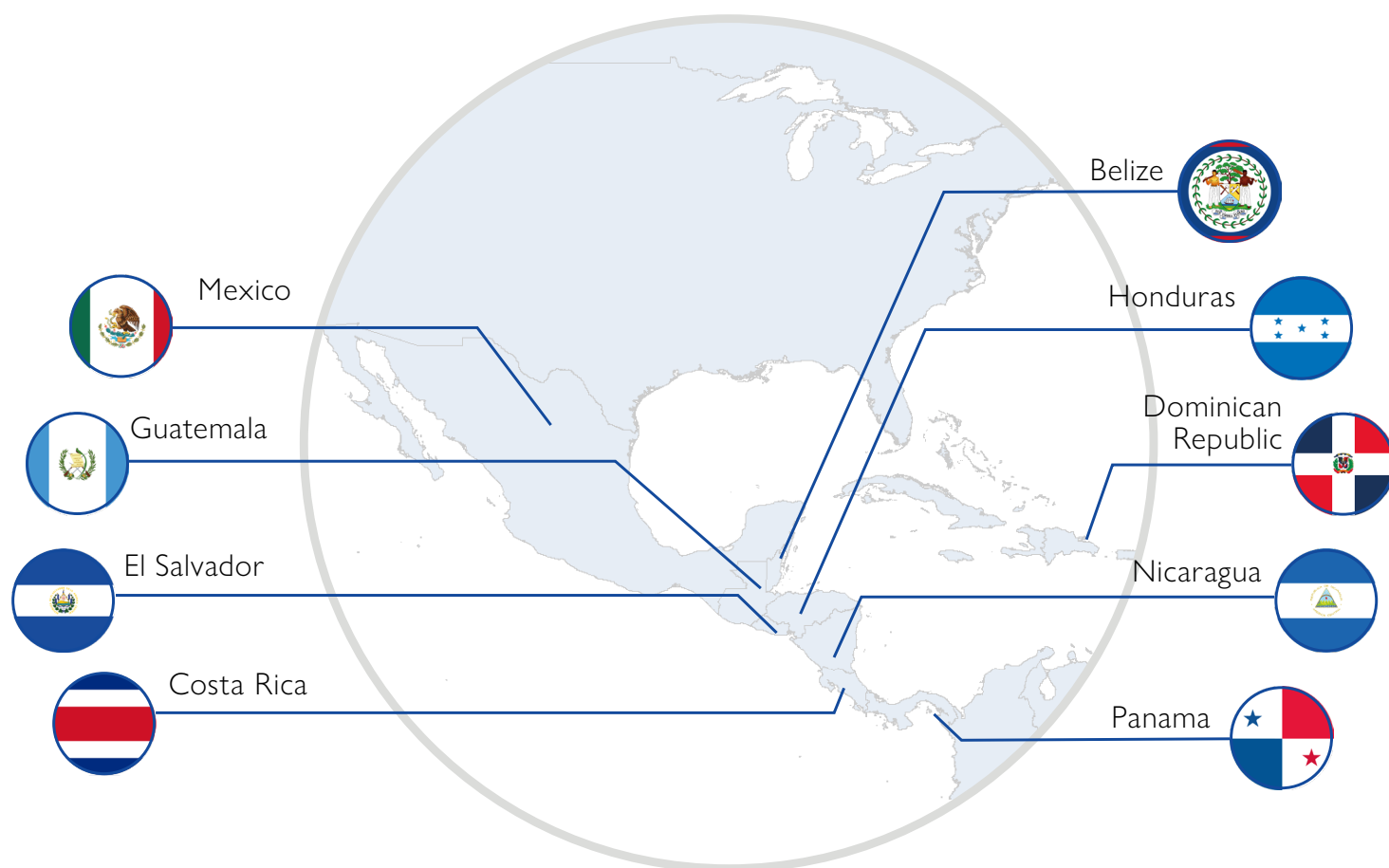
Despite these measures, it has been reported that individuals and networks involved in human smuggling and trafficking have adapted their mechanisms and forms of recruitment and exploitation of victims to the virtual world and the Internet, mainly through social networks. (UNODC, 2021)

On the other hand, in addition to the COVID-19 pandemic, hurricanes Eta and Iota impacted Guatemala, Honduras and Nicaragua, increasing the vulnerability of the population in general and, in particular, exacerbating the condition of those already in this state, increasing the risk of human trafficking. (UN News, 2021)

This report was prepared based on the information collected and provided by the institutions that make up CORETT, and which were named above, and is composed of six sections, which are specified below:

1. Identification of victims: socio-demographic profiles of the identified victims, as well as the main trafficking purposes reported.
2. Victim care: main services offered to victims by governmental and non-governmental institutions and other organizations.
3. Provision of justice: judicial processes opened and resolved, as well as the reparation measures reported by the countries.
4. Repatriation, return and resettlement: repatriation, return and repatriation processes carried out by the CORETT countries.
5. Prevention: data on direct and indirect prevention activities carried out by national institutions that combat human trafficking and other partner organizations.
6. Events of interest: main activities, initiatives and developments reported by the countries on human trafficking issues.

COUNTRIES IN THE COALITION



VICTIM IDENTIFICATION



**1,205 total
identified
victims**

An identified victim of human trafficking is defined as a person who has been officially identified by the relevant government institution and is guaranteed a series of rights and protections¹.

Regarding the number of victims identified, there was a decrease compared to 2019. However, due to the clandestine nature of this crime, as well as the difficulty in identifying victims, the few reports received due to its complex and violent nature and the means of control exercised by traffickers, it is understood that this does not imply a decrease in the actual number of victims. In turn, due to technological advances and the changing context of the region, it is deduced that the means of recruitment have diversified and adapted.

¹ According to UNODC, "Trafficking in persons" shall mean the recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring or receipt of persons, by means of the threat or use of force or other forms of coercion, of abduction, of fraud, of deception, of the abuse of power or of a position of vulnerability or of the giving or receiving of payments or benefits to achieve the consent of a person having control over another person, for the purpose of exploitation.

Map I. Percentage of victims of total trafficking identified per country, Central America, the Dominican Republic, and Mexico, 2020.



Fuente: Basemap source: ESRI and UN World Map
Nota: This map is for illustration purposes only. The boundaries and names shown and the designations used on this map do not imply official endorsement or acceptance by the International Organization for Migration.

DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE



NATIONALITIES²

During 2020, most of the persons identified as victims of human trafficking by the relevant institutions were within their country of nationality. In addition, it should be noted that most of the foreign victims identified were nationals of countries in the region. In the cases of Nicaragua and Honduras, only national victims were reported.

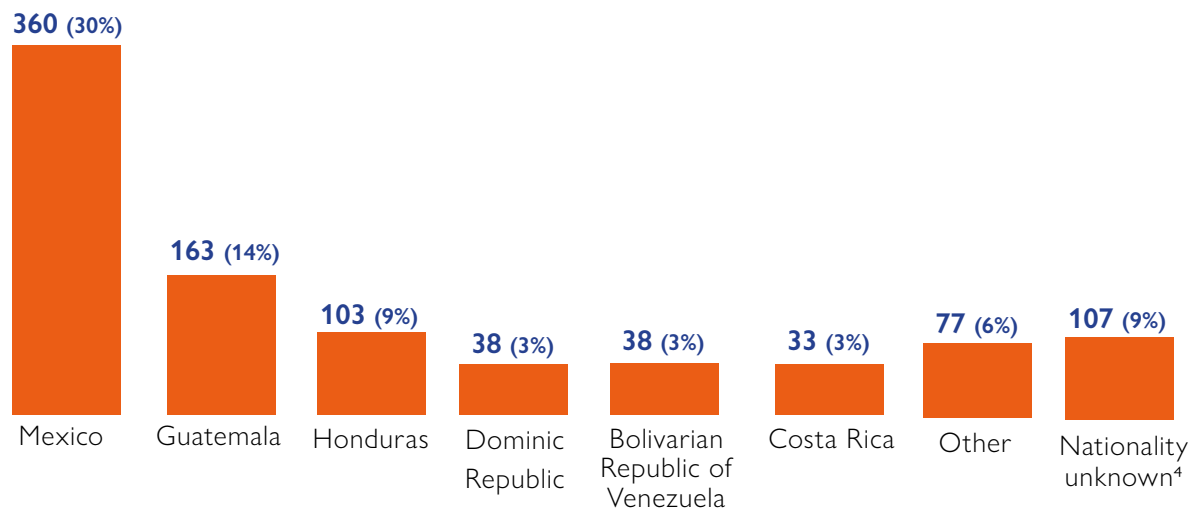
Persons identified as victims of trafficking within their country of nationality - 690 (74%)

Trafficked persons identified outside their country of nationality- 246 (26%)

² Despite the efforts made by the countries, there are still limitations to the identification of LGBTQ+ persons.

² In the cases of Guatemala, Panama and the Dominican Republic, there are no figures available by nationality of the foreign nationals identified.

FIGURE 1. MAIN NATIONALITIES IDENTIFIED AMONG VICTIMS OF TRAFFICKING IN PERSONS, 2020



FORMS OF EXPLOITATION

489 (40%)

**SEXUAL
EXPLOITATION**



Means the obtaining of economic or other benefits through the involvement of another person in forced prostitution, sexual servitude or other sexual services, including forced pregnancy, acts of pornography and the production of pornographic materials.

102 (8%)

**LABOUR
EXPLOITATION**



Means any work or service required of an individual under the threat of any penalty, dismissal, or payment of wages below the legal minimum, and for which the individual does not volunteer.

28 (2%)

**FORCED
BEGGING**



The obligation of a person to practice begging under coercion, where the profits go to the exploiter or trafficker.

21 (2%)

**SEXUAL
ABUSE
OF MINORS**



Refers to acts related to pornographic materials involving minors.

16 (1%)

**IRREGULAR
ADOPTION**



Unauthorized adoption of babies, children, sale, and trafficking of mothers for sale.

12 (1%)

**ILLICIT
ACTIVITIES**



It refers to the exploitation of a person for the purpose of committing, among others: theft, robbery, drug trafficking or any other activity subject to sanctions and involving an economic gain.

83 (7%)

**OTHER
TYPES OF
EXPLOITATION**



These include the retention of minors and the corruption of minors.

454 (37%)

**THE PURPOSE
OF TRAFFICKING
IS NOT KNOWN**



⁴ For some countries, the nationality of the identified victims is unknown

VICTIM ASSISTANCE



Regarding the victims assisted during 2020, in most of the CORETT countries, governmental institutions, non-governmental organizations and other relevant institutions not only assisted victims identified in 2020, but also followed up on victims from previous years. In the cases of Honduras and Costa Rica, assistance was also provided to dependents of victims of human trafficking.

In the cases of Costa Rica and Honduras, care was also provided to the dependents of the victims. For all countries, most of the services were provided directly by governmental institutions and, in some cases, with the support of Non-Governmental Organizations.

Likewise, in most countries, the care required by victims is provided regardless of the status of judicial or administrative proceedings.

DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE



FORMS OF ASSISTANCE⁵

584 (30%)

MEDICAL ASSISTANCE



Such services may include medical first aid, general or specialized medical care, medications, and medical examinations.

615 (32%)

PSYCHOSOCIAL AND MENTAL HEALTH ASSISTANCE



This type of services includes individual therapy, group therapy, and psychological first aid.

776 (40%)

LEGAL ADVICE



This service includes accompaniment for filling allegations and during the judicial process, as well as accompaniment with consulates and embassies.

333 (17%)

HOUSING



This service includes accommodation, either in state or NGO shelters, or rental assistance.

⁵ Victims can receive more than one type of assistance; therefore, the added percentages for forms of assistance are over 100%.

84 (17%)

BASIC NEEDS



This service includes cash assistance, food, hygiene kits and clothing.

508 (26%)

**EDUCATIONAL
AND/OR
PROFESSIONAL
TRAINING**



This includes support services for integration into the education system, particularly in the case of underage victims, as well as vocational training and support for entrepreneurship.

89 (5%)

**FAMILY
REUNIFICATION**



This includes family reunification and counseling.

PROSECUTION AND ACCESS TO JUSTICE

During 2020, the different Prosecutor's Offices, Public Prosecutor's Offices and Courts in the region were responsible for seeking justice in human trafficking cases. Due to COVID-19, the execution of warrants, searches and other judicial requests were affected by the restrictions on movement imposed in most countries, as well as the lack of personnel in some institutions.

In Guatemala, among the measures taken by the institutions in charge of human trafficking in response to the COVID-19 pandemic are the creation of a button on the web page of the Secretariat against Sexual Violence, Exploitation and Trafficking in Persons: www.svet.gob.gt, as well as the web page www.tupista.gt, in addition to the PNC's 110 telephone number for receiving complaints.

In the case of Costa Rica, it is contemplated that, regardless of whether the victim wishes to file a complaint, personnel are obliged to report the incident.



3,093
allegations



208
Open Judicial
Proceedings



15
acquittals



119
convictions

CONVICTIONS OCCURRED IN THE FOLLOWING CRIMES

LABOR EXPLOITATION AND FORCED SERVICES

SEXUAL EXPLOITATION

FORCED MARRIAGE

FORCED BEGGING

BONDED LABOR

SEXUAL EXPLOITATION OF MINORS FOR
THE PURPOSE OF CHILD PORNOGRAPHY

REPARATION MEASURES

Economic reparation:

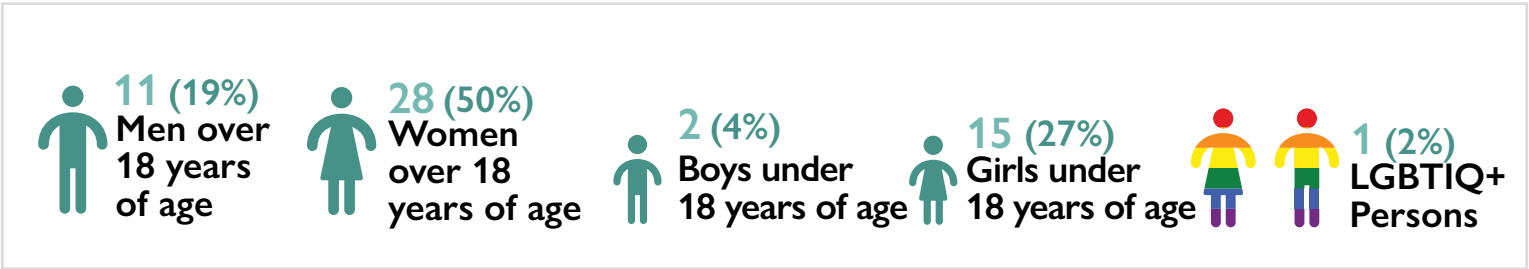
- In Guatemala, the Ministry of Education, through the Directorate of International Cooperation (DICONIME), granted a scholarship to an aggrieved girl, as well as to ensure that she completes the basic and diversified cycle.
- In Panama, the convicted person was ordered to pay 2,000 balboas to repair the damage caused to a victim of human trafficking of Panamanian nationality, who belongs to an ethnic minority.
- In the Dominican Republic, the trafficker was ordered to pay compensation of 500,000 Dominican pesos to each of the victims and ordered the confiscation of all assets in favor of the Dominican State.

REPATRIATION, RESETTLEMENT AND RETURN

During 2020, repatriations, resettlements and returns of 56 victims of human trafficking were processed; these returns were carried out based on the willingness of the victims to return to their countries of origin, while resettlements were carried out to ensure the safety of the victims. In the case of Nicaragua and El Salvador, according to what was reported by the relevant institutions, no repatriation, resettlement or return processes were recorded during 2020.

As a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, compared to what was recorded during 2019, there was a sharp decrease in repatriation, resettlement and return processes, due to the mobility restrictions imposed as a result of COVID-19.

DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE



MEANS FOR REPATRIATION, RESETTLEMENT AND RETURN





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PREVENTION



2,312,678
Reached
people

During 2020, the different institutions in charge of the prevention of human trafficking conducted trainings, seminars and workshops aimed at people who could potentially be victims of trafficking, as well as workers of public and private institutions that could have contact with victims, on issues of awareness, detection and care of victims.

Due to the restrictions imposed mainly as of March 2020 for COVID-19 containment, most of these activities and the meetings of institutions that make up the various entities against human trafficking were changed to the virtual modality. Although this meant less contact between government institutions, the virtual trainings and workshops facilitated the participation of actors in remote areas who would find it difficult to attend in person.

DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE⁶



970,152 (42%)
Men and
women over
18 years of age



174,289 (8%)
Boys and
girls under 18
years of age



136,971 (6%)
Persons whose age
and/or sex are
not known



39,626 (2%)
LGBTIQ+
Persons

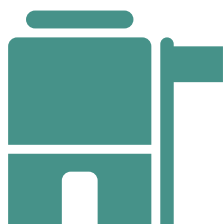


741.099 (32%)
reached people
Direct
prevention⁷

The means of direct prevention include all those that involve direct contact with potential victims or those who have a professional role in the prevention of human trafficking, such as awareness-raising workshops and trainings.

⁶ Some countries did not provide complete information for demographic profiles.

⁷ In the case of Mexico, 1,545 prevention events were recorded, but the number of people reached by type of prevention is not available.



**1.102.777 (47%)
reached people**

**Indirect
prevention**

Indirect means of prevention include those that do not involve direct contact with individuals in the target populations, but which indirectly influence them: publicity campaigns, dissemination of information materials or media campaigns.

EVENTS OF INTEREST



Belize

On the occasion of World Day Against Trafficking in Persons 2020, a contest related to the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) Blue Heart Campaign was held on social media. Participants were competing for 100 Belizean dollars and to win they had to post a photo of themselves with a blue heart drawn on their arm.



Costa Rica

In 2020, the Government of Costa Rica worked on its Comprehensive Care Strategy, which has been considered a best practice at the regional level. On the other hand, in 2020, the National Women's Institute (INAMU) identified and transferred to the Immediate Response Team (ERI) two possible cases of a modality of exploitation within the crime of human trafficking, not previously recorded in the country, forced begging.



El Salvador

On July 30, the World Day against Trafficking in Persons was commemorated at the facilities of the Ministry of Justice and Public Security, where the Executive Secretariat of the National Council Against Trafficking in Persons of El Salvador (CNCTP) imposed the pin to all staff of the Ministry, in order to raise awareness about this crime.

Similarly, work was done to update the National Policy against Trafficking in Persons and its Action Plan. The instrument was validated at the ordinary meeting of the Technical Committee, in order to disseminate, follow up, coordinate and evaluate the Policy, as well as to prepare and promote the respective National Plan after approval by the CNCTP members.



Guatemala

In 2020 and within the framework of the pandemic caused by COVID-19, 50,000 information sheets and other communication materials on crimes of sexual violence, exploitation and trafficking in persons were prepared and distributed by the Government to vulnerable sectors of the population.

Given the importance of providing a better response to situations involving unaccompanied migrant children and adolescents, the State of Guatemala promoted the launching of the Mechanism for the Comprehensive Protection of Unaccompanied Migrant Children and Adolescents.

EVENTS OF INTEREST



Honduras

On June 25, the new Penal Code (130-2017) entered into force, repealing Article 52 of the Law against Trafficking in Persons. The new typification includes in the base type of the crime some of the means indicated in the international regulations, but suffers a substantial reduction in the years of imprisonment with which the crime is punished, also disappearing other important elements framed in the actions and modalities in which this crime is manifested.

In addition, the crimes of pimping, paid sexual relations and sex tourism were repealed. These changes were subject to review and analysis to identify gaps and strengths, as well as harmonization with international standards, motivating the beginning of the work for the development of a reform proposal to ensure the effective punishment of these criminal acts. A reform proposal is expected to be ready by 2021.

Due to the confinement due to the COVID-19 pandemic, it was possible to develop, under the online modality, extensive prevention and training processes, highlighting the training of a large number of teachers nationwide on cybercrime. The online work made it possible to reach key people in the fight against human trafficking at the national level at a low cost, reaching a larger number of people than could be reached in person, even benefiting remote communities that would be difficult to integrate into a face-to-face training process.



Mexico

29 out of 32 states approved their local laws on human trafficking. In 2020, the Simplified Guide for the Care of Victims of Human Trafficking was issued, a document that brings down the main elements of the Comprehensive Model of Care for Victims (MIAV) and links them to the care of victims of crimes related to human trafficking.



Nicaragua

Through the departmental roundtables, work sessions are planned with the institutions and non-governmental organizations that attend to victims. Bimonthly follow-up is carried out to evaluate and measure the impact on each of the institutions, the results of which are used to plan future actions.



Panama

During 2020, the first case of human trafficking of a Panamanian national of the LGBTIQ+ community to be exploited abroad was recorded.



Dominican Republic

The Commission worked in a coordinated and effective manner on revisions to the proposed amendment to Law No. 137-03 on smuggling of migrants and trafficking in persons. The draft bill was sent for legal review before being submitted to the National Congress in 2021. The draft law has included new articles related to the reduction of the consumption of sexual services for commercial sexual exploitation and sanctions against consumers.

Likewise, it has been established that in cases of children and adolescents identified as victims of exploitation, the fact will be considered human trafficking and it will not be necessary to prove the existence of means of commission for any of the purposes of exploitation, among other advances brought by the updating of this legislation.

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