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# Women migrants in Latin America and the Caribbean

Progress report. May 2024

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WUCWO



UMOFC



# Authorities

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# Introduction

Over the last two decades, women have emerged as a prominent protagonist in migration flows in Latin America and the Caribbean. There is still little or only partial knowledge about the determinants, problems and particular forms that female migration takes on. Behind these migratory displacements, a variety of economic, social, political and cultural violences are hidden, affecting a highly vulnerable population.

The violence, injustice and social precariousness faced by migrants in the region - especially women - is not a central issue on the public agenda, and the problem tends to go unnoticed, silenced and made invisible by the political, economic and social elites. In this context, however, hundreds of organisations, especially non-governmental organisations, both religious and lay, devote significant but still scarce resources to assisting, accompanying and sustaining these populations.

Hence, approaching the study of the phenomenon through these organisations allows a privileged approach to the vulnerabilities, demands and most urgent needs of migrant women in the region. With this objective in mind, this study contacted and interviewed almost one hundred "social correspondents", representatives of the main organisations that assist different migrant populations throughout the region, in order to provide a specific account of the migratory experiences of Latin American women. In this regard, it is worth highlighting the role and perspective of Catholic religious organisations, as they have become a central protagonist in the humanitarian work required by the current migration crisis in the region.

# Methodology

- In order to study the migration processes of women in Latin America, the reasons for leaving their countries of origin and their experiences through the voices of the social organisations assisting them, this study uses a quantitative information-gathering methodology. The technique used was the application of an online survey administered using the Google Forms platform. The survey was applied during the months of January and April 2024.
- The survey was conducted with both religious and secular organisations in Latin America and the Caribbean involved in assisting women migrants, both those settled in the country of destination and those in transit.
- Contact with them was achieved through different strategies. The first was undertaken through the network of women social leaders built by WUCWO in 2023 in relation to this phenomenon and through partner organisations; the second strategy was led directly through WUCWO organisations; the third was through meetings with experts; and finally, through word of mouth.
- A total of 89 organisations working with migrant women responded to the survey. Therefore, the results presented in this report are not representative of the experiences of all Latin American migrant women or of the organisations that support this entire population, nor of the relative weight that this population universe holds in the countries it encompasses , but only express the findings and percentages of various indicators of those organisations that completed the survey.

# Definition of variables

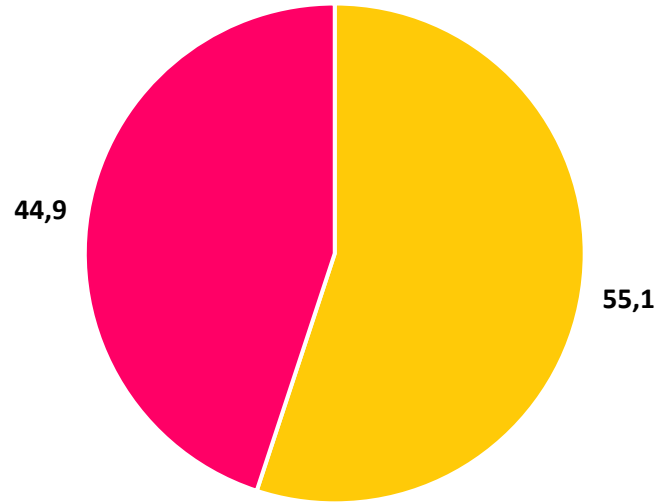
Variable	Definition
REGION OF RESIDENCE	THE LAC AREA WHERE MIGRANT WOMEN ARE LIVING.
TYPES OF ORGANISATIONS	NATURE OF ORGANISATIONS ASSISTING MIGRANT WOMEN
MIGRATION STATUS	MIGRATION STATUS OF MIGRANT WOMEN IN THE COUNTRY OF RESIDENCE.
SCOPE OF WORK OF THE ORGS.	THE TERRITORIAL EXTENSION OF THE WORK OF ORGANISATIONS ASSISTING MIGRANT WOMEN
REGION OF PROVENANCE	THE ALYC AREA FROM WHERE THE WOMEN MIGRATED.
MIGRATION SENIORITY	THE LENGTH OF TIME SINCE WOMEN MIGRATED FROM THEIR COUNTRY OF ORIGIN.
MAIN ACTIVITIES OF THE ORGS.	THE DIFFERENT TYPES OF ACTIVITIES THAT ORGANISATIONS CARRY OUT TO ASSIST MIGRANT WOMEN
MAIN REASON FOR MIGRATION	THE REASONS WHY WOMEN DECIDED TO MIGRATE FROM THEIR COUNTRIES OF ORIGIN.
MAIN REASONS FOR MIGRATION	ECONOMIC, SOCIAL OR CULTURAL REASONS WHY WOMEN DECIDED TO MIGRATE FROM THEIR COUNTRIES OF ORIGIN.
KEY VULNERABILITIES	THE MAIN VULNERABILITIES OR CHALLENGES FACED BY A MIGRANT WOMAN
MAJOR PSYCHOLOGICAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL CHALLENGES	THE PSYCHOLOGICAL, SOCIAL AND CULTURAL CHALLENGES FACED BY MIGRANT WOMEN DURING THE MIGRATION PROCESS
MAIN DEMANDS OF WOMEN IN TRANSIT AND DESTINATION	TYPES OF ASSISTANCE REQUESTED BY MIGRANT WOMEN ON ARRIVAL IN TRANSIT OR DESTINATION AREAS.
TOPICS OF INTEREST REQUIRING FURTHER STUDY	THE ISSUES ON MIGRANT WOMEN THAT REQUIRE FURTHER STUDY.
LINES OF ACTION TO BE IMPROVED	LINES OF ACTION TO BE IMPROVED BY ORGANISATIONS TO BETTER ASSIST MIGRANT WOMEN.

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# Preliminary results

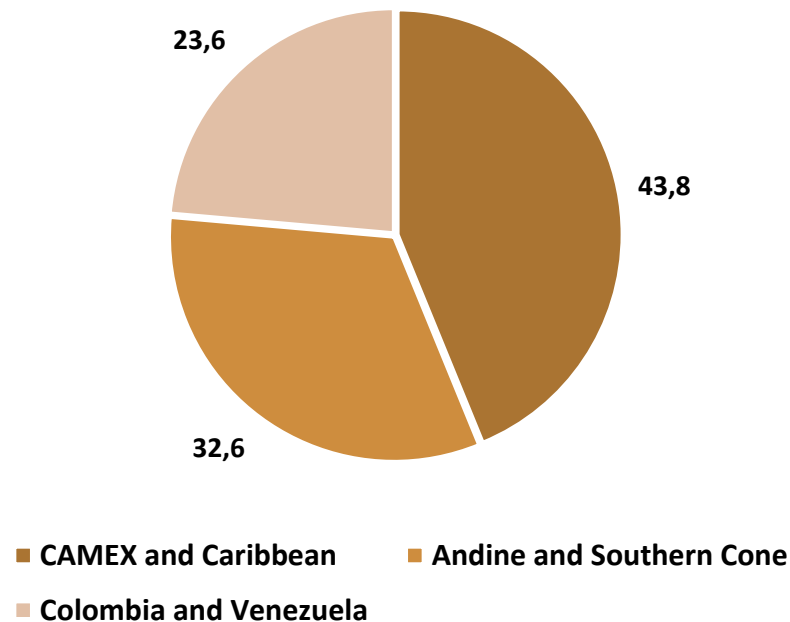
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## Type of organisation assisting migrant women in Latin America and the Caribbean. In percentages of the sample of organisations (2024).



■ Church and religious organizations ■ Other organizations

## Region of residence of organisations assisting migrant women in Latin America and the Caribbean. In percentages of the sample of organisations (2024).



Source: Prepared by the authors based on the survey "Consultation questionnaire on migrant women in LAC" of the World Women's Observatory.



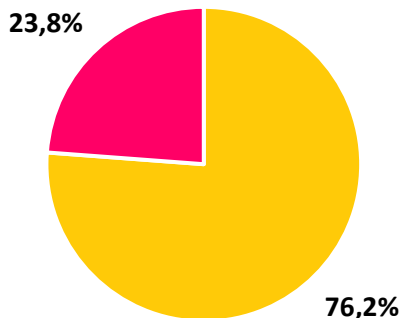
# Type of organisation assisting migrant women by region of residence in Latin America and the Caribbean. In percentages of the sample of organisations (2024).

## CAMEX and Caribbean



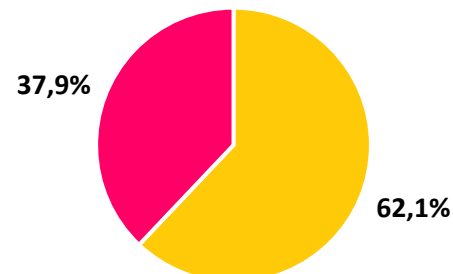
- Church and religious organizations
- Other organizations

## Colombia and Venezuela



- Church and religious organizations
- Other organizations

## Andean area and Southern Cone

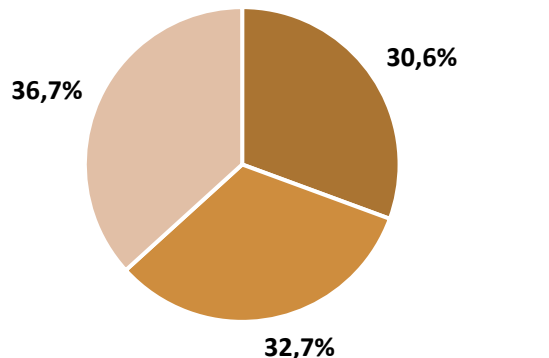


- Church and religious organizations
- Other organizations

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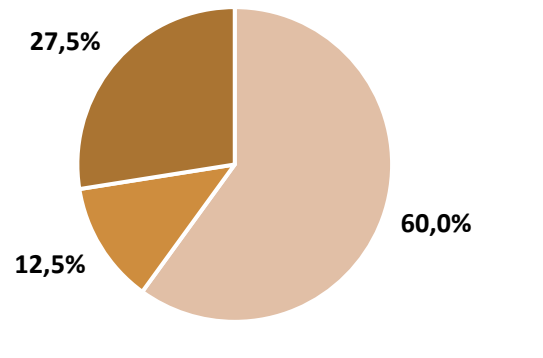
## Region of residence by type of organisation assisting migrant women in Latin America and the Caribbean. In percentages of the sample of organisations (2024).

### Church and religious organisations



- CAMEX and Caribbean
- Colombia and Venezuela
- Andean and Southern Cone

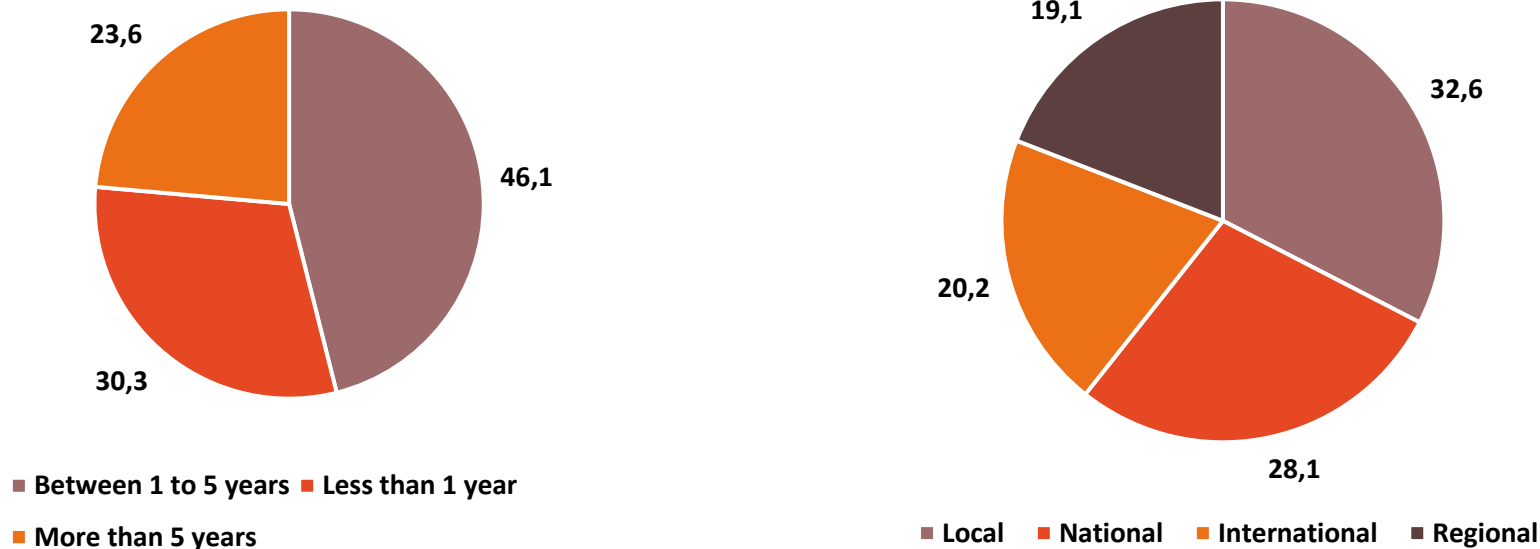
### Other organizations



- CAMEX and Caribbean
- Colombia and Venezuela
- Andean and Southern Cone

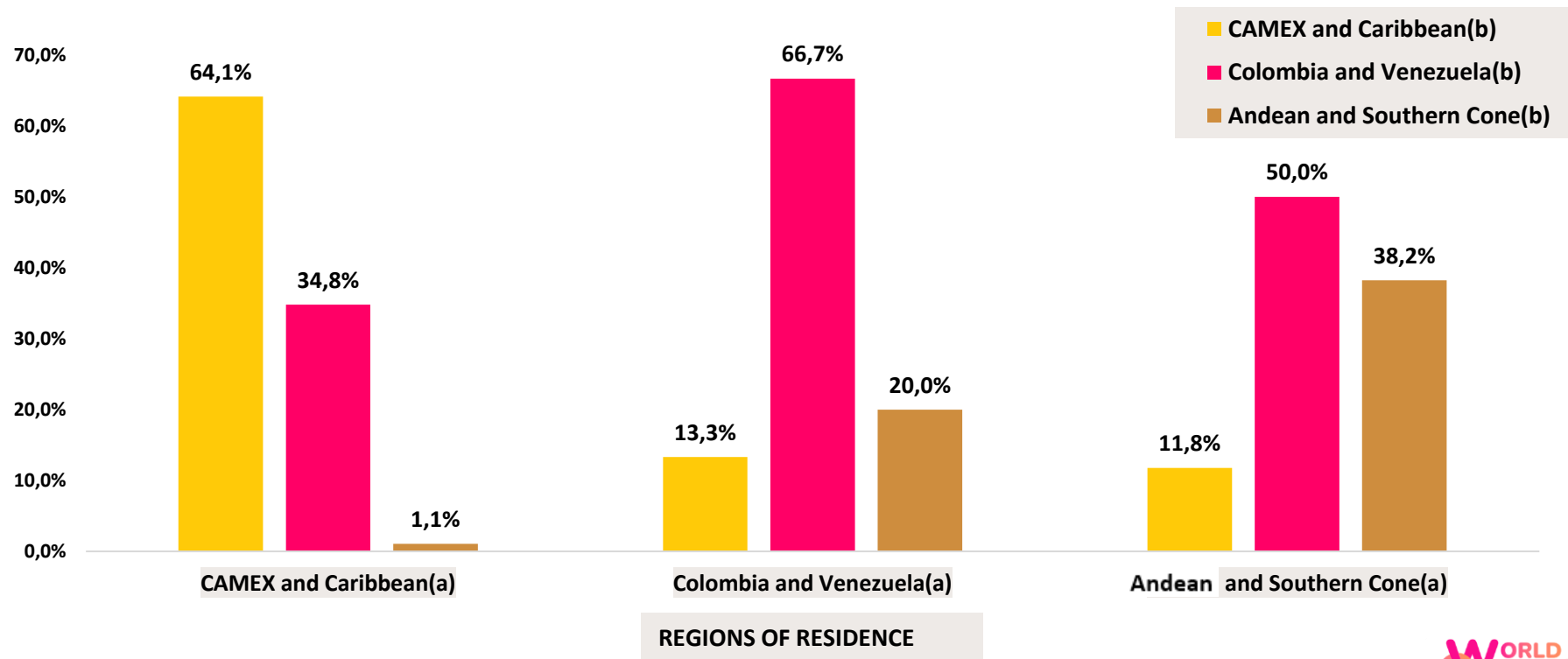
Source: Prepared by the authors based on the survey "Consultation questionnaire on migrant women in LAC" of the World Women's Observatory.

## Migrant seniority of migrant women assisted by the organisations and scope of work of the organisations. In percentages of the sample of organisations (2024).



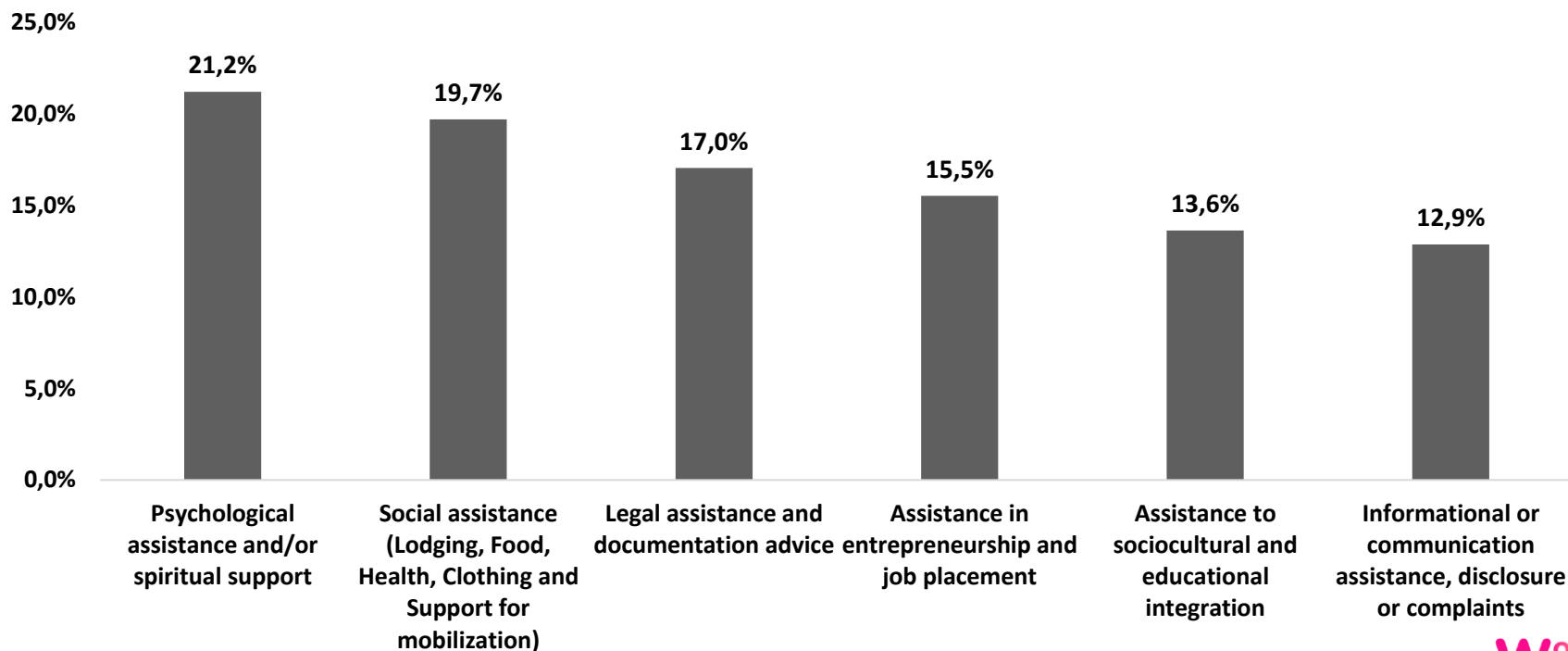
Source: Prepared by the authors based on the survey "Consultation questionnaire on migrant women in LAC" of the World Women's Observatory.

## Region of origin (b) of migrant women according to the region of residence (a) of the organisations. In percentages of the sample of organisations (2024).



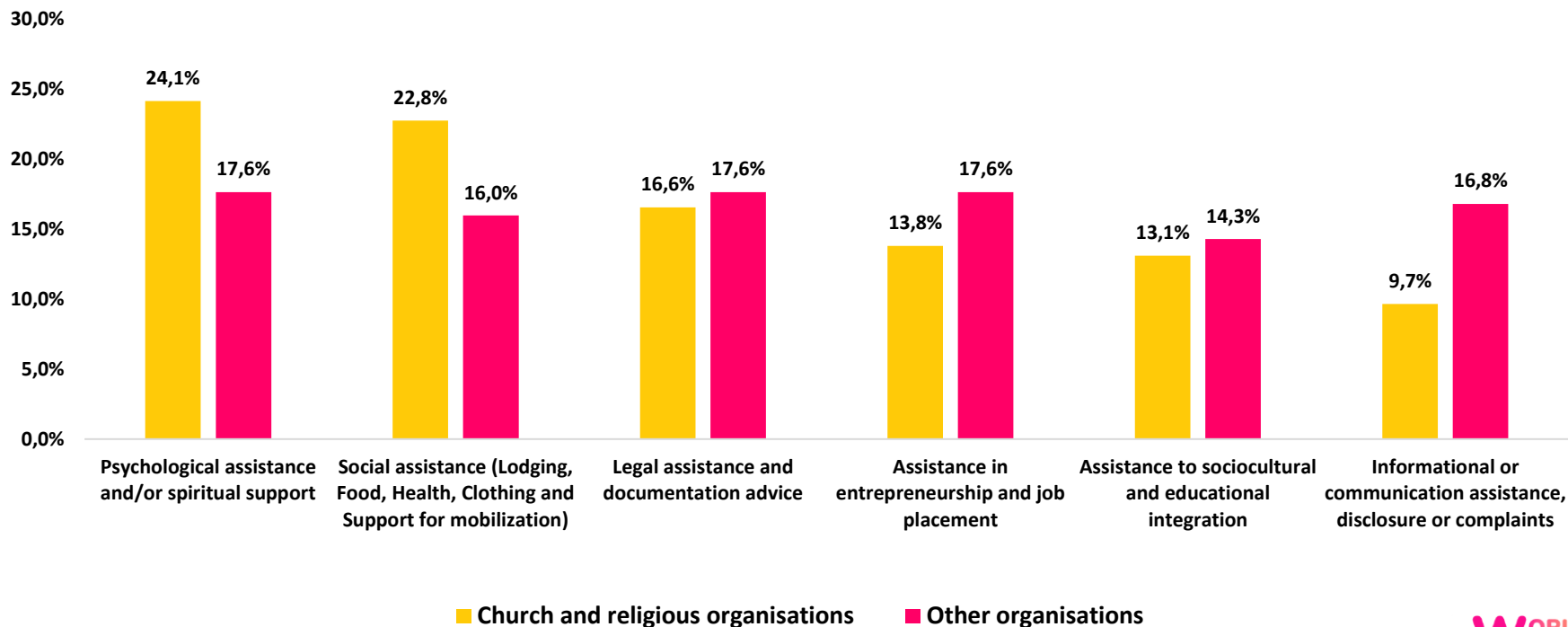
Source: Prepared by the authors based on the survey "Consultation questionnaire on migrant women in LAC" of the World Women's Observatory.

## Main activities of assistance to migrant women in Latin America and the Caribbean. In percentages of the sample of organisations (2024).



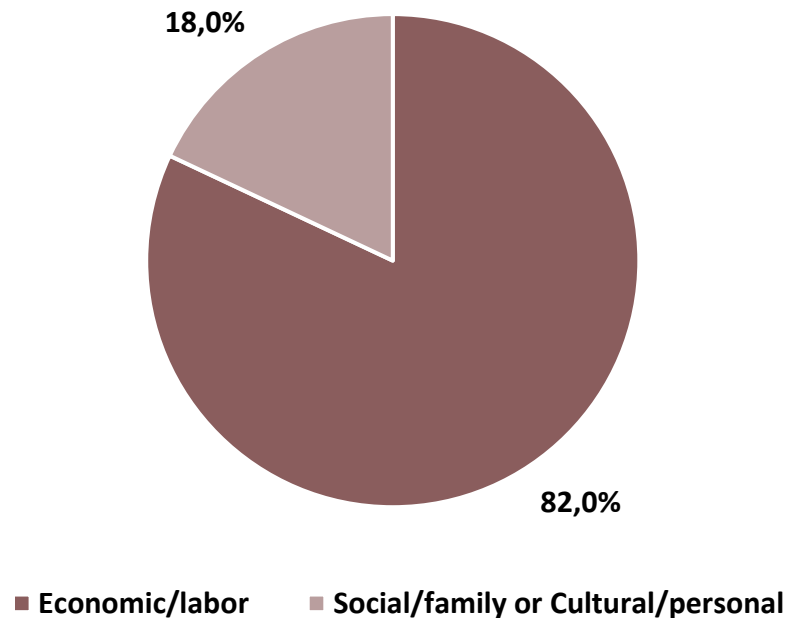
Source: Prepared by the authors based on the survey "Consultation questionnaire on migrant women in LAC" of the World Women's Observatory.

## Main activities of assistance to migrant women in Latin America and the Caribbean by type of organisation. In percentages of the sample of organisations (2024).



Source: Prepared by the authors based on the survey "Consultation questionnaire on migrant women in LAC" of the World Women's Observatory.

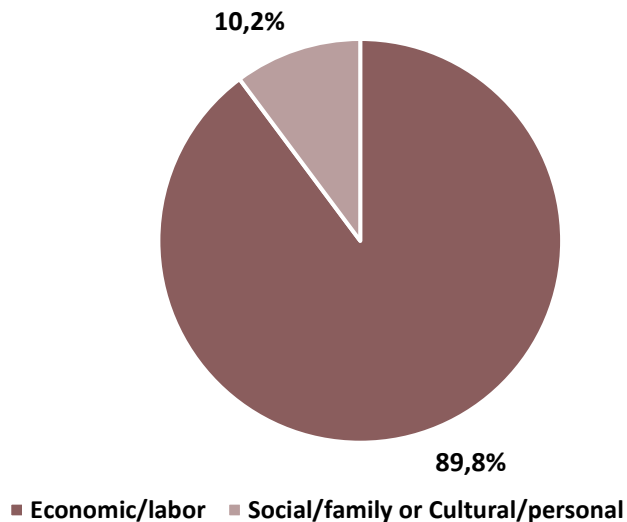
## Main reason for migration of migrant women assisted by organisations in Latin America and the Caribbean. In percentages of the sample of organisations (2024).



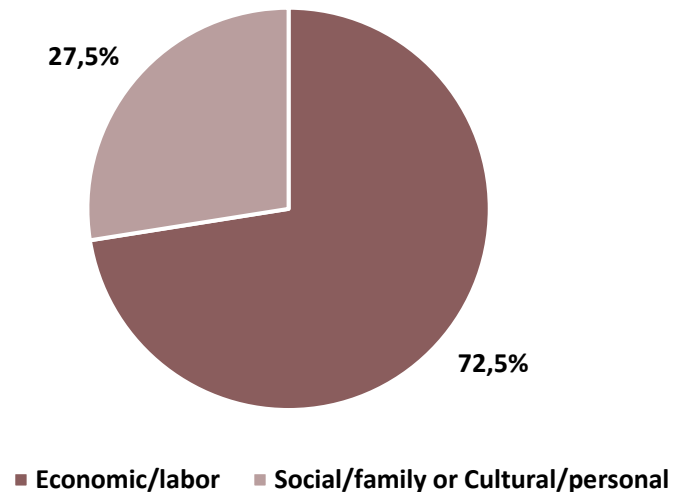
Source: Prepared by the authors based on the survey "Consultation questionnaire on migrant women in LAC" of the World Women's Observatory.

# Main reason for migration of assisted migrant women by type of organisation in Latin America and the Caribbean. In percentages of the sample of organisations (2024).

## Church and religious organisations



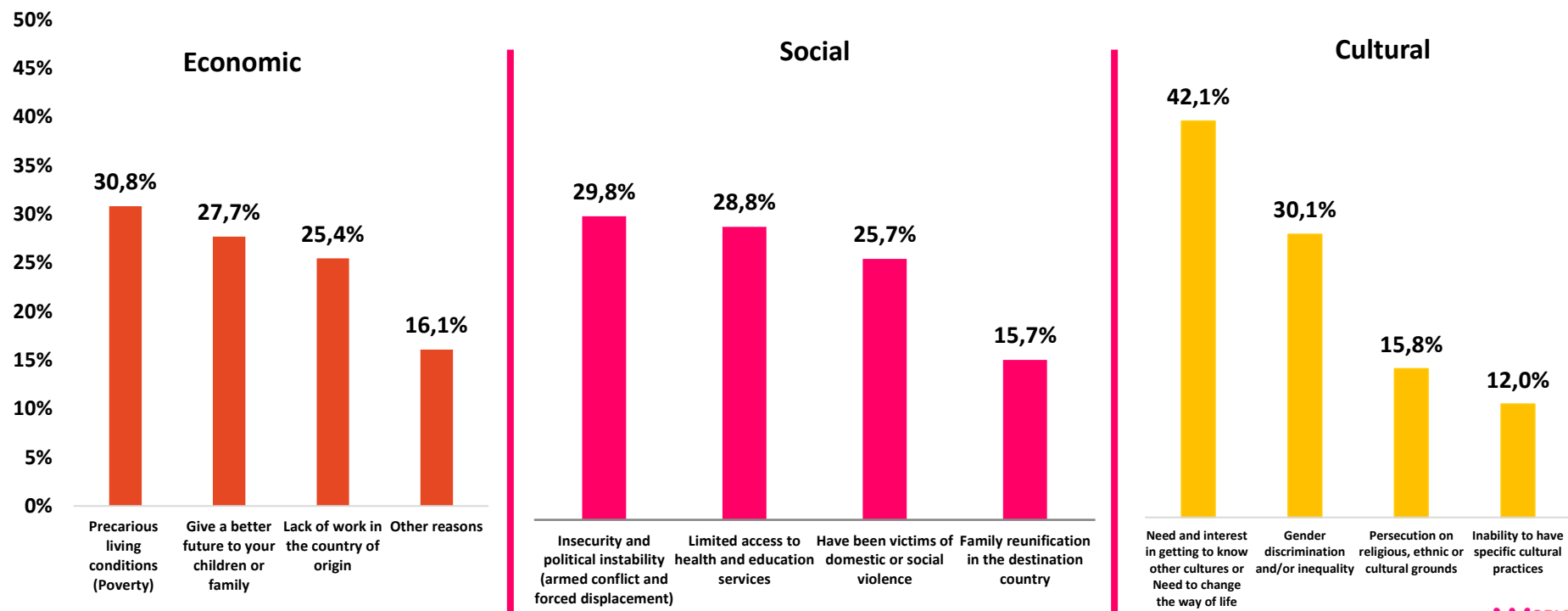
## Other orgs.



Source: Prepared by the authors based on the survey "Consultation questionnaire on migrant women in LAC" of the World Women's Observatory.

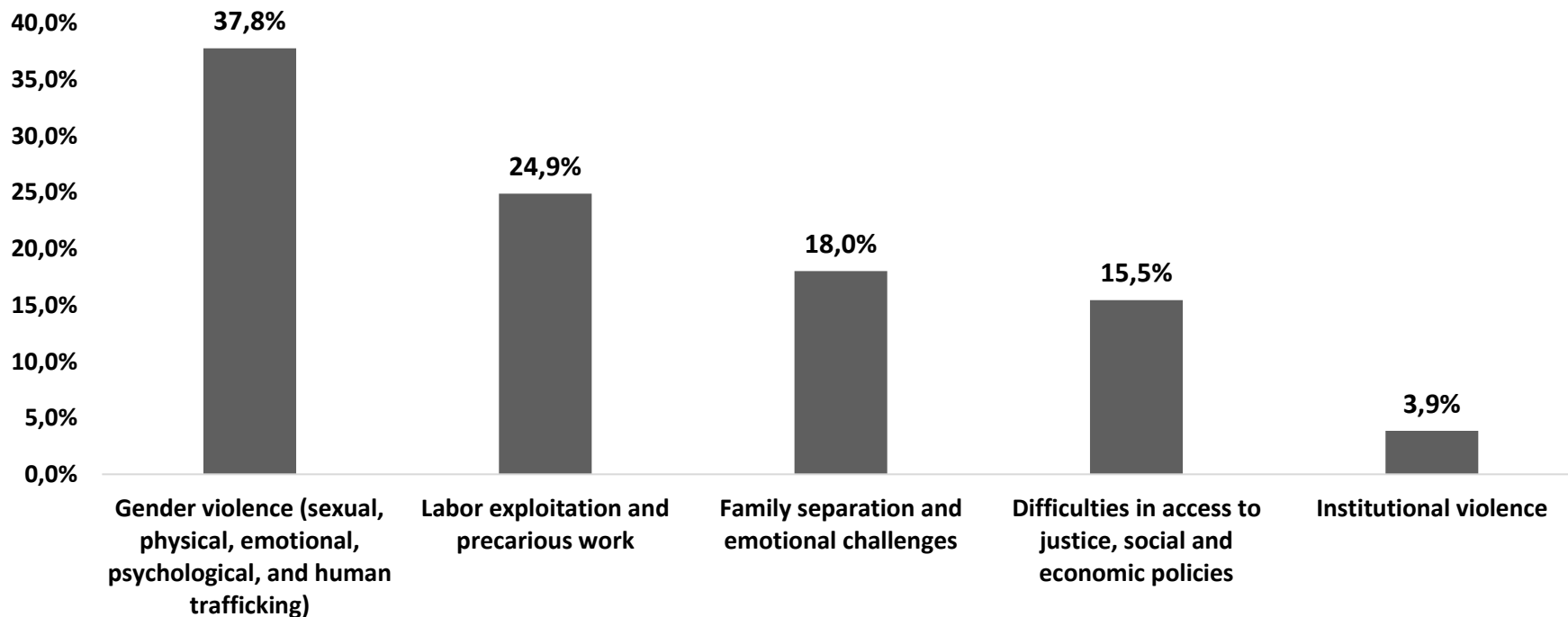


# Main economic, social and cultural reasons for migration of women assisted by organisations in Latin America and the Caribbean. As a percentage of the sample of organisations (2024).



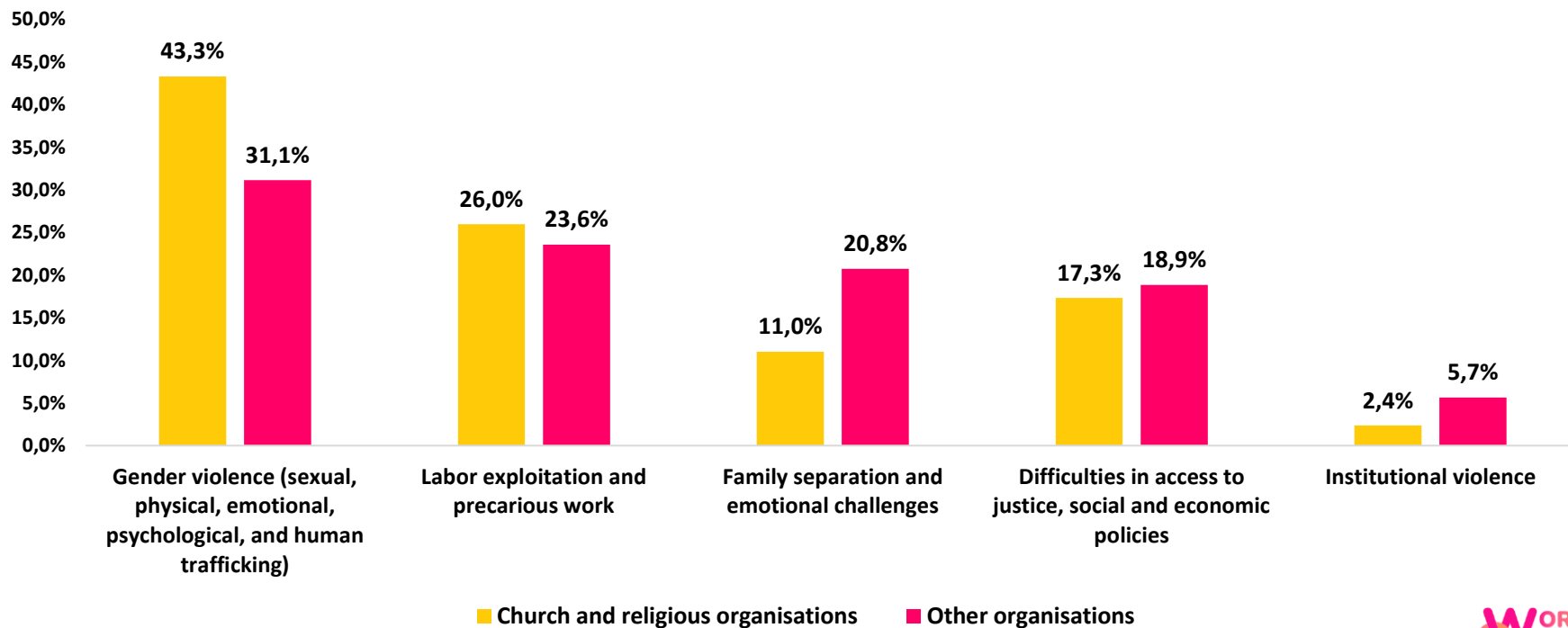
Source: Prepared by the authors based on the survey "Consultation questionnaire on migrant women in LAC" of the World Women's Observatory.

## Main vulnerabilities faced by migrant women assisted by organisations in Latin America and the Caribbean. In percentage of responses from the sample of organisations (2024).



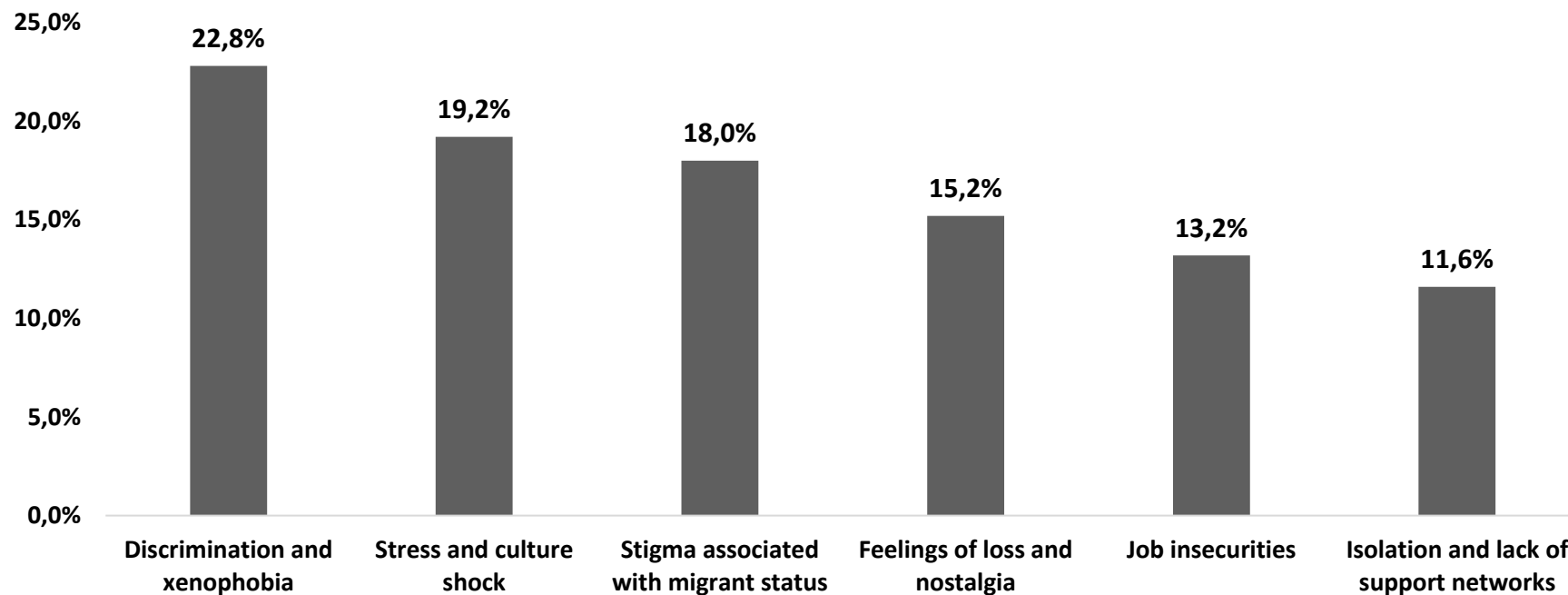
Source: Prepared by the authors based on the survey "Consultation questionnaire on migrant women in LAC" of the World Women's Observatory.

## Main vulnerabilities faced by migrant women assisted by type of organisation. In percentage of responses from the sample of organisations (2024).



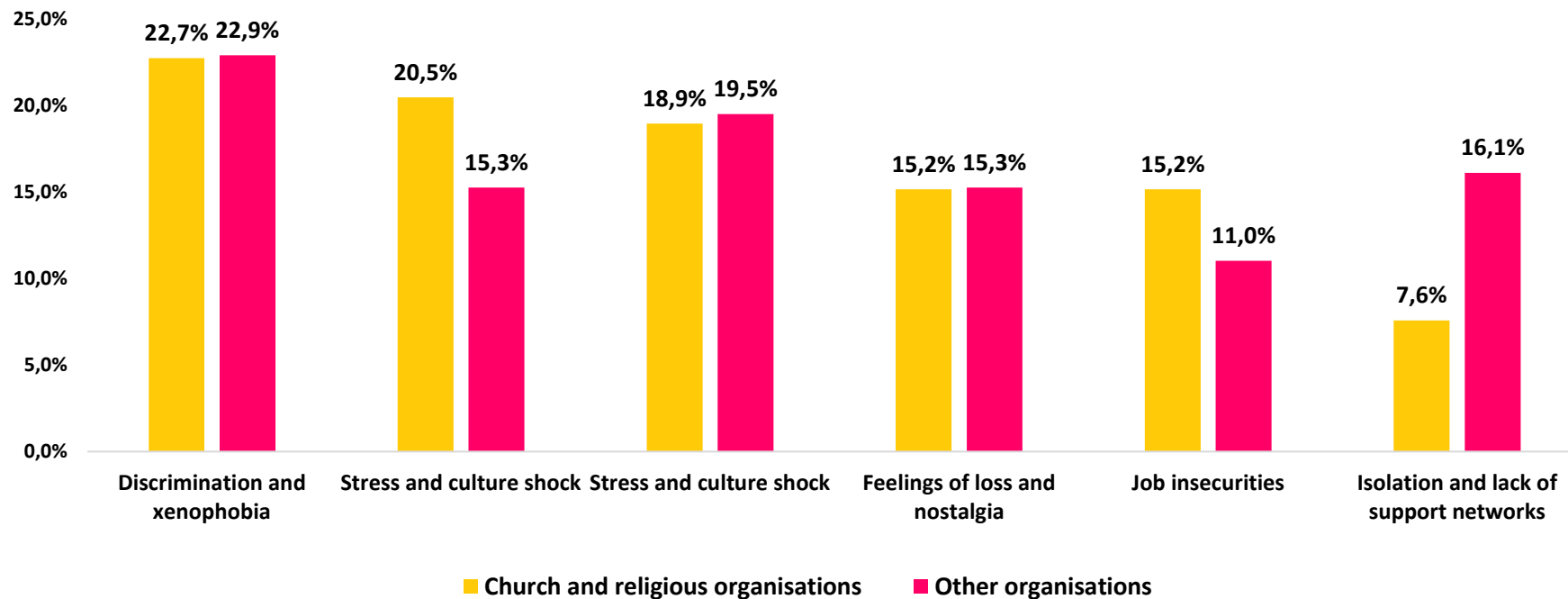
Source: Prepared by the authors based on the survey "Consultation questionnaire on migrant women in LAC" of the World Women's Observatory.

## Main psychological, social and emotional challenges experienced by migrant women assisted by organisations. In percentage of responses from the sample of organisations (2024).



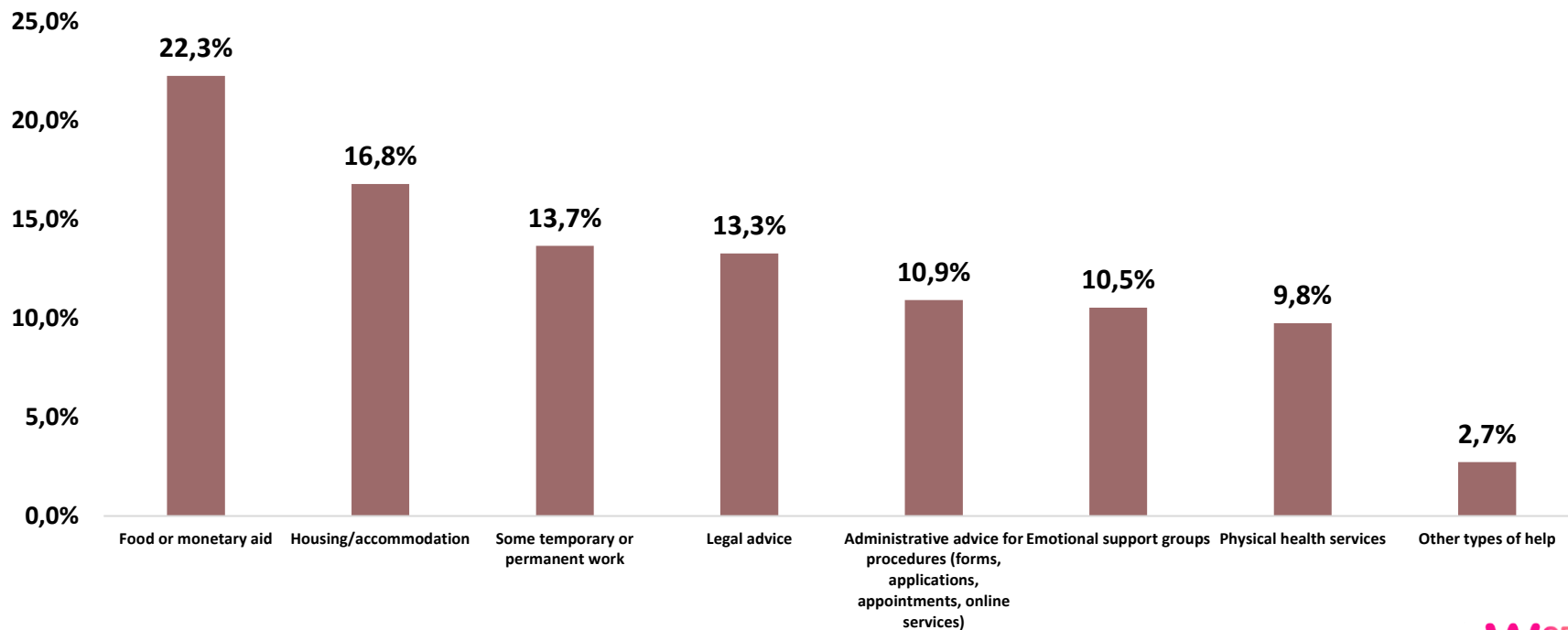
Source: Prepared by the authors based on the survey "Consultation questionnaire on migrant women in LAC" of the World Women's Observatory.

# Main psychological, social and emotional challenges experienced by assisted migrant women by type of organisation. As a percentage of responses from the sample of organisations (2024).



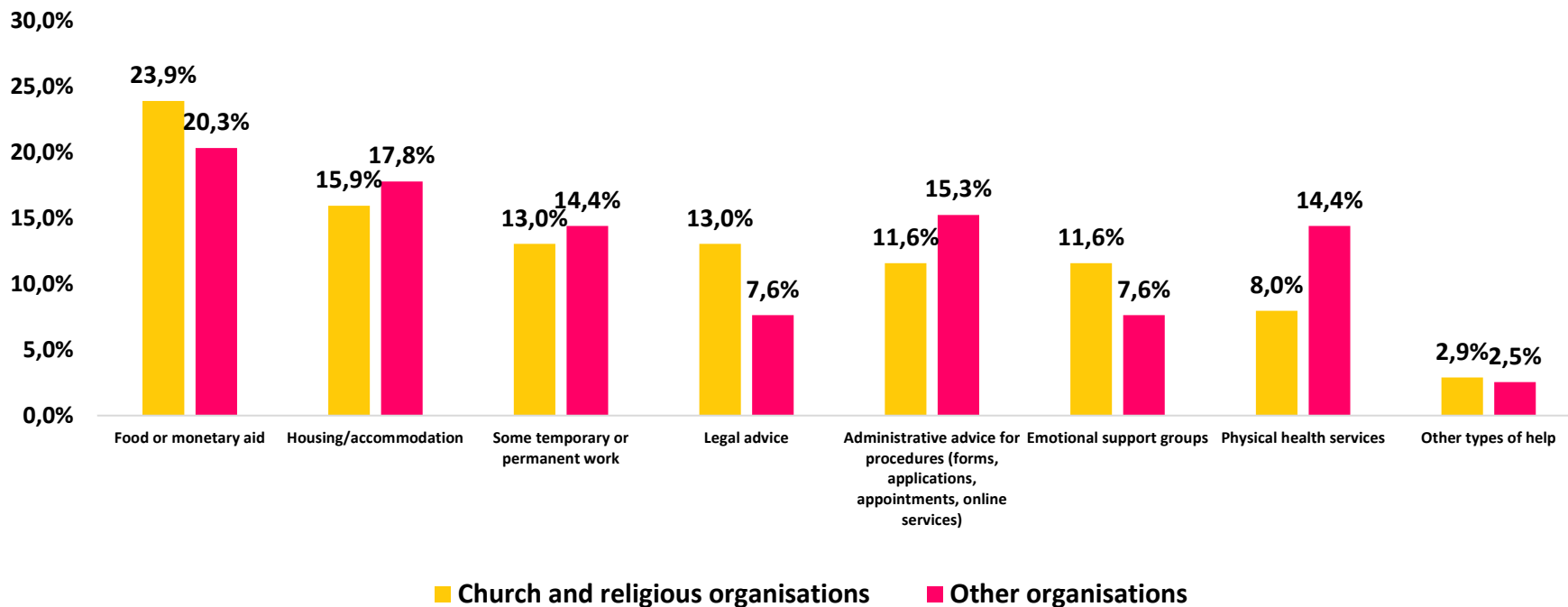
Source: Prepared by the authors based on the survey "Consultation questionnaire on migrant women in LAC" of the World Women's Observatory.

## Main social demands of migrant women IN TRANSIT assisted by organisations in Latin America and the Caribbean. In percentage of responses from the sample of organisations (2024).



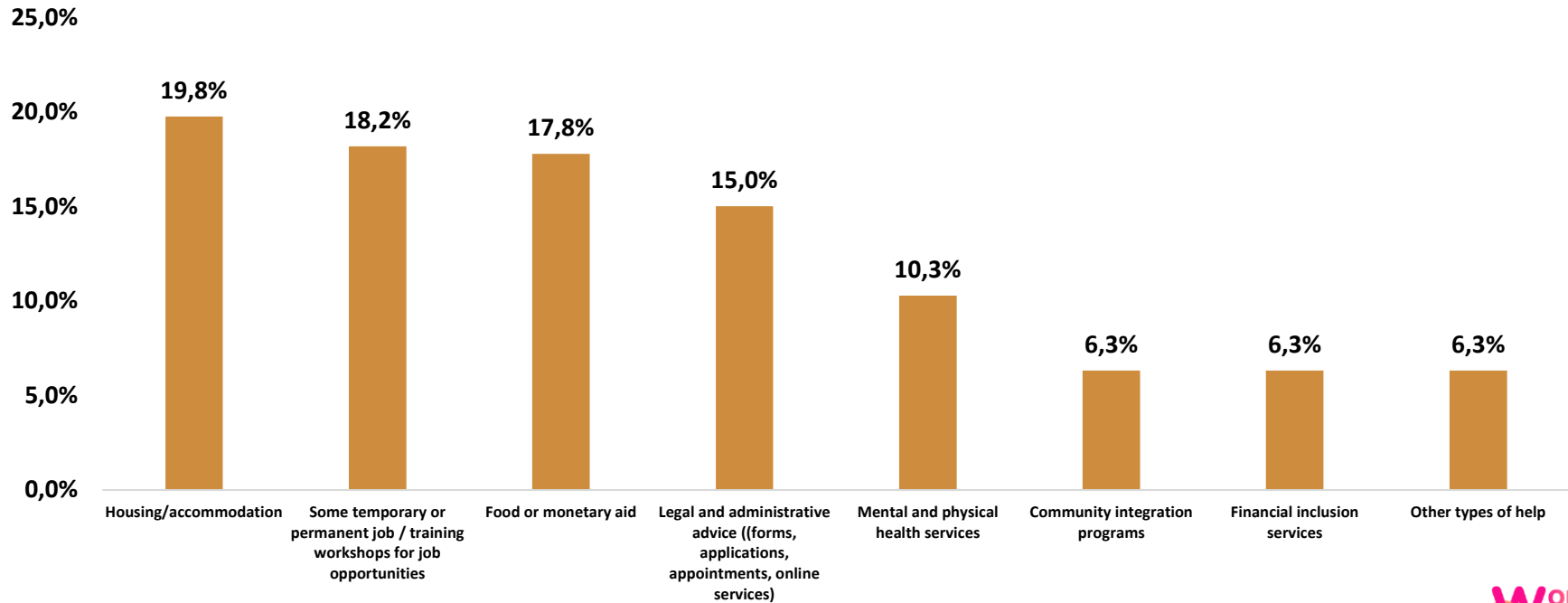
Source: Prepared by the authors based on the survey "Consultation questionnaire on migrant women in LAC" of the World Women's Observatory.

## Main social demands of migrant women IN TRANSIT assisted, by type of organisation. In percentage of responses from the sample of organisations (2024).



Source: Prepared by the authors based on the survey "Consultation questionnaire on migrant women in LAC" of the World Women's Observatory.

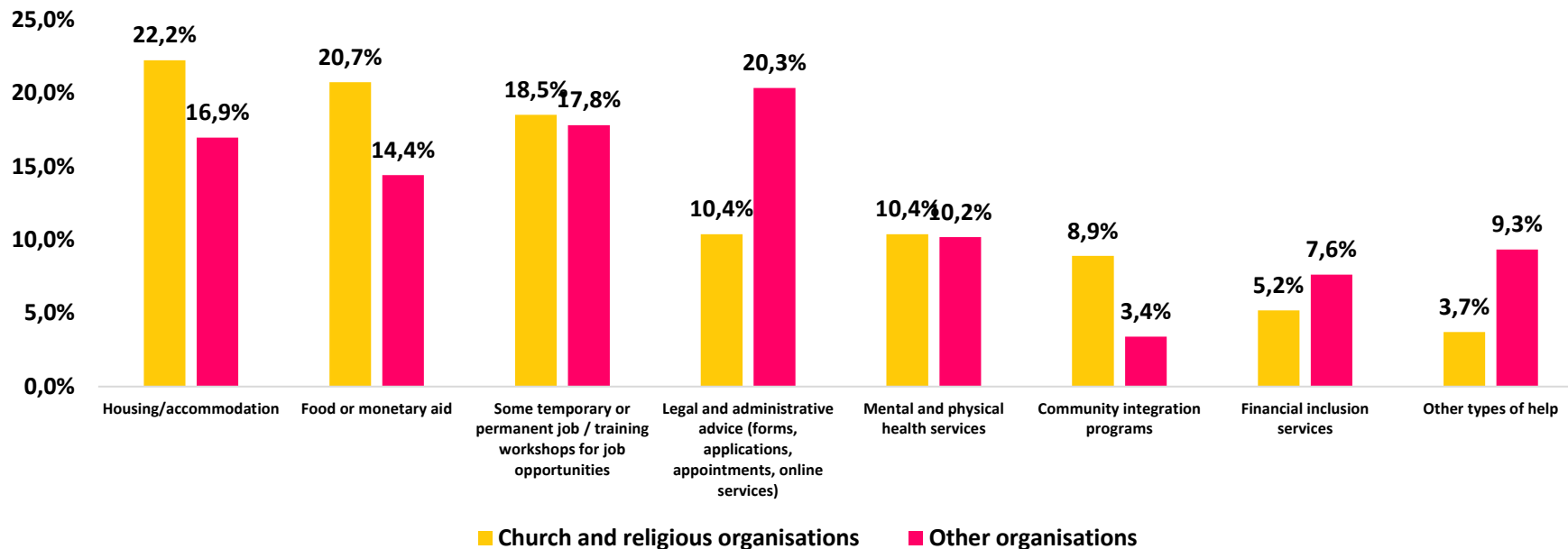
# Main social demands of the SETTLED migrant women assisted by organisations in Latin America and the Caribbean. In percentage of responses from the sample of organisations (2024).



Source: Prepared by the authors based on the survey "Consultation questionnaire on migrant women in LAC" of the World Women's Observatory.

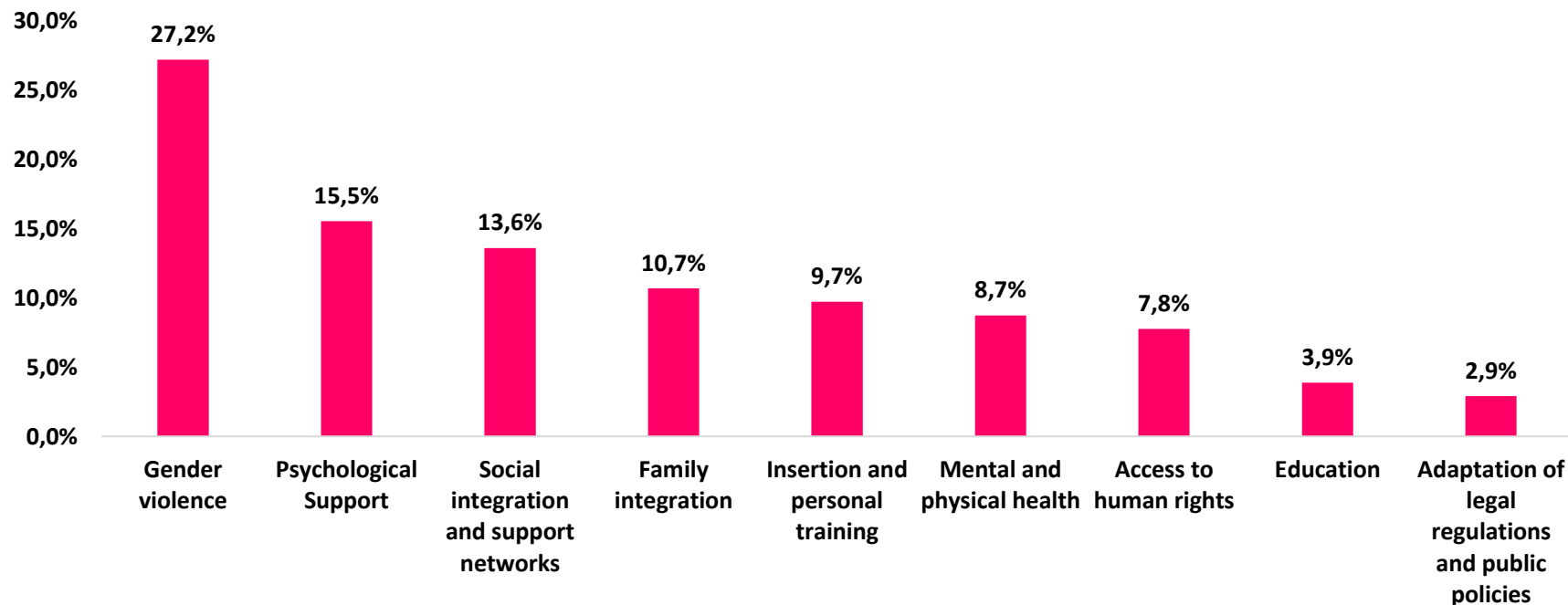


## Main social demands of the SETTLED migrant women assisted according to type of organisation. In percentage of response of the sample of organisations (2024).



Source: Prepared by the authors based on the survey "Consultation questionnaire on migrant women in LAC" of the World Women's Observatory.

## Main topics of interest that demand further study on migrant women in Latin America and the Caribbean. In percentage of responses from the sample of organisations (2024).



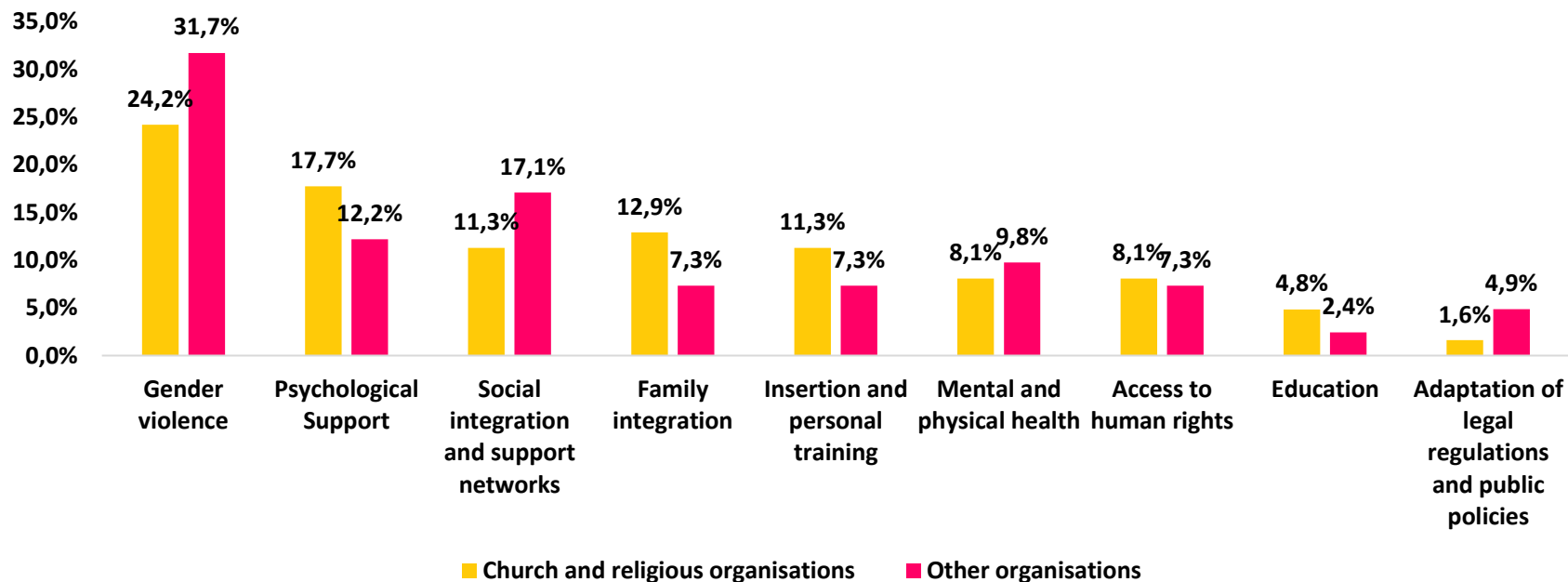
Source: Prepared by the authors based on the survey "Consultation questionnaire on migrant women in LAC" of the World Women's Observatory.

# Main issues of interest for further research on migrant women sorted by type of organisation. Answers cloud of the sample of organisations (2024).



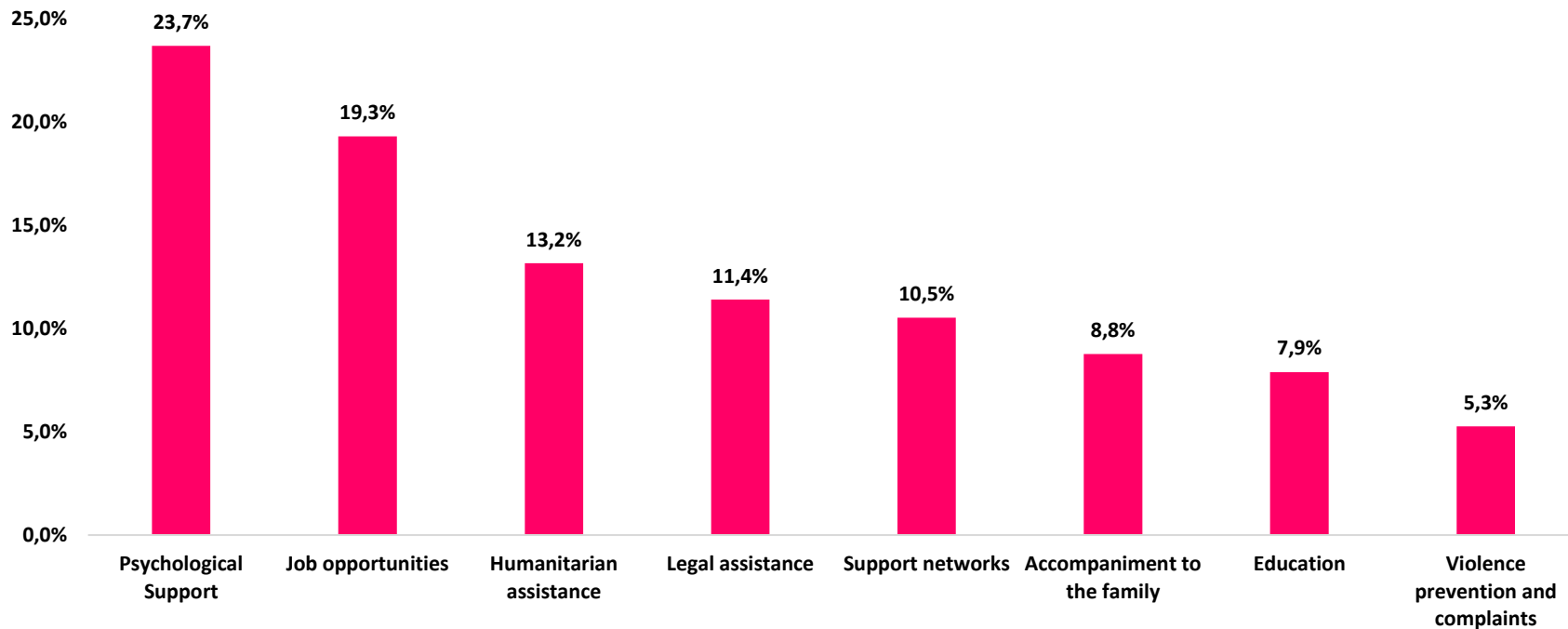
Source: Prepared by the authors based on the survey "Consultation questionnaire on migrant women in LAC" of the World Women's Observatory.

## Main issues of interest requiring further study on migrant women sorted by type of organisation. In percentage of responses from the sample of organisations (2024).



Source: Prepared by the authors based on the survey "Consultation questionnaire on migrant women in LAC" of the World Women's Observatory.

## Main lines of action to be improved towards migrant women in Latin America and the Caribbean. In percentage of responses from the sample of organisations (2024).



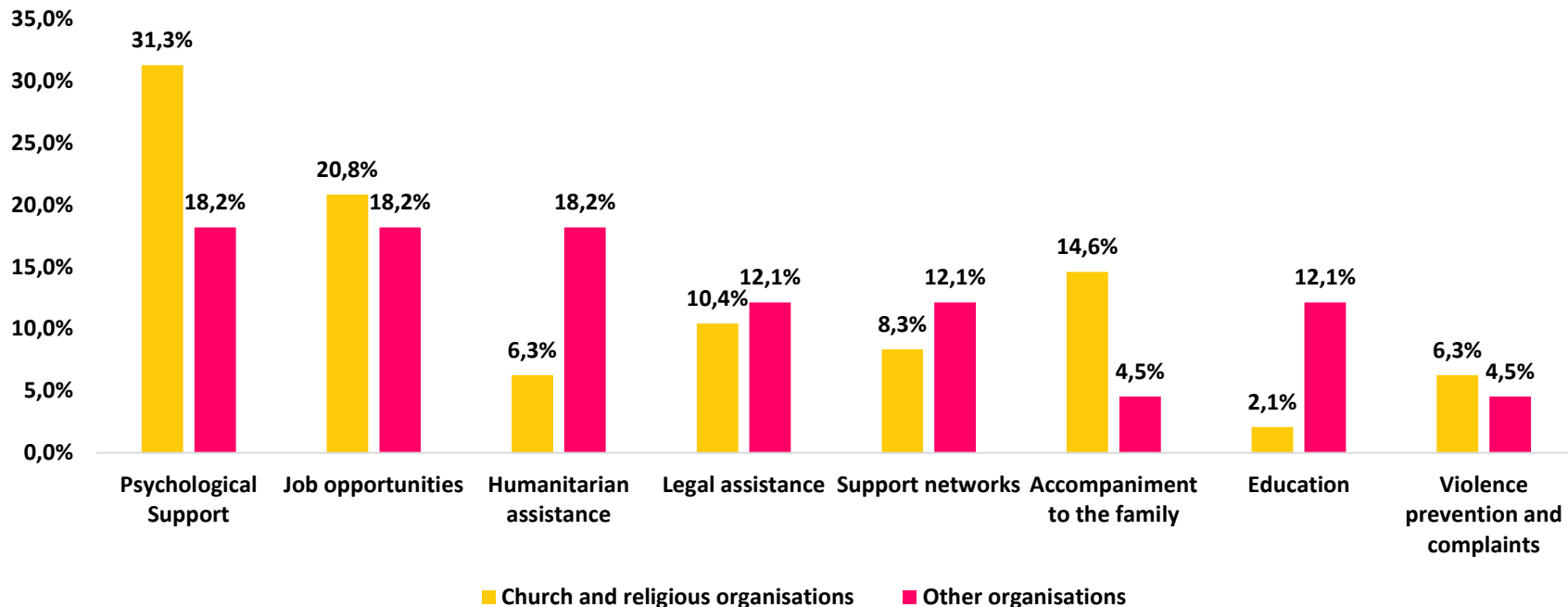
Source: Prepared by the authors based on the survey "Consultation questionnaire on migrant women in LAC" of the World Women's Observatory.

# Main lines of action to be improved towards migrant women in Latin America and the Caribbean. Answers cloud from the sample of organisations (2024).



Source: Prepared by the authors based on the survey "Consultation questionnaire on migrant women in LAC" of the World Women's Observatory.

## Main lines of action to be improved in assisting migrant women sorted by type of organisation. In percentage of responses from the sample of organisations (2024).



Source: Prepared by the authors based on the survey "Consultation questionnaire on migrant women in LAC" of the World Women's Observatory.

## Executive Summary

- 55.1% of the sample of organisations assisting migrant women are organisations belonging to the Church and other religious organisations. 43.8% assist migrant women residing in the CAMEX and Caribbean region, 32.6% assist women residing in the Andean and Southern Cone region and 23.6% in Colombia and Venezuela.
- At the same time, we see that the religious organisations in the sample uniformly assist women residing in the three regions studied, with a homogeneous coverage of assistance, while other types of organisations in the sample mainly assist migrant women residing in the Andean region and the Southern Cone.
- 60% of the sampled organisations support migrant women, both in transit and once they have reached their destination, in the region where they are located. While 22.5% of the organisations in the sample exclusively assist migrant women in transit and 16.9% assist women in destination.
- 32.6% of the organisations in the sample that assist migrant women carry out their activities at the local level, 28.1% at the national level, 20.2% at the international level and 19.1% at the regional level.



## Executive summary

- The organisations in the sample assist 46.8% of migrant women from Colombia and Venezuela and 35.6% of women from CAMEX and the Caribbean.
- Most of the organisations in the sample work with women who migrated between 1 and 5 years ago from their places of origin, 30.3% with women who migrated less than 1 year ago, and 23.6% more than 5 years ago.
- Of the organisations in the sample that are based in the CAMEX and Caribbean region, 64.1% provide support to women who come from the same region, and in second place to women coming from Colombia and Venezuela.
- Of the organisations in Colombia and Venezuela, 66.7% of the women receiving support also come from these two countries. And of the organisations in the Andean and Southern Cone region, 50% of the women receiving support come from Colombia and Venezuela, 38.2% from the same region and 11.8% from CAMEX and the Caribbean.

## Executive summary

- The organisations that help migrant women in the sample, carry out a wide range of assistance tasks. 21.2% of the organisations' responses indicate that they provide psychological assistance and/or spiritual support, 19% social assistance and 17% legal assistance and advice on documentation.
- However, it should be noted that that the church or religious organisations in the sample mainly provide psychological and/or spiritual support and social assistance, in other words, assistance of a more spiritual and human nature, whereas the other types of organisations provide legal and documentation assistance and help with starting a business and finding a job.
- Among the main reason for women migrants' migration, 82% of the organisations in the sample cite economic/labour reasons as the main causes for women leaving their place of origin. This is reported by almost 90% of religious organisations in the sample, while the figure falls to 72% for other types of organisations.

## Executive summary

- In terms of the main economic motive for women to migrate, 30.8% of the responses from the organisations in the sample indicate that it is because of precarious living conditions, linked to poverty in the countries they come from. The main social reason reported by the organisations is limited access to health and education services in the women's places of origin. And the main cultural reason, cited by 47.4% of the organisations, is the women's need to get to know other cultures or to change their way of life.
- It can be seen that 37.8% of the responses from organisations in the sample that support migrant women indicate that the greatest vulnerabilities they face during the migration process are related to gender-based violence, including sexual, physical, emotional, psychological and human trafficking, and this rate increases when the responses come from religious organisations. In second place is labour exploitation and precarious work.
- Among the main psychological, social and emotional challenges faced by migrant women, 22.8% of the organisations in the sample cited discrimination and xenophobia due to their foreign status, 19.2% cited stress and culture shock on arrival in a new country. Finally, 16% of non-religious organisations report that the women they support also face challenges of isolation and lack of support networks.

## Executive summary

- Among the main demands made by the migrant women in transit assisted, 22.3% of the responses from the organisations in the sample indicate that they are requesting food or monetary aid, 16.8% of the responses point to aid linked to housing or accommodation for migrant women, and 13.7% to finding temporary or permanent work. This same trend is replicated in the responses from both religious and other organisations.
- Among the main demands made by the settled migrant women assisted, firstly, 19.8% of the responses from the organisations in the sample indicate that the women request help in finding housing or accommodation, and secondly, temporary or permanent work. Focusing on the responses from non-religious organisations, it can be observed that the main demand of the settled migrant women assisted is for administrative advice on paperwork, while the main demands registered by the responses from religious organisations are related to housing.

## Executive summary

- When organisations were asked to identify the research issues they felt needed further investigation, the majority of responses, mainly from non-religious organisations, indicated that more should be done on the violence experienced by women as a reason for migration and/or during the migration process, and secondly on the health status and level of social integration of women on their arrival in a new country.
- Finally, when asked about future lines of action or improvements that organisations should incorporate to help and assist migrant women, the majority of responses from the sample of organisations indicated that the psychological support provided to women and assistance with basic needs should be improved. However, the level of support for the improvement of psychological assistance is highest among the responses of the religious organisations. (31 per cent), whereas non-religious organisations were split between improving basic care (18.2 per cent) and psychological care (18.2 per cent).

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