FOOD SECURITY ASSESSMENT FOR MIGRANT POPULATIONS

COLOMBIA 2024

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

INTRODUCTION

Colombia has become the primary destination for migrants and refugees from Venezuela. According to Migración Colombia, as of December 2024, there were 2,815.611 migrants residing in the country with the intention to settle[1] , along with approximately 33,385 migrants in transit to other destinations[2].

Over the past decade, the Colombian government has implemented several mechanisms to

regularize the migrant population, including the Temporary Protection Status (PPT) for Venezuelan migrants, which has achieved a 69% coverage. These initiatives have facilitated better access to healthcare, education, and the social protection system for migrants.

However, these communities remain highly vulnerable. Migrants continue to face significant challenges in accessing sufficient and nutritious

1. Migrantes venezolanos en Colombia | Tableau Public

2. Migración Irregular en Tránsito | Tableau Public

3,989

Households with intention to settle surveyed

483

Travel groups surveyed

Information of **16,323** people

food, which affects their health and well-being. Therefore, it is crucial to conduct studies that identify the specific needs of migrants in transit and those intending to settle, to improve the effectiveness of assistance policies and programs. Between September and October 2024, the United Nations World Food Programme conducted an emergency food security assessment (EFSA) for both migrants intending to settle and those in transit. The assessment aimed to update the food security situation, evaluate the coverage of social protection, and analyze the socioeconomic integration process of the migrant population in Colombia.

METHODOLOGY

The EFSA was conducted using a quantitative methodology, with data collected through in-person surveys administered to households of migrants intending to settle and to travel groups in the case of migrants in transit. A multi-stage probabilistic sampling method was employed for the survey of migrants intending to settle. The sample was stratified across the 12 departments with the highest proportion of migrant populations in the country[3] as well as in Bogotá. Municipalities were treated as

clusters, with random selection applied to migrant households. In total, 3,989 household surveys were conducted, representing 15,012 individuals. The results for migrants intending to settle were representative at both the national and departmental levels, with a confidence level of 95% and a margin of error of 1,6%.

For migrants in transit, a purposive sampling strategy was used. The municipalities selected for this sample were Cúcuta in Norte de Santander, Ipiales in Nariño, and Turbo and Necoclí in Antioquia. In these locations, areas with a high probability for encountering migrants in transit were identified, including bus stations, temporary refuge shelters, and urban areas with significant migrant concentrations. A total of 483 Spanish-speaking travel groups were surveyed, representing 1,311 individuals. For migrants in transit, the data are indicative.

Food security was measured using the Consolidated Approach for Reporting Indicators of Food Security (CARI) methodology, which classifies food security into four categories: food secure, marginally food secure, moderately food insecure, and severely food insecure[4].

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3. The departments included in this assessment are: Antioquia, Arauca, Atlántico, Bolívar, Cesar, Cundinamarca, La Guajira, Magdalena, Nariño, Norte de Santander, Santander and Valle del Cauca. These departments account for 90% of migrants who intend to remain in Colombia. Within these departments, 34 municipalities were visited.

4. The CARI indicator is a composite measure that considers three key components: food consumption, economic vulnerability, and the use of livelihood-based coping strategies.

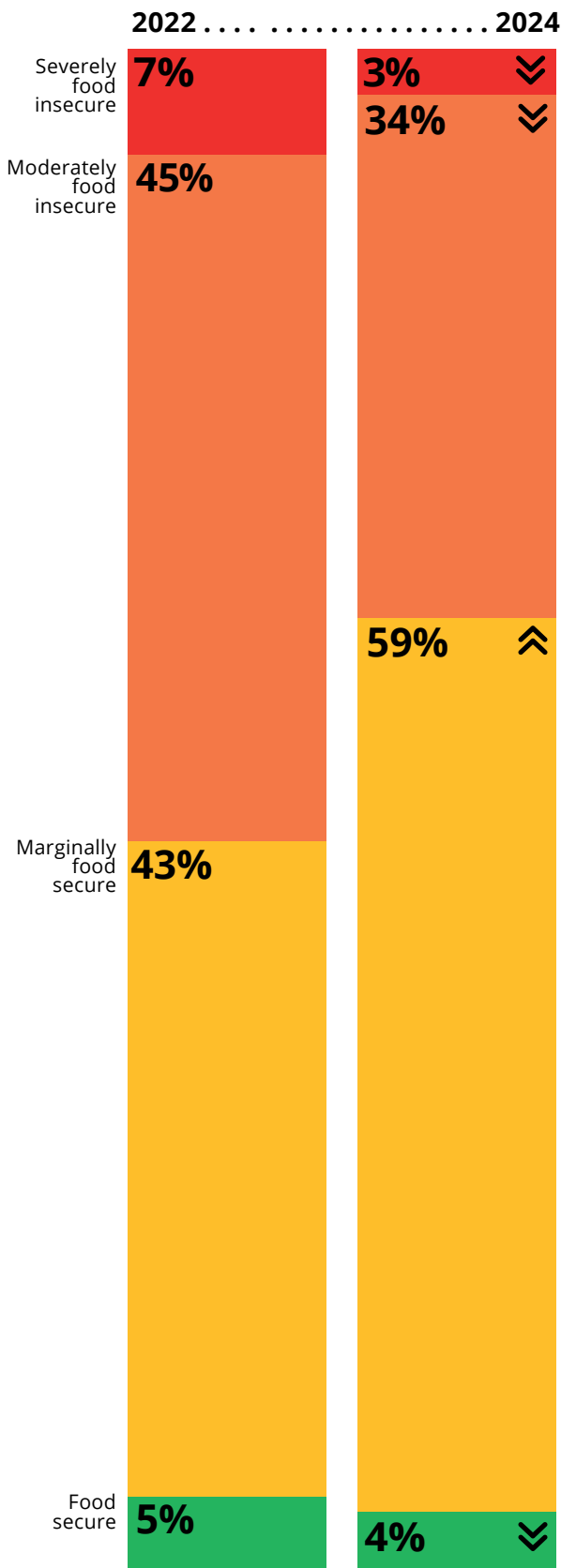# I. RESULTS OF MIGRANTS WITH INTENTION TO SETTLE

The food security assessment reveals that migrant households with the intention to settle in Colombia have a demographic profile similar to the Colombian population, primarily composed of adults in productive age. **Eighty-six percent of the surveyed households arrived in the country more than two years ago,** while only 3% have been settled in the country for less than six months.

The average household size is 3,7, slightly lower than the 4,2 recorded in 2022. Additionally, the mean dependency ratio is approximately 0,73, indicating that for each working-age member (15 to 59 years), there is less than one dependent person (either under 15 years or over 60 years).

About 35% of the households have children under the age of five, down from 48% in 2022, and 8% of the surveyed households have a pregnant woman, compared to 6% in 2022.

In terms of household leadership, **64% of households are headed by women,** while 36% are headed by men. As in the 2022 findings, most household heads have low levels of education—only 14% have technical or university degrees—and 34% report having a disability or a chronic illness.

1. HOW MANY PEOPLE ARE FOOD INSECURE?

2022 2024

Severely food insecure
7% | **3%** ⩔

Moderately food insecure
45% | **34%** ⩔

Marginally food secure
43% | **59%** ⩕

Food secure
5% | **4%** ⩔

Graph 1. Food security levels (%) 2022 y 2024

According to this assessment, **37% of migrants with intention to settle are moderately or severely food insecure,** which is equivalent to 1.041.000 people registered by Migración Colombia in December of 2024[5].
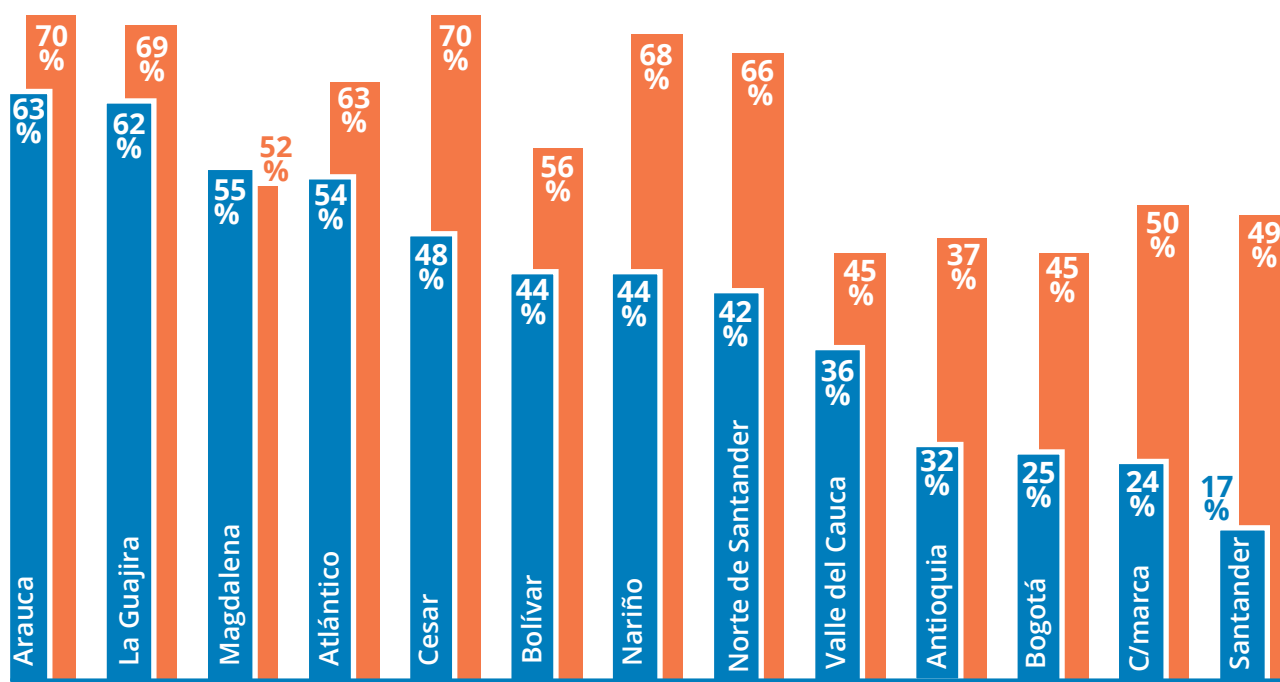
Nearly 84,000 people are severely food insecure and face high economic vulnerability, meaning these households experience extreme gaps in food consumption, high economic vulnerability and most of them use survival coping strategies that endanger their livelihoods and further increase their vulnerability.

Compared to the 2022 results, migrants have experienced an improvement in their food security situation, passing from 52% to 37% of households in severe or moderate food insecurity. However, it is important to highlight that this finding does not mean an improvement in the proportion of food secure households (4%). Instead, the percentage of households in marginal food security has grown (59%). Indeed, **migrant households have satisfied their basic food needs largely by using diverse coping strategies.**

37% of migrants with intention to settle are moderately or severely food insecure.

5. Migrantes venezolanos en Colombia | Tableau Public

2. WHERE ARE THE FOOD INSECURE?

Graph 2. Prevalence of food insecurity at the departmental level (%) 2022 and 2024

Legend: 2022 (orange), 2024 (blue)

Data by department:
- Arauca: 2024 63%, 2022 70%
- La Guajira: 2024 62%, 2022 69%
- Magdalena: 2024 55%, 2022 52%
- Atlántico: 2024 54%, 2022 63%
- Cesar: 2024 48%, 2022 70%
- Bolívar: 2024 44%, 2022 56%
- Nariño: 2024 44%, 2022 68%
- Norte de Santander: 2024 42%, 2022 66%
- Valle del Cauca: 2024 36%, 2022 45%
- Antioquia: 2024 32%, 2022 37%
- Bogotá: 2024 25%, 2022 45%
- C/marca: 2024 24%, 2022 50%
- Santander: 2024 17%, 2022 49%

Departments with the most critical situation (2024)
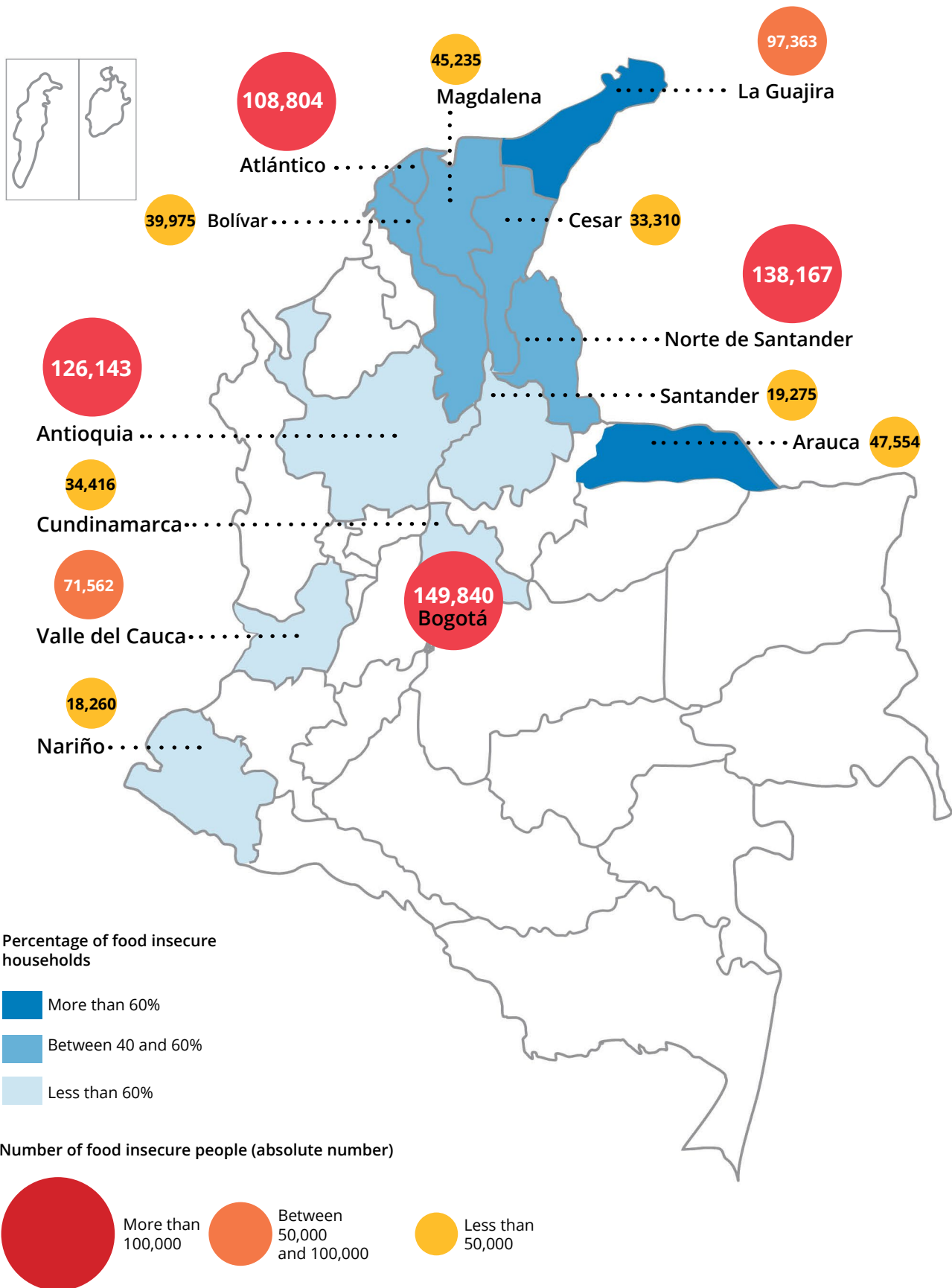
63%
Arauca

62%
La Guajira

The prevalence of food insecurity is higher in Colombia's border departments where critical levels of poverty, inequality, unemployment and lack of basic services persist. As revealed in the 2022 findings, **the departments most affected by food insecurity in 2024 were Arauca (63%) and La Guajira (62%).**

In the assessment carried out by WFP in 2023, these departments also showed high percentages of food insecurity: La Guajira (59%) and Arauca (46%).
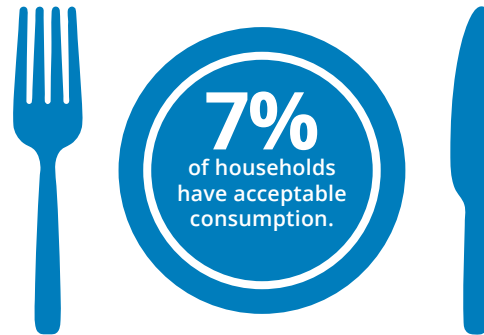
The departments with **the lowest prevalence of food insecurity were Santander (17%), Cundinamarca (24%), and Bogotá (25%).** The best food security outcomes are associated with a combination of more frequent and diverse food consumption, along with lower economic vulnerability.

It should be noted that by population density, the departments with the highest estimated number of people in food insecurity are: The Capital District of Bogotá (149,840), Norte de Santander (138,167), Antioquia (126,143) and Atlántico (108,804).

Map 1. Prevalence of food insecurity (moderate or severe) by department 2024

45,235 — Magdalena

97,363 — La Guajira

108,804 — Atlántico

39,975 — Bolívar

Cesar — 33,310

138,167 — Norte de Santander

126,143 — Antioquia

Santander — 19,275

34,416 — Cundinamarca

Arauca — 47,554

71,562 — Valle del Cauca

149,840 — Bogotá

18,260 — Nariño

Percentage of food insecure households

■ More than 60%

■ Between 40 and 60%

■ Less than 60%

Number of food insecure people (absolute number)

More than 100,000

Between 50,000 and 100,000

Less than 50,000

3. COMPONENTS OF THE FOOD SECURITY MEASUREMENT

2022 2024

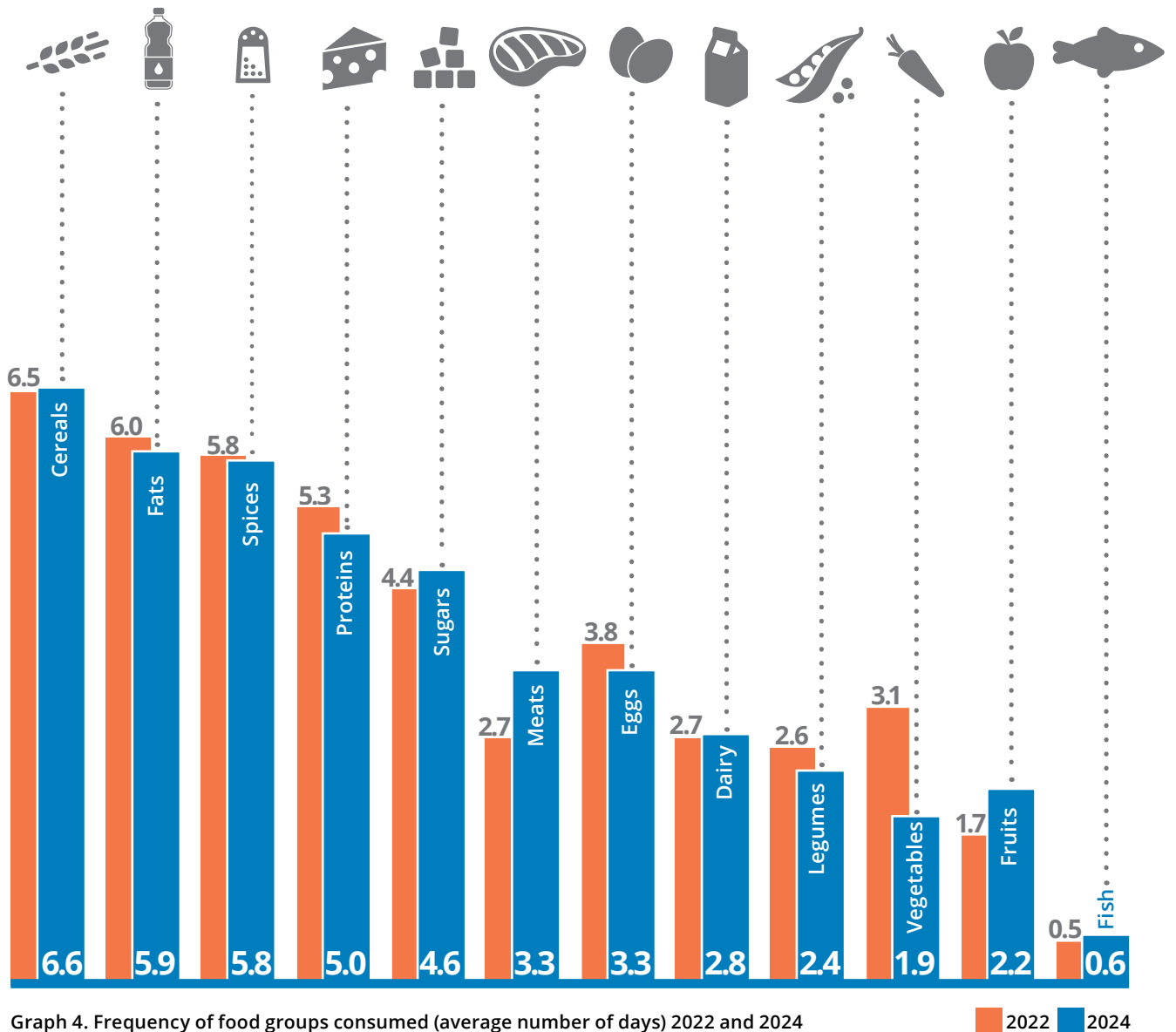|	2022	2024
Acceptable	16%	7% ⌄⌄
		75% ⌃⌃
Acceptable with high level of coping strategies	62%	
Bordeline	16%	12% ⌄⌄
Poor	6%	6% =

7%
of households have acceptable consumption.

3.1 FOOD CONSUMPTION

Most migrant households experience inadequate food consumption and a low diversity in their diet. **Only 7% of households reported having an acceptable level of food consumption without resorting to food-based consumption coping strategies.** In response to food scarcity, many households have adopted strategies such as reducing the number of meals, decreasing portion sizes, or altering their food choices. This represents a deterioration in food consumption compared to the 16% observed in 2022.

Furthermore, the percentage of households achieving acceptable consumption, albeit with a high reliance on coping strategies, increased from 62% in 2022 to 75% in 2024. **This suggests that while the migrant population is achieving adequate food consumption, it is doing so at the expense of both the quantity and quality of food consumed.**

Graph 3. Food consumption classification (%) 2022 and 2024

Graph 4. Frequency of food groups consumed (average number of days) 2022 and 2024

Food group	2022	2024
Cereals	6.5	6.6
Fats	6.0	5.9
Spices	5.8	5.8
Proteins	5.3	5.0
Sugars	4.4	4.6
Meats	2.7	3.3
Eggs	3.8	3.3
Dairy	2.7	2.8
Legumes	2.6	2.4
Vegetables	3.1	1.9
Fruits	1.7	2.2
Fish	0.5	0.6

49% of households consume an average of **two meals a day.**

3% of households consume an average of **one meal a day.**

Considering the frequency of consumption in each food group, **the diet of migrant households remains primarily based on cereals and fats,** as identified in the 2022 assessment. Although the average frequency of protein consumption increased in 2024, it remains low. This has negative consequences for other dimensions of human development, such as health, education, and labour productivity.

In terms of the number of meals, 49% of households consumed two meals per day in the seven days prior to the survey, while **3% faced a more critical situation, consuming just one or fewer meals per day.** This 3% is consistent with the percentage observed in 2022.

Graph 5. Use of food-based consumption coping strategies (%) 2022 and 2024

	2022	2024
Consume less preferred food	85%	88%
Buy food on credit	53%	53%
Reduce the number of meals	60%	59%
Reduce the portion sizes	65%	66%
Reduce the portion of the adult household member so that the childrten have more to eat	52%	74%
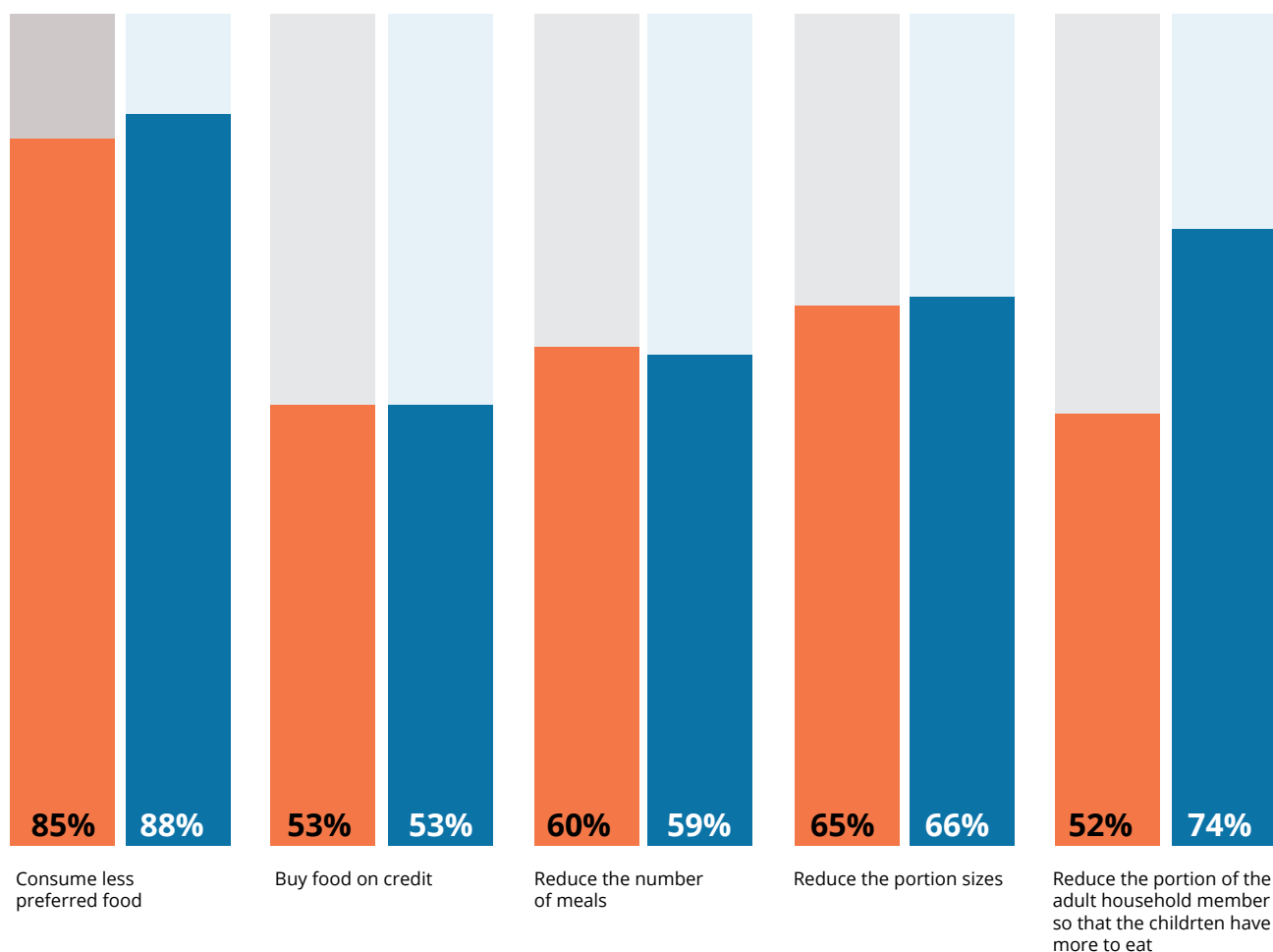
97%

of migrant households used at least one food-based consumption coping strategies.

FOOD-BASED CONSUMPTION COPING STRATEGIES

Almost all migrant households (97%) employed at least one food-related coping strategy in the seven days prior to the survey. Similar to the 2022 findings, the most commonly used strategy was buying less preferred food because it was more affordable (88%). However, notably, the second most common strategy this time was reducing food portions consumed by adults to ensure children could eat (74%).

In general, all food-related coping strategies showed high usage rates. The strategy that saw the most significant increase compared to 2022 and is the most severe strategy, was prioritizing the consumption of food for children.

3.2 ECONOMIC VULNERABILITY

INCOME

50%
of migrant households depend on a single source of income.

1,130,000 COP
Average household income.

6. DANE - Encuesta Pulso de la Migración (EPM)

7. By 2024, the current legal minimum wage in Colombia was 1,300,000 Colombian pesos (COP).

A significant proportion of the population in productive age does not generate income due to a lack of effective labour participation.

According to the assessment, 60% of individuals aged 15 or older (9,212 people) are employed, 8% are unemployed, and 32% are out of the workforce, primarily due to engagement in other activities such as domestic unpaid work or studies. This information is consistent with the latest results from Pulso de la Migración, published by DANE (7th round, April-May 2024)[6].

Migrant households primarily rely on informal and precarious income sources, with long workdays and earnings below the minimum wage.

According to this assessment, the three main sources of income for the migrant population are self-employment (43%), wage labour (27%), and day labour (10%). Furthermore, half of the households depend on a single source of income, with an average household income of 1,130,000 COP, which is below Colombia's minimum wage[7].

More than half of the households experienced a reduction in monetary resources during the six months prior to the survey. A significant percentage of households (59%) reported a partial reduction in their incomes over this period, and 3% lost all their income. The main reasons for these income reductions were wage cuts (32%), job loss (30%), and decreased sales (21%).

EXPENDITURE

Despite improvements in the economic situation of the migrant population since 2022, the prevalence of poverty remains a significant issue. By evaluating economic vulnerability through per capita expenditures compared to the monetary poverty line, the assessment findings reveal that the prevalence of poverty—encompassing both poor and extremely poor households—decreased from 74% in 2022 to 44% in 2024. Although this represents a reduction in population´s vulnerability, it still indicates that **four out of ten households lack the resources to afford basic goods and services.**

Several factors explain the reduction in poverty, including improvements in living conditions, the regularization of the migrant population, and a decrease in inflation. As a result, purchasing power has increased, leading to higher expenditures in 2024 compared to 2022.

Regarding its composition, household expenditure is primarily concentrated on food (55%) and rent (17%), which together account for 72% of the budget. Other expenses, such as payment for public services, represent 7%, while health and education each account for 2%. These results maintain the pattern observed in 2022, where food expenditure represented 47% and rent 24%, totalling 71% of the household budget.
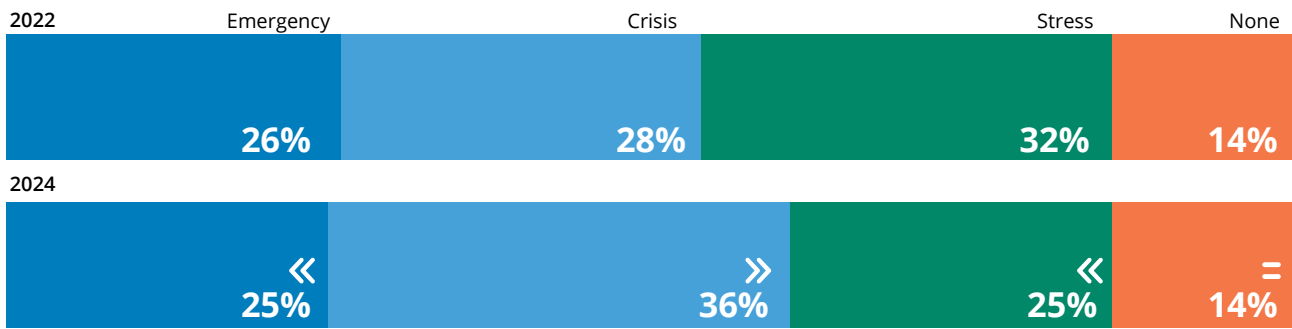
DEBT

Given the high volatility of incomes, one of the mechanisms used to meet basic needs is borrowing. **At the time of the survey, 43% of migrant households reported having debt.** The primary reasons for incurring debt were related to essential expenses: **rent (43%), food (21%), and public services (12%).** Only 8% of households acquired debt to buy assets, meaning that most of the debt was unproductive, further increasing vulnerability.

Non poor		Poor		Extremely poor	
26%	56%	49%	34%	25%	10%
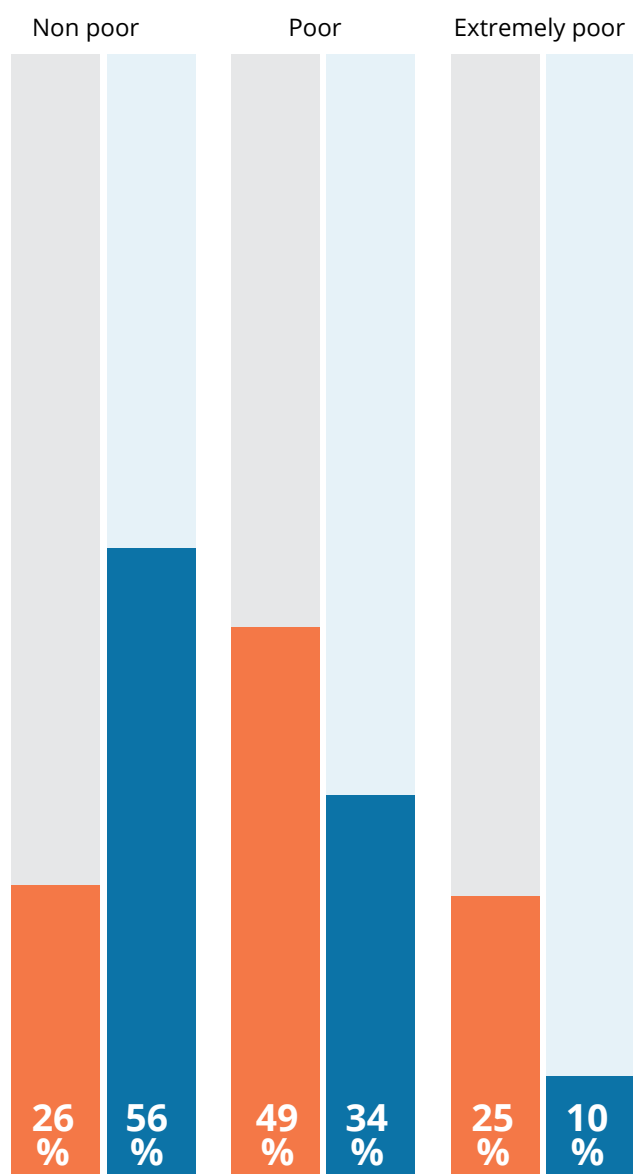
Graph 6. Economic vulnerability (%) 2022 and 2024

■ 2022 ■ 2024

2022	Emergency	Crisis	Stress	None
	26%	28%	32%	14%

2024				
	« 25%	» 36%	« 25%	= 14%

Graph 7. Use of livelihood coping strategies 2022 and 2024

8 out of 10 migrant households' resort to some form of livelihood strategy to meet their essential needs.

3.3 LIVELIHOOD COPING STRATEGIES

In addition to food-based consumption coping strategies, households also implement livelihood coping strategies due to the lack of food or money. These strategies vary in severity—stress, crisis, or emergency[8] —depending on the level of depletion of livelihoods.

Eight out of ten migrant households' resort to some form of livelihood strategy to meet their essential needs.
When focusing on the most severe strategies, the assessment shows an increase in the use of crisis strategies and a decrease in the use of stress strategies, while the number of households using emergency strategies remained nearly the same. These patterns can be attributed to the depletion of livelihoods.

As a result, households that previously relied on stress strategies have begun to adopt more severe measures.

The most used stress livelihood coping strategy was purchasing basic needs (food, personal care, clothes) on credit (45%). Regarding crisis strategies, the most common strategy applied was reducing essential expenditures on health and education (46%). For emergency livelihood coping strategies, the most common response was begging in the street to purchase food (15%).

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8. "Stress" strategies indicate that the household has reduced capacity to cope with future crises because of resource depletion or increased debt. "Crisis" strategies are associated with a direct reduction in the household's future productivity, including the formation of human capital. "Emergency" strategies also affect future productivity but are harder to reverse or are more dramatic by nature.

4. REGULARIZATION AND INTENTION TO EMIGRATE

9 out of 10 heads of households have no plans to leave Colombia in the next 12 months.

The current assessment findings confirm that the main reasons for leaving the country were the economic situation, followed by difficulties in purchasing food and the lack of employment opportunities to generate income.

Regarding regularization, **a significant percentage of the heads of household interviewed (62%) stated that they already had the temporary protection permit (PPT).** This figure is consistent with the official figures from Migración Colombia, which as of December 2024 reported that 1,939,9879 people already had this document[9], equivalent to 69% of migrants intending to remain in country.

Most migrants do not plan to leave Colombia in the next 12 months. Eighty-six percent have no intention of leaving the country, 3% are uncertain about whether they will migrate, and 11% have plans to do so. Among those with plans to migrate, the main motivations were family reunification, job opportunities, and access to food. For this group, the two most common destination countries were Venezuela (63%) and the United States (26%).

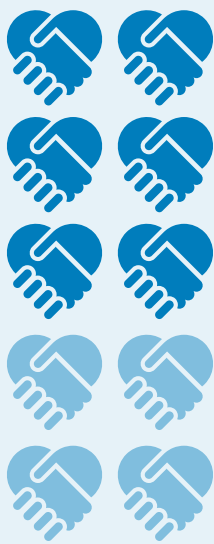9. Migrantes venezolanos en Colombia | Tableau Public

5. SOCIO-ECONOMIC INTEGRATION

60% of the migrant population feels highly integrated into Colombia society.

Among the migrant population with intentions to settle, a strong sense of integration into Colombian society prevails.

Sixty percent report feeling completely integrated, meaning they feel part of a society where they can access education, healthcare, employment, and housing, and where they have a regular migration status. They also express that it is possible to have good relationships with people in the city, neighbourhood, and various societal organizations. Only 2% do not feel integrated, while 38% feel partially integrated.

Although there is a predominant perception of no discrimination among the migrant population, **14% of households have felt highly discriminated against;** the vast majority (95%) report that this discrimination has been mainly due to their nationality, and the main places where they have experienced it are public spaces, workplaces, and their community or neighbourhood.

Graph 8. Perceived levels of discrimination during your time in Colombia

60% Not discriminated	24% Minimally discriminated	14% Highly discriminated	2% Prefer not to answer

6. SOCIAL PROTECTION

The integration of migrants into the Colombian social protection system remains partial. Considering that the SISBEN is the System for Identifying Potential Beneficiaries of Social Programs of the Colombian State[10], and that since the end of 2021 the government has expanded coverage to the Venezuelan migrant population, households were asked if they had already requested the SISBÉN survey. Sixty percent stated yes. Of this group of households, **45% were classified in level A (extreme poverty), 27% in level B (moderate poverty), 1% in level C (households in vulnerable conditions),** 20% in level D (not poor), and 7% responded that they did not know. These results demonstrate the high vulnerability in which the

Venezuelan migrant population in Colombia still finds itself, despite the efforts made to regularize and achieve its socio-economic integration.

For the 40% of households that have not yet requested the survey, the main reasons were a lack of knowledge about the process (45%) and the absence of required documentation (43%). The findings suggest that continued efforts to raise awareness about the importance of applying for the survey, along with educational initiatives on the requirements and procedures for accessing the social protection system, are essential.

60% of migrant households have requested the SISBEN survey.

10. ¿Qué es el SISBEN?

43% Absence of required documentation	45% Lack of knowledge about the process	4%	8% Other

Do not think it is important

Graph 8. The obstacle for not requesting the SISBEN survey
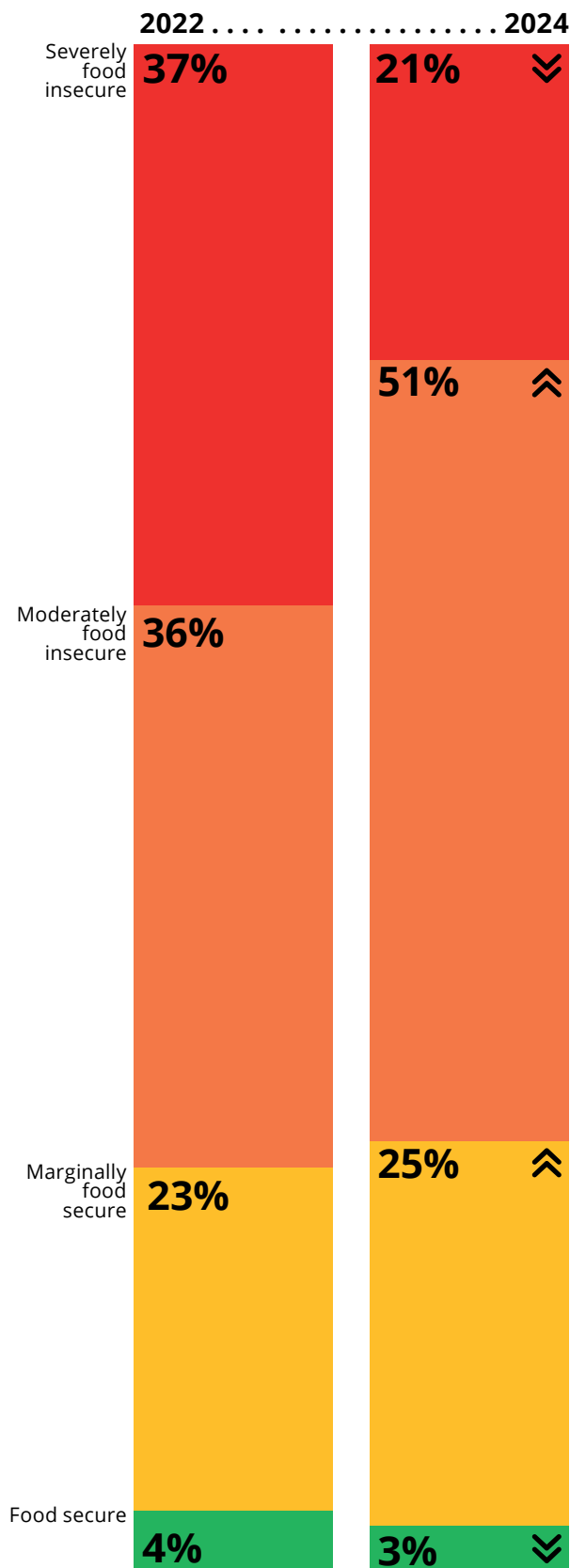
II. RESULTS FOR MIGRANTS IN TRANSIT

According to Migración Colombia data, a total of 400,612 irregular migratory flows were registered in 2024, averaging 33,385 migrants in transit each month. Most of these migrants came from Venezuela (75%), followed by Ecuador (6%), Haiti (4%), and China (3%) [11]. Despite the high diversity of nationalities within these populations, the survey was applied only to Spanish-speaking travel groups.

On average, the surveyed travel groups consisted of 2,7 members; in 33% of the cases, individuals traveling alone were interviewed. In cases where people were traveling in groups, the leader was interviewed. **Of the 483 people who responded to the survey, 97% were of Venezuelan nationality, and the remaining 3% were from South American countries** (Argentina, Brazil, Bolivia, Chile, Peru, and Ecuador).

Regarding the demographic characteristics of the surveyed migrants, 54% identified as female and 46% as male; only one person reported a gender identity outside these categories. The average age was 30,8 years. While 88% did not identify with any ethnic group, 7% identified as Afro-descendant, and 5% as Indigenous. Regarding education level, 46% of the surveyed individuals had an incomplete secondary education or less, another 43% had completed secondary education (complete secondary or incomplete higher education), and **12% had completed higher education (technical or university).**

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11. Migracion Irregular en Tránsito | Tableau Public

1. HOW MANY PEOPLE ARE FOOD INSECURE?

2022 2024

	2022	2024
Severely food insecure	37%	21% ⌄⌄
Moderately food insecure	36%	51% ⌃⌃
Marginally food secure	23%	25% ⌃⌃
Food secure	4%	3% ⌄⌄

Graph 9. Levels of food security (%) 2022 and 2024

72% of the migrants in transit (travel groups) are food insecure.

The migrant population in transit has a high prevalence of food insecurity. According to the results of this assessment, **72% of the migrants in transit (travel groups) are food insecure**; five out of ten are moderately food insecure and two out of ten are severely food insecurity. Compared to the 2022 results, the situation of this population largely remains the same; the prevalence of food insecurity has decreased by only one percentage point, however, there is a significant change in the severity of the situation. **The proportion of severely food insecure migrants in transit decreased from 37% in 2022 to 21% in 2024.**

It is worth noting that a quarter of the migrants in transit through Colombia manage to achieve a marginal level of food security, meaning they attain minimally adequate food consumption without employing irreversible coping strategies, but are unable to cover some non-essential, non-food expenses. This population is highly vulnerable to falling into food insecurity when faced with external shocks that affect the availability or access to food, as well as the depletion of resources.

2. WHERE ARE THE FOOD INSECURE?

FOOD SECURITY LEVELS	ANTIOQUIA	NARIÑO	NORTE DE SANTANDER
Food secure	3%	1%	6%
Marginally food secure	30%	11%	30%
Moderately food insecure	53%	56%	42%
Severely food insecure	14%	32%	22%

Table 1. Food security level by department (%) 2024

Similar to the migrant population intending to settle, the situation of migrants in transit varies depending on the department where they were interviewed. **The highest percentage of both moderate and severe food insecurity (56% and 32%, respectively) was found among migrants in transit surveyed in Nariño.** These groups, mainly returning to Venezuela, may be experiencing extreme depletion of their economic resources as they are unable to find a favourable context for their socio-economic integration, forcing them to return to their country of origin. On the other hand, migrants surveyed in Norte de Santander show a relatively better situation; however, the percentage of food insecurity remains high (64%), and their situation may worsen as they continue their transit through Colombia.

3. COMPONENTS OF FOOD SECURITY MEASUREMENT

2022 2024

	2022	2024
Acceptable	13%	11% ⌄⌄
Acceptable with high level of coping strategies	32%	47% ⌃⌃
Borderline	17%	16% ⌄⌄
Poor	38%	26% ⌄⌄
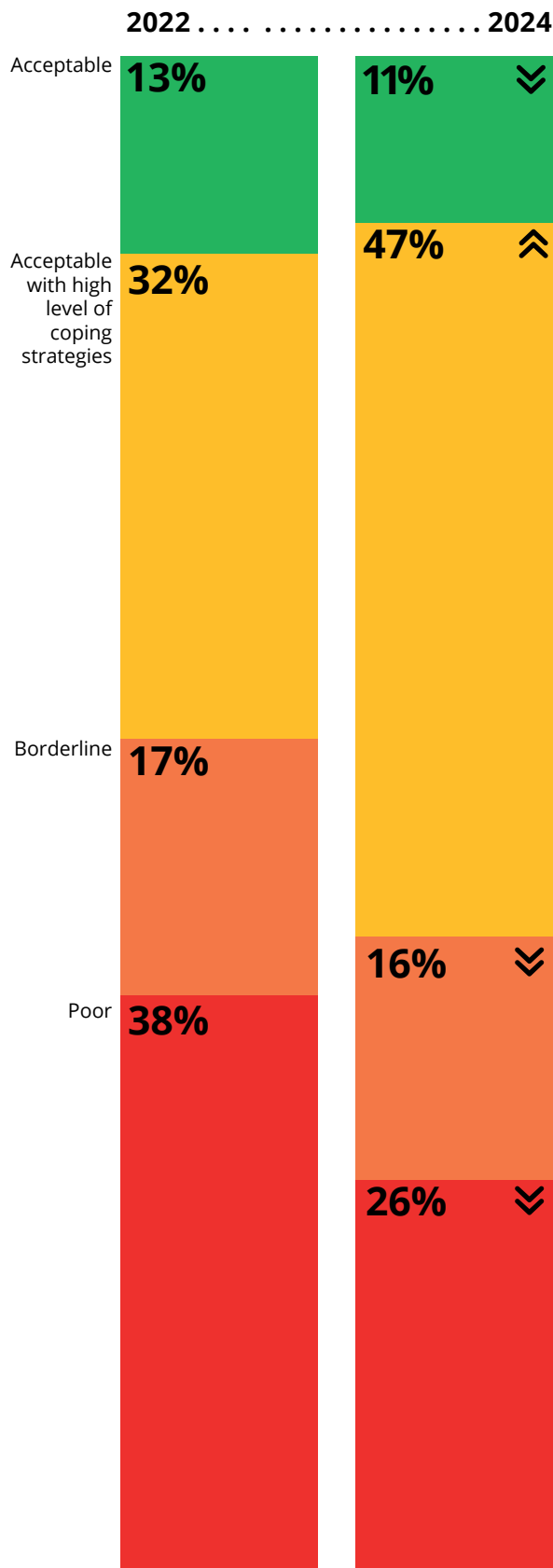
42% of transit travel groups have inadequate food consumption.

3.1 FOOD CONSUMPTION

The food consumption of the migrant population in transit has shown a positive change over the past two years. The percentage of travel groups with inadequate consumption decreased from 55% in 2022 to 42% in 2024. However, this relative improvement in the diversity and frequency of food consumption is linked to an increased reliance on coping strategies, applied by this population.

The most consumed food groups by migrants in transit were cereals and sugars, with average consumption of 5,2 and 4,2 days per week, respectively. In contrast, more nutritious food groups, such as red and white meats, fish, seafood, eggs, and dairy, were consumed less frequently, with average consumption of 3,7 and 2,3 days per week.

Graph 10. Food consumption classification (%) 2022 and 2024

FOOD-BASED CONSUMPTION COPING STRATEGIES

39% of the surveyed travel groups reported that they had gone days without eating.
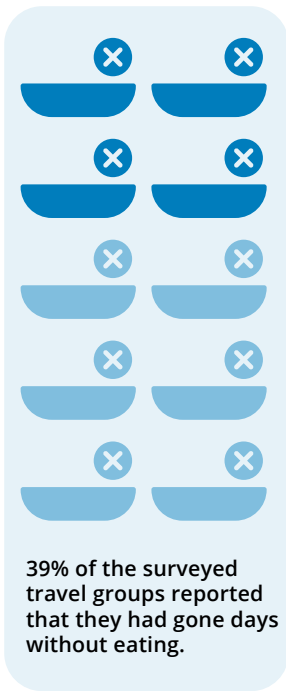
Given the lack of food and money, **nine out of ten migrant travel groups in transit used at least one food-based consumption coping strategy** during the seven days prior to the survey. Among these groups, the most common strategies used were consuming less preferred foods (79%), reducing portion sizes (75%), and reducing the number of meals consumed per day (72%).

As mentioned earlier, the use of these strategies has increased compared to 2022. **Notably, 39% of the surveyed travel groups reported going days without eating.**

3.2 ECONOMIC VULNERABILITY

Non poor	Poor	Extremely poor
23% 34%	27% 27%	52% 39%
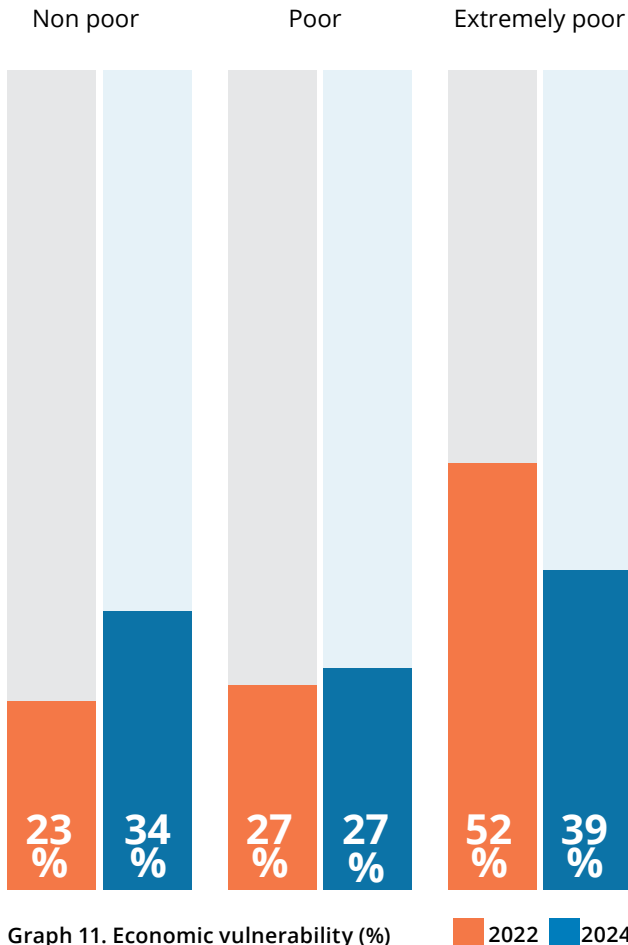
Graph 11. Economic vulnerability (%) 2022 and 2024

🟧 2022 🟦 2024

The migrant population in transit faces high levels of economic vulnerability. Twenty-seven percent of the travel groups were classified as poor, and 39% were in extreme poverty, meaning their per capita expenditure was lower than the basic referential food basket in Colombia (extreme poverty line). Compared to the 2022 findings, the surveyed population in 2024 is less vulnerable. In fact, in the previous year, 52% of the travel groups were in extreme poverty, representing a 13% decrease in the last two years.
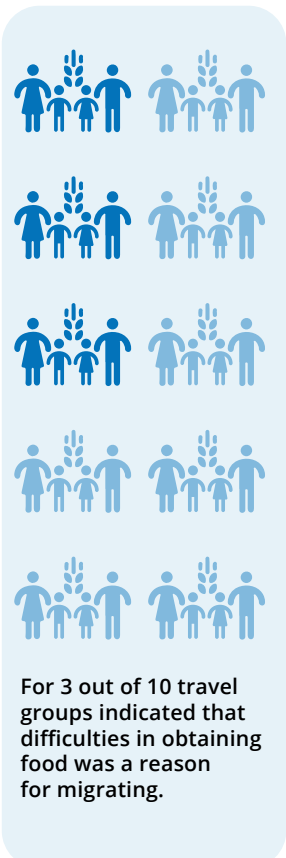
It is important to note that 34% of the travel groups are classified as "non-poor." However, during the journey, their economic resources (if they have any) are depleted, and their income-generating capacity is low, meaning **their vulnerability can quickly increase the farther away the destination is.**

3.3 LIVELIHOOD COPING STRATEGIES

More than half of the migrant population in transit relied on emergency strategies, indicating a severe depletion of their livelihoods. In 2024, 95% of the travel groups in transit through Colombia used at least one coping strategy during the 30 days prior to the assessment, reflecting an increase from the 89% observed in 2022. Among the most severe strategies, **57% of the travel groups resorted to emergency measures such as scavenging for food, begging in the street, or engaging in risky activities that are often avoided by discussion.** These strategies have long-term consequences for productivity and are difficult to change, further highlighting the extreme vulnerability of the migrant population in transit.

Twenty-six percent of travel groups resorted to at least one crisis livelihood coping strategy (excluding emergency strategies), such as asking for food at restaurants, stores, or marketplaces; reducing transportation and accommodation costs (e.g., walking or sleeping on the street); or having children work to contribute resources for the journey. **Compared to 2022, the use of these strategies has nearly doubled, increasing from 14% to 26%.**

4. MIGRATION TRAJECTORY

For 3 out of 10 travel groups indicated that difficulties in obtaining food was a reason for migrating.

Four in ten travel groups had lived in countries other than their native country before arriving in Colombia. Forty-five percent of them had lived in Peru, 35% in Ecuador, and 12% in Chile. The primary reasons for leaving their country were economic hardship (63%) and political instability (55%). **Notably, three in ten travel groups cited difficulties in accessing food as a significant factor in their decision to migrate.**

The United States was the most common destination for the surveyed population, with nearly half of the travel groups (48%) selecting it as their destination. Other frequently mentioned destinations included Peru, Ecuador, and Chile (22%), while 19% of the population was returning to Venezuela. The groups headed to South American countries were generally seeking better living conditions, while those returning to Venezuela had already experienced these challenges and decided to return to their home country.

Economic vulnerability remained a critical issue during transit. When asked about their ability to afford resources to reach their destination, 75% of travel groups reported lacking the necessary funds. Of those, 26% had enough resources for one week or less, while 31% had funds for one to

Given the possibility of accessing health, education, and social protection services, 47% of travel groups would consider staying in Colombia.
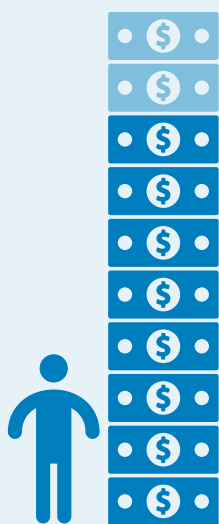
two weeks. The primary sources of financing for these travel groups were personal savings (53%), loans from relatives or friends (20%), and the sale of assets (13%). **These findings underline the severe depletion of livelihoods among migrants in transit, and their prospects for improving their situation largely depending on their ability to generate income in their host environments.**

Throughout their migratory journey, surveyed migrants faced multiple barriers that worsened their living conditions. Consistent with their economic vulnerability, **80% of the travel groups identified the lack of money and high travel costs as the main challenges they encountered.** Legal barriers, including difficulties in obtaining visas and permits, were reported by 19% of the migrants, while 10% faced social barriers, such as discrimination and a lack of support networks. Additionally, security concerns, such as violence and criminality, were mentioned by 10% of respondents.

In relation to the possibility of accessing social protection programs in Colombia (financial assistance, access to health and education services), 47% of the travel groups would consider staying in Colombia, while 50% would stick to their decision to

continue toward their current destination country.

Regarding the possibility of returning to their country of origin with the provision of social assistance, such as financial aid or reintegration programs, opinions are divided. Forty-four percent of the travel groups would consider returning instead of continuing their journey or staying in Colombia, while more than half (53%) would proceed with their plan and their destination.

80% of travel groups perceive lack of money and high travel costs as the main barrier they have faced.

III. CONCLUSION

The food security assessment provides evidence that, despite improvements in the migrant population's situation between 2022 and 2024, a high level of vulnerability persists, requiring ongoing attention from both humanitarian and governmental sectors. It is crucial that all sectors continue their efforts aimed at enhancing the quality of life and socioeconomic integration of this population.

In relation to the 2022 results, there is a relative improvement in the food security situation both for migrants with the intention to settle and for those in transit through Colombia. However, in the first group, the decrease in food insecurity does not translate into an increase in the percentage of food secure households, but rather into an increase in the percentage of marginally food secure households, which remain vulnerable and can risk falling into food insecurity due to any shock. In the second group, the most significant change between the two periods is the reduction in severe food insecurity, but the total prevalence shows no changes.

The assessment also indicates a decrease in the percentage of households in extreme poverty and regular poverty among migrants with the intention to settle. However, **, high vulnerability persists, as reflected in the increased use of coping strategies related to food consumption and livelihoods.** Despite a notable number of households moving out of poverty, there remain significant gaps in consumption and a low diversity in their diets.

On the other hand, **the migrant population in transit faces higher economic vulnerability, characterized by the extreme depletion of**

livelihoods due to a lack of financial resources to fund their journey and the heavy reliance on crisis and emergency strategies. Seventy-five percent of migrants in transit lack the economic resources to continue their journey, and those who do have resources report that they will deplete them in the short term.

Regionally, in departments such as **Arauca, La Guajira, Magdalena and Atlántico, more than half of the migrant population remains in moderate or severe food insecurity.**

Although most migrants intending to settle report feeling highly integrated into Colombian society and have experienced positive changes in the regularization process and access to social programs, closing existing gaps remains a key objective. This includes improving labour opportunities and helping the migrant population overcome their vulnerability.