

KEY FIGURES

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MIGRANTS ENTERED PANAMA VIA THE DARIEN GAP IN THE FIRST 9 MONTHS OF 2021

20%

OF MIGRANTS WHO ENTERED PANAMA THROUGH THE DARIEN GAP BETWEEN JANUARY AND SEPTEMBER 2021 WERE MINORS

Sources:

- Government of Panama
- Government of Mexico
- Government of Ecuador
- IOM
- UNICEF

KEY FIGURES

Cases, deaths & vaccines administered (11 Oct)

Cases	46,340,439	+2.0% from 3 Oct
Deaths	1,507,106	+0.4% from 3 Oct
Vaccines	644,310,574	+3.9% from 3 Oct

Sources:

- COVID-19 Data Explorer - <https://bit.ly/3vsHRP9>
- PAHO/WHO

LATIN AMERICA & THE CARIBBEAN: MIGRANTS & REFUGEES

PANAMA

According to Panama's National Migration Service (SNM), more than 91,300 migrants have embarked on the perilous journey through the Darien Gap in hopes of reaching the United States, Canada or Mexico during the first nine months of 2021, tripling the previous record of 30,000 traversing the same route in all of 2016. Per UNICEF, the number of minors who crossed into Panama via the Darien jungle, which straddles the Colombia-Panama border, hit a record high between January and September, with around 19,000 minors in transit identified. While in 2017 children made up just 2 per cent of the migratory movement through the Colombia-Panama border area, in the first nine months of this year they already account for 20 per cent.

The growing number of migrants crossing the Darien Gap into Panama continues to generate humanitarian needs in shelter, water, sanitation and hygiene as well as health, while raising significant protection concerns, especially for girls and adolescents on the move, who are particularly vulnerable to sexual abuse and violence. Officials say they have recovered the remains of at least 50 migrants in Darien so far in 2021, roughly double recent yearly migrant death tolls, a number they say is only a fraction of those who have perished making the dangerous passage through the dense and lawless jungle area.

MEXICO

On 7 October, Mexican authorities discovered more than 652 Central American migrants in six trailers near the US border in the northern state of Tamaulipas. A total of 564 Guatemalan nationals were identified, as well as migrants from Honduras, El Salvador, Nicaragua and Belize, with more than half of those identified being children, nearly 200 of them unaccompanied. All migrants identified by Mexican authorities were alive, with no deaths reported by officials. The Red Cross evaluated 40 migrants for dehydration and malnutrition, while Tamaulipas' health authorities report that at least nine migrants tested positive for COVID-19.

ECUADOR

National officials report that irregular crossing points along the Carchi river on the Colombia-Ecuador border, long a common point of transit for thousands of Venezuelan migrants and refugees in both directions, are now seeing growing numbers of Haitian migrants and a corresponding increase in human trafficking into Colombia. Transit authorities estimate that between 450 and 650 people a day are arriving at the Carchi river since June, most of whom arrive from Huaquillas on the southern border with Peru. As with the Rumichaca border crossing with Colombia, Huaquillas has yet to re-open since the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic.

LATIN AMERICA & THE CARIBBEAN: COVID-19

Shortages caused by wealthier countries buying up supplies, ongoing acquisition processes and COVAX reallocating available doses to priority countries with less than 10 per cent coverage are complicating the delivery of the full amount of COVID-19 vaccine doses pledged to certain countries in Latin America and the Caribbean for 2021. In the region, countries prioritized include

Nicaragua and Haiti. Jamaica has reached 18 per cent coverage with at least one dose but has only fully immunized 10 per cent of all people. While COVAX sought to provide enough doses in 2021 for countries in the region to inoculate 20 per cent of its population, most countries have only received around 30 per cent of their COVAX allocation.