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EXPLAINING THE PHENOMENA OF
MIGRATION AND HUMAN
TRAFFICKING FROM A WELFARE STATE
APPROACH: THE CASE OF COSTA RICA

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1. Introduction

When analyzing globalizing processes such as: a) the rapid acceleration of technologies, b) the growing fundamentalism of the market, c) new forms of management by State institutions and, d) greater citizen participation in collective aspects, we are faced with the usual debate, that which questions or supports the effectiveness of States in addressing the relevant issues of their countries. In Latin America, this questioning is even greater in the face of the serious problems of poverty, unemployment and inequality, issues that are becoming even more complex and widespread.

A review of the different studies carried out in the region shows strong trends caused by these problems, as in the case of unemployment, where the following trends can be observed:

- Violation of labor legislation in order to cheapen the hiring of low-productivity jobs, achieving astonishing levels of informal employment.
- Poverty and exclusion promote the emergence of new forms of exploitation of people, where human rights are once again in question in Latin America.

In this region, the problem of unemployment, far from being solved, has become a structural problem, or rather, it has become a permanent one, thus widening the picture of poverty and inequality.

Therefore, the effects of these problems, as well as the actions developed by the States to guarantee the equal right to welfare, such as the functioning of one of the main routes to welfare, the existence of sufficient decent jobs for the working population, form the basis of this research.

For the purpose of this research, the phenomena of migration and human trafficking will be analyzed in this context, taking as a case study Costa Rica, a country that had been characterized by its universal social welfare policies, but that is currently facing new problems with greater concern, whose complexity and extension are becoming real challenges to the traditional public policies of the Costa Rican State, even more so in the midst of the globalization processes mentioned at the beginning.

Likewise, this research will take as an important element the survey conducted in May 2009 by the Institute of Social Studies in Population (IDESPO) of the National University of Costa Rica called "*Perception of the Costa Rican population on the Welfare State and some social situations affecting the country*".

Key words: Globalization, Welfare State, Public Policies, Migration, Human Trafficking, Poverty, Exclusion, Exploitation, Welfare Services.

2. Globalization

In the study of Welfare States, it cannot be overlooked how they have undergone modifications in their construction or consolidation, given the effects of globalization, a worldwide process that imposes new challenges to national public policies.

Elwood (2003) points out that globalization is a new term that describes an old process, that is, the integration of the world economy that began in earnest five centuries ago, with the beginning of European colonization. What distinguishes this global phenomenon today is that the process has been accelerated by the explosion of information technology, the removal of barriers to the movement of goods and capital, and the expansion of the economic and political power of multinational corporations (Elwood 2001). (Elwood 2001).

In this global context, in which the processes of privatization and liberalization have been strengthened, Elwood points out that national governments are losing the ability to control their policies and development strategies, and he blames globalization for the increase in poverty and inequality throughout the world. Elwood therefore recommends reviving democratic control through structural reforms, such as job creation and the promotion of human rights.

All in all, Latin America as a whole is integrated into the new global economy, but in an unequal and perhaps unsustainable way, with high social and economic costs in the transition, and with broad social sectors and territories structurally excluded from this process of modernization and economic integration (Castells 2003).

Undoubtedly, these are difficult times, as fragmentation, poverty and local or national isolation have deepened, putting Latin American states in serious trouble in this new global context in the presence of greater social problems that make their incipient welfare regimes, including Costa Rica's, vulnerable.

3. Definition of the Welfare State

Studies conclude that the level of wealth or poverty, the degree of economic and political independence, the extent of democracy and human rights, the capacity and provisions of the state, and relative gender equality all positively and independently impact a nation's level of well-being. (I. Gough 2003).

Thus, as Gough rightly points out, a proactive state is but a means to achieve needs-oriented policies, and although it may not be sufficient, this political authority, the state, is a necessary condition for policy success.

Therefore, with the passage of time, the concept of Welfare States has changed from a Keynesian position, i.e. the State intervening in the economy, to the present day, when it is defined as the set of State institutions providing social policies aimed at improving living conditions and promoting equal opportunities for citizens. To these policies are added the contributory social security system for workers and their dependents and social assistance for citizens in need or in the area of personal care (Roldan and García 2006). (Roldan and García 2006).

The present research will therefore consider the welfare state as the set of policy products that pursue the objective of improving human welfare (I. Gough 2003). These policies can be implemented by government institutions, but also through the interrelation of the state's social protection activities with private initiative and the role of the family.

Gough emphasizes that the most common desirable measure of well-being in the literature on the subject is equality. This is important, since well-being in its different manifestations is nowadays also a right of all people.

4. Poverty, exclusion and exploitation

Poverty and exclusion are part of the doubts about the effectiveness of the welfare state in developed countries and even more so in developing countries.

The World Health Organization (WHO) established the following concept of poverty:

- ❖ *Poverty is the manifestation of social structures of domination, exploitation and exclusion.*

Poverty has spread all over the planet, even in the so-called "developed" countries. The symptoms of current poverty are insufficient income, which in turn is generated by the lack of access to social services, precarious health, poor education, unemployment, low production levels and discrimination based on gender and race (Moreno 2006).

The defenders of individual and liberal thinking consider that the persistence of poverty will demonstrate the failure of welfare states, in fact they consider that social policies are harmful to the good performance of the economy because they assume that poverty is an individual problem.

However, the defenders of the structuralist thesis that defines poverty as a result of the constructions of society, distribution and class differences, explain it as a consequence of market inequalities, especially with regard to the means of production and productive appropriation (Gough 2003).

Perhaps research on poverty will move from one position to another, in search of reasons, origins and public policies to contain it, bearing in mind that the achievement of lower levels of inequality and poverty does not depend on the possibilities of growth or on following a single model of relationship with the markets, but on other economic and political conditions and on the public policy schemes applied.

4.1. Exclusion and exploitation

Exclusion is defined as the lack of effective recognition of entitlements and social rights. It is the itinerary of poverty with difficulties in returning to "normality". (Moreno 2006)

Inequality originated in marginalization, poverty and exclusion is manifested in what the individual is: poor, illiterate, delinquent, drug addict. The analysis of these dimensions implies that marginalization does not always lead to poverty, nor can it be said that all poverty means marginalization. Family groups tend to have a main breadwinner or to have an income, even if it is very low, which can alleviate the negative effects of this complex phenomenon that is poverty.

Poverty and inequality are closely linked, and exploitation is an inevitable feature of inequality.

Exploitation is considered as those individuals with little or no professional qualifications, precarious or submerged employment, are the most likely to receive lower or minimum wages. They are also the most vulnerable to unemployment due to the ups and downs of the economic situation. The exploited are always exposed to the possibilities of dismissal, the level of unemployment and the threats of poverty, including migration and human trafficking.

Keeping these concepts in mind is important for the analysis of the effects of poverty and inequality in a context of globalization versus the capacity of States to resolve issues such as migration and human trafficking.

5. The Phenomena of Migration and Trafficking in

Persons 5.1 Migration

The new world economy, which has brought with it competition and commercialization, implies the idea of minimizing the production costs of goods and services to the maximum, sometimes the market tries to achieve this by incorporating new technologies and innovating its forms of production, other times with the exploitation of an emerging working class: the migrants.

Undoubtedly, this phenomenon joins a kind of borderless labor supply that has promoted the displacement of people around the world in search of a dignified life and well-being.

The term migration refers to one of the most important social phenomena of our era, forming part of the common cultural and linguistic heritage. However, there is no operational definition that allows us to clearly differentiate which population movements belong to this category and which, on the contrary, escape it" (Blanco, 2000:1).

It has also been defined: *"The migrant is therefore a different category of non-nationals who have as part of their characteristics basic needs to cover, above all that of a job. The vast majority of them do not leave their territory because they choose among alternatives that favor them or generate added value for them; they do so because they have no alternative. It is a forced choice, guided by necessity. Therefore, the categorization of individuals who move out of a territory has a burden that corresponds to their status quo, to their economic and social position". (Borge 2006)*

Likewise, in 2002, the United Nations pointed out:

Orderly international migration can have a positive impact on both the communities of origin and destination. Migration also has the potential to facilitate the transfer of know-how and contribute to cultural enrichment.

Many migration scholars have defined common characteristics of the phenomenon, among which the following stand out:

- The movement must take place between two significant geographical boundaries.
- How many people are involved with respect to the country of origin and the country of arrival.
- The displacement must be long-lasting and not sporadic.
- The move must involve a significant change in the social and physical environment.

Knowing the effects that migration has generated in Latin America arises from the concern about the risks that this population carries, which, as has been pointed out, starts from an economic and social position that gives them no other option but to move to another country in search of resources that allow them a dignified life, although the reality seems to be a more complex and difficult panorama for these people, as has been the appearance of deception and exploitation of migrants, including the problem of human trafficking.

As Raoul Vaneigem has written:

The problem of emigration is nothing other than the problem of the misery that causes it and that spreads by changing climate. But the displacement of poverty also contains the inverse movement. The exportation of misfortune at the same time imports the potential wealth of individuals, of their differences and specificities".

5.2 What is human trafficking?

Human trafficking is a form of slavery (sexual or labor) that involves kidnapping, deception or violence.

Trafficking victims are often recruited through deception (such as false job offers or misleading offers that do not make clear the conditions under which the offered work will be performed) and transported to the place where they will be exploited.

In places of exploitation, victims are held by their captors through threats, debts, lies, coercion, violence, etc., and forced into prostitution or work in subhuman conditions.

The United Nations Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children contains the internationally agreed definition of trafficking in persons.

The main elements of the definition are the following: (Migrations 2009):

- recruitment (by kidnapping or deception);
- the transfer (within the same country, or between countries);
- the purpose of exploitation - mainly sexual or labor exploitation - through threats, violence, coercion, etcetera.

This sequence of actions is carried out by criminal networks or associations (networks of traffickers) whose different members identify and recruit future victims; organize, manage and finance their transfer; own, manage or run the places where they exploit them; or -rent the victims to third parties in exchange for a fee. Traffickers ensure through threats, deception, debt and violence that the victims cannot - or believe they cannot - escape from their situation of slavery.

In general, traffickers withhold victims' documents as a further form of coercion. In the case of foreigners, they threaten them with deportation or imprisonment. Worldwide, it is estimated that more than 90% of trafficking victims are women, girls and adolescents who are sexually exploited. With regard to trafficking for labor exploitation, the victims - men and women alike - are forced to work in inhumane conditions in clandestine textile workshops, agriculture, fishing, brick kilns, domestic service, etc. Other exploitative purposes include servile marriages, begging and organ harvesting.

Human trafficking is a crime committed by networks that recruit, kidnap, transfer, house and exploit victims. A person who, through deception, threats or violence, is forced to do things against his or her will is a victim of a crime.

It is estimated that more than 1.2 million children are trafficked worldwide each year for exploitation in agriculture, mines, factories, armed conflict or the sex trade.

This phenomenon enslaves millions of minors and UNICEF reports that it is the most lucrative activity after arms trafficking and drug trafficking, with annual revenues of some \$9.5 billion.

The phenomenon of human trafficking is extremely complex and can therefore be analyzed from the perspectives of gender, socioeconomic context and ethnic diversity. It is also a phenomenon that recognizes that it is a complex expression of various manifestations of psychological, physical, economic and sexual violence, among others.

Undoubtedly, it is a phenomenon derived from other complexities that societies suffer, in this case in the Latin American region, such as poverty, poverty, social exclusion, and the lack of access to education.

inequality, exclusion, exploitation and especially the structural unemployment that the region has been suffering for decades.

Therefore, its analysis from the approach of the Welfare States is important to determine the factors that have caused the phenomenon from a public policy approach and thus determine concrete actions to stop the problem promoted by the States, without neglecting the fact that human trafficking is a global phenomenon.

6. The case of Costa Rica

The reason why this research gives special emphasis to the case of Costa Rica is due to the creation of universal welfare policies, such as health, education, social security and housing.

Since 1949, the Costa Rican State has been based on constitutional pillars that we could summarize as follows: (Fumero 2006)

- A Social State governed by the rule of law
- Free and compulsory education
- The proscription of the army
- The provision of public services on a not-for-profit basis
- The principle of Social Solidarity.

Since the 1980 crisis, Latin America as a whole has seen an increase in poverty parallel to a reduction in social spending and consequently a deterioration of public services, and although Costa Rica has managed to maintain its social welfare policies, changes in the consolidation of its Welfare State, which had been developing since the mid-twentieth century, began to be noticed as of that decade and more clearly in the 1990s.

In fact, some have already confirmed that Costa Rica is undergoing a transition from the Welfare State to the Regulatory State, as part of the forces of liberalization and privatization of the global economy. In this sense, further research and debate will have to be carried out, although new trends in the management of public services aimed at social welfare can be observed.

Another important element to mention in Costa Rica's transformations is that since the 1990's the country has also become a receiving country for migration, especially Nicaraguan and more recently Colombian migration, a situation that poses new challenges for the Costa Rican government's public policies.

Fumero (2006) cites the following as the changes that have been promoted in Costa Rica as a result of the new forces of globalization:

- Increasing poverty
- Deterioration of citizen security
- Deterioration of infrastructure, services and social assistance
- Opening of the financial sector
- Virtual disappearance of social institutions such as INVU and IDA
- Reduction of tariffs
- Privileges for exporters
- Privatization and denationalization of industries
- Privatization of services that are still basic
- Weakening of democracy, plurality and free expression of ideas

However, there have been other changes in Costa Rica, such as globalization, the complexity of migration with new groups arriving in the country, as well as human trafficking, whose knowledge is not yet fully understood in true terms by the Costa Rican population. Both phenomena mean new challenges for the Costa Rican State, since their tendencies put pressure on the prompt action in society or in the implementation of new public policies.

6.1 Survey "Perception of the Costa Rican population on the Welfare State and some social situations affecting the country".

For the realization of the research results, and as we have indicated above, we have taken the case of Costa Rica, for which we begin by analyzing the results of the survey on these issues and from the perspective of the Welfare State that was conducted in this country in May by the Institute of Social Studies in Population (IDESPO) of the National University (UNA).

The survey conducted nationwide, with a sample of 800 people applied in gender equality, by age and different social strata, yields interesting data for research on the issues of migration and human trafficking, but also on the effectiveness of the Costa Rican State in a broader framework of welfare and national problems such as unemployment, human rights and real access to welfare services by the population.

The survey was carried out in May 2009 by the Institute of Social Studies in Population (IDESPO) of the National University (UNA), to a sample of 800

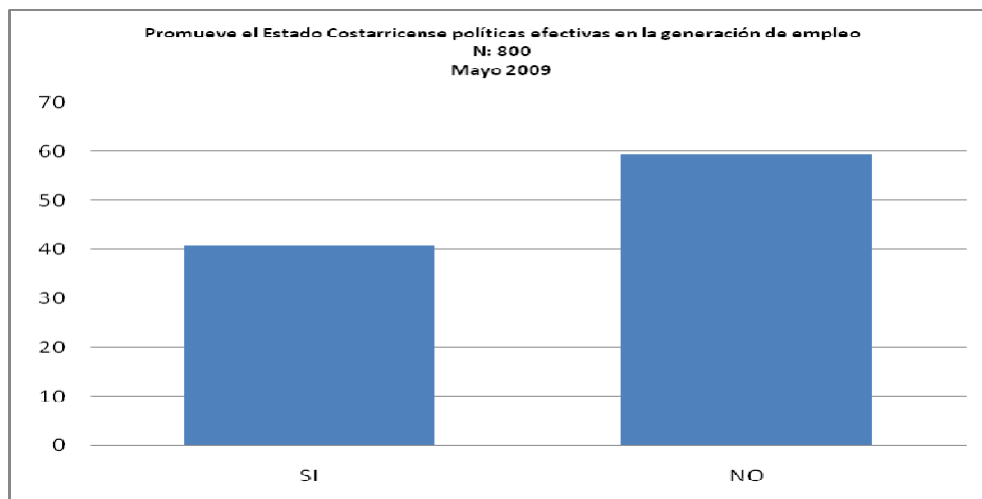
people from different parts of the country, with the participation of 47.5% of men and 52.5% of women.

a) *The Welfare State in Costa Rica:*

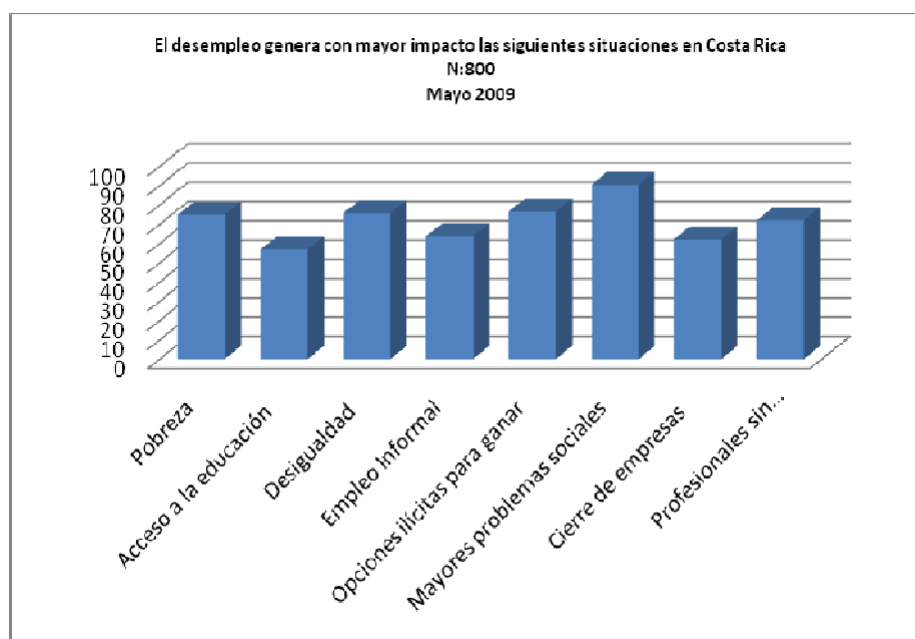
In order to know the perception about the effectiveness of the Welfare State in providing social policies for the welfare of its citizens, we asked about the opinion on whether the Costa Rican State guarantees education, health, housing and employment services to the population. Among others, the following compilation of responses was given:

- More than 70% of those interviewed consider that the State in Costa Rica does little to guarantee the population access to housing and employment, while more than 50% consider that access to health care and prompt justice is poorly guaranteed.
- It also highlights that almost 70% of the population considered that the State guarantees little vigilance in the fulfillment of human rights in the country.
- On the other hand, the service that obtained a favorable opinion, that is, that the State does guarantee a lot, was access to education, with almost 70% positive opinion that the State guarantees the right to education, which is important to highlight in this research.

Since the topics to be investigated, migration and human trafficking, are closely linked to sources of employment, the effectiveness of the Costa Rican State in this area was consulted, where a negative perception was also obtained, since 60% considered that the State does not promote effective employment policies.



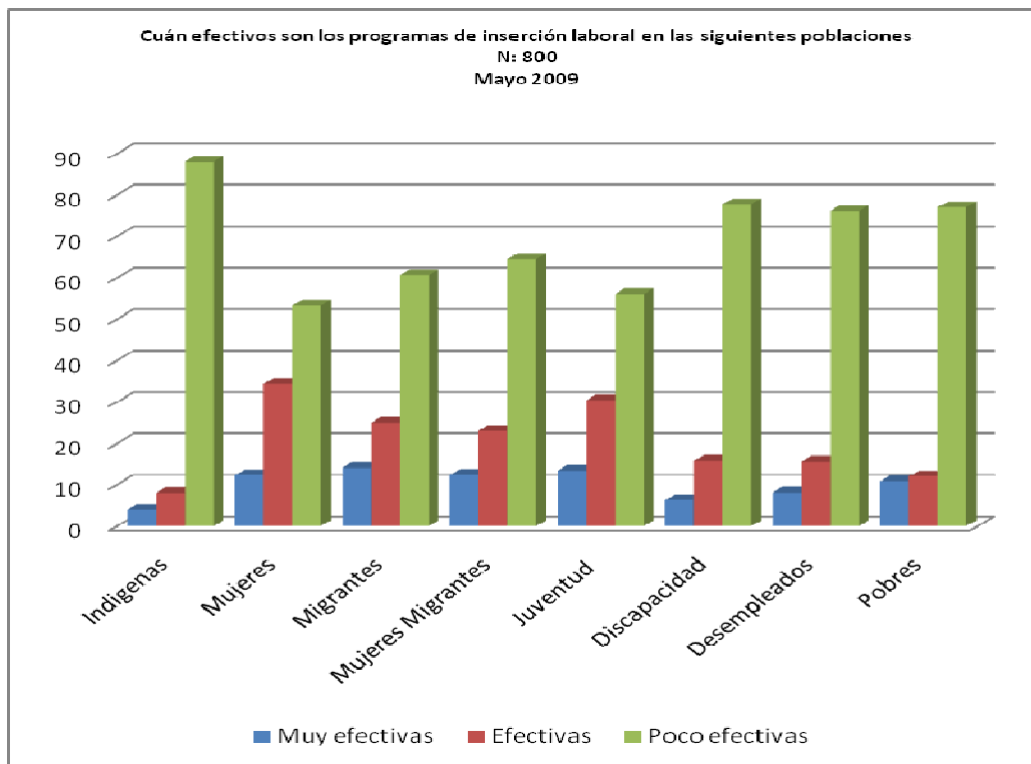
Next, we asked about the impact of unemployment in Costa Rica, where the greatest element that is perceived to produce this problem is the growth of social problems (90.4%), followed by illicit alternatives to earn money (76.5%), the growth of inequality (75.6%) and poverty (74.8%). This point is important in the analysis of the research, given its possible relationship with human trafficking, a phenomenon that will be analyzed later.



In the need to know the effectiveness of employment policies by sector, consistency was maintained with the low effectiveness previously perceived, as it can be strongly verified in population sectors such as indigenous people with 88%, people with physical or intellectual disabilities with 77.8%, poor people with 77% and unemployed people with 76.1%.

In terms of which sectors were considered most effective in employment policies, the female sector is observed, although with a relatively low percentage (34%).

From the perception analyzed, it can be considered that the Costa Rican population does not observe that the Costa Rican State generates real policies so that the populations with greater difficulties in obtaining employment can obtain decent work options.



As pointed out in the definition of the Welfare State, Gough describes human rights and gender equality as one of the points that have a positive and independent impact on the level of welfare.

For this reason, a question was included on what is their perception of human rights, and the following graph shows a dispersion of what they consider about it, since there is no percentage of relevant answers, but rather it has been distributed in several elements that are mentioned below:

- Equality 35%
- Fees for government services 23%.
- Violation of human rights 21
- Freedom 15%.

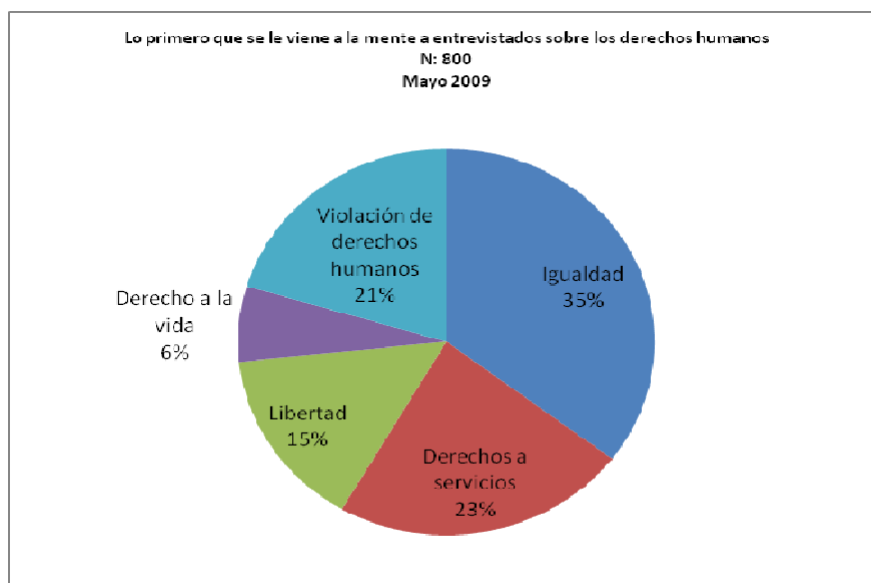
In this regard, two aspects stand out:

- The issue of violation of human rights is a perception consistent with the previous result, where almost 70% of the population considered that the State does not guarantee enough vigilance in the fulfillment of human rights.

The opposite perception is linked to this level of response obtained in the survey.

- The right to State services was the second most important element in the response obtained, which if related to the previous consultation, the ineffectiveness of State policies may be returning to the issue of human rights violations, with the exception of education, as highlighted in the corresponding analysis.

The right to state services can also be linked to the element that obtained the highest level of response, that is, equality (35%).

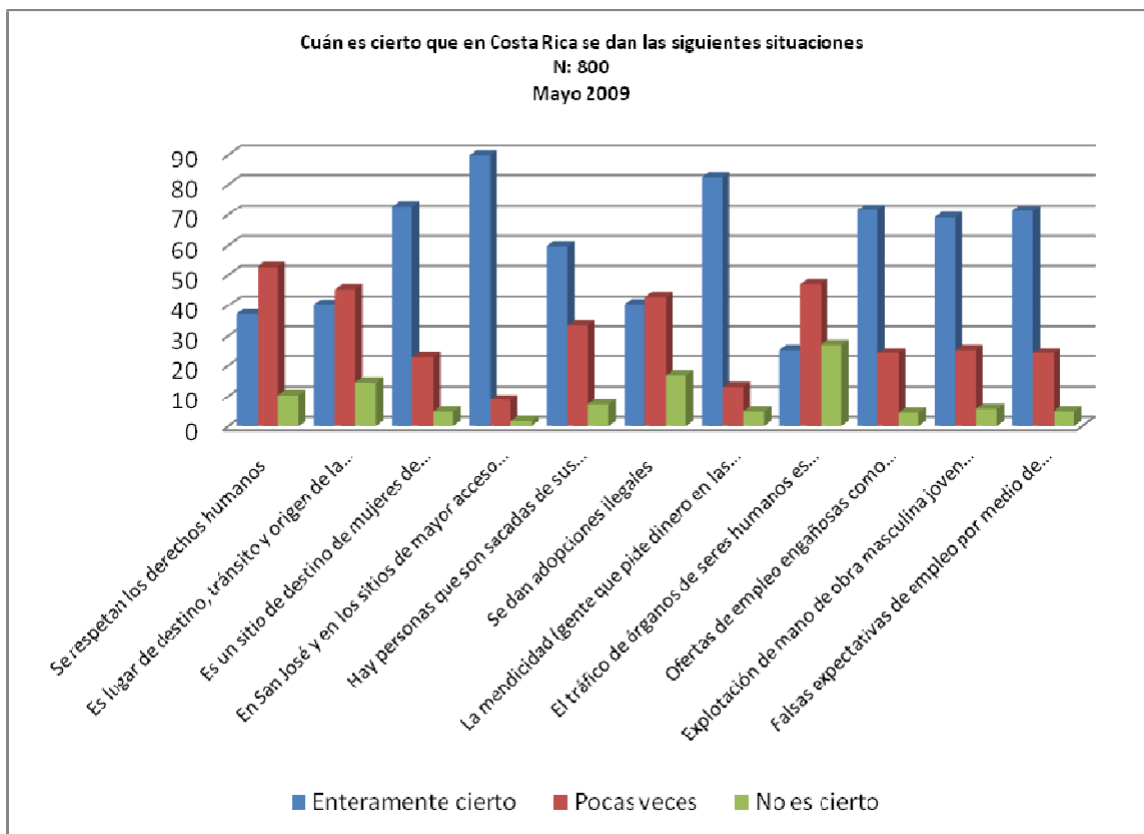


Now, in order to analyze the perception of the interviewees regarding the frequency of situations that affect human rights and thus better understand the reason for the first thing that comes to mind on this subject, the main results were obtained:

- Regarding the fact that prostitution networks operate in the Costa Rican capital and in other places with greater tourist access, the highest percentage of responses was obtained, with more than 89% saying that this situation is entirely true. Another issue considered important for the analysis of human trafficking and migration, both considering the country as a receiving State of these phenomena. Almost 73% said that the country is a destination for women from different countries to feed these networks.
- More than 80% of those interviewed considered begging to be a growing and unavoidable problem in the country.

- In relation to the question on whether false job expectations are given in the country through advertisements in the media, more than 71% considered this to be entirely true.
- As to whether there are deceptive offers in Costa Rica for domestic or modeling work, either inside or outside the country, more than 70% considered this situation to be entirely true.
- The exploitation of young male labor without respect for basic labor rights was considered entirely true by almost 70% of the population interviewed.
- As to whether there are people in Costa Rica who are taken from their communities to be exploited for agricultural, sexual and domestic work, the response rate was almost 60%.
- More than 50% consider that human rights are rarely respected in Costa Rica and more than 10% have considered that the respect for human rights in the country is definitely not true. This aspect should be widely analyzed, since Costa Rica is one of the countries in the region with the greatest respect for human rights, but in the current context the perception of citizens is not consistent with this general opinion.
- Only 37% of the population considered that it is entirely true that human rights are respected in Costa Rica, a relatively low percentage compared to those who did not think so.
- As to whether Costa Rica is a place of destination, transit and origin of human trafficking, 40% considered this to be entirely true and 45.3% thought that such a situation rarely occurs in the country. Similar percentages were found for legal adoptions in the country.
- The issue of organ trafficking obtained 47% that it is a situation that rarely occurs in the country.

Below is the graph that proves the above-mentioned results:



Now, in order to learn even more about frequent situations in the country, always linked to the well-being of citizens, the frequency of negative situations that are considered to occur more frequently in the country was consulted, with the following results as the main ones.

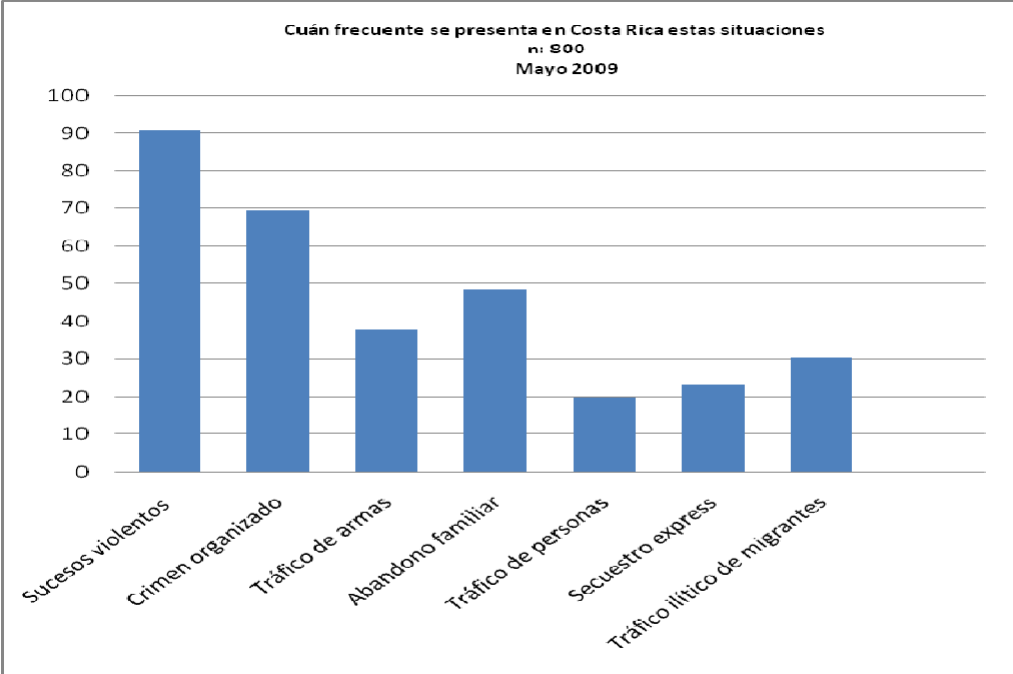
Violent events, considered as sudden deaths due to accidents or criminal acts, was the main element with more than 90%, followed by organized crime with 69.7% and family abandonment with 48.6%.

The first two aspects are linked to the issue of security, perhaps the most important national problem to be solved in the country, the concrete facts of insecurity seriously affect the perception of society in the policies that the Costa Rican State may be carrying out in this area.

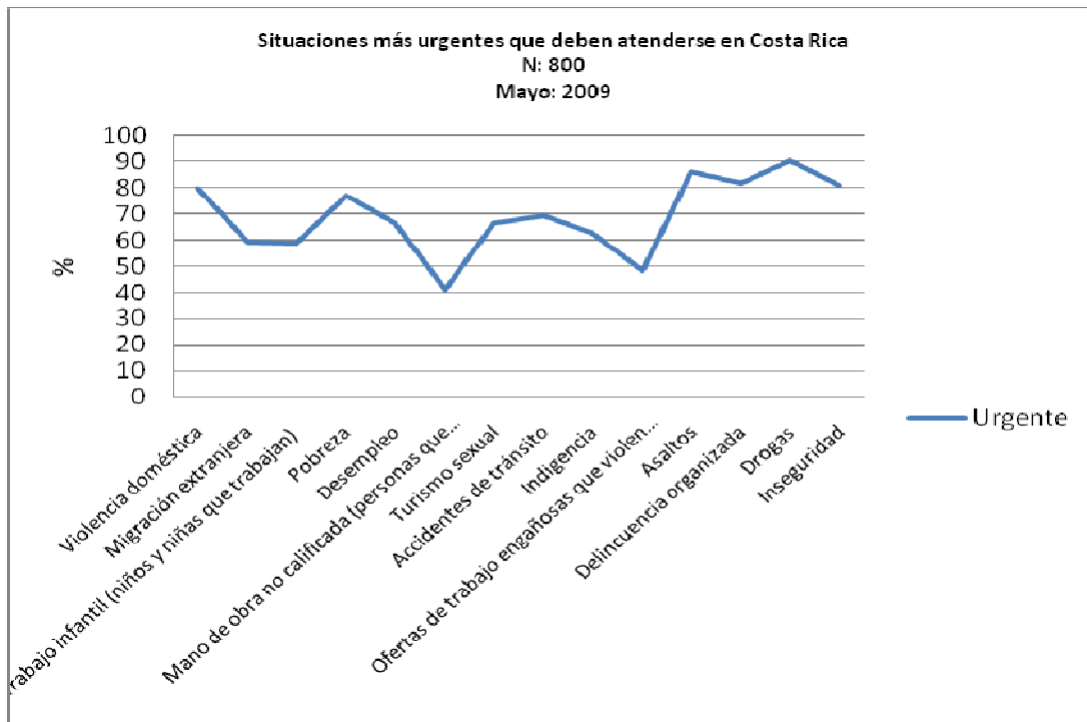
As for family abandonment, it is an issue that may have different factors that affect what the interviewees have considered this aspect as the third most important, likewise its consequences constitute another issue to be investigated and resolved by State institutions.

Finally, this response drew attention to the fact that more than 30% of the interviewees considered the frequency of situations involving traffic to be a problem.

of arms and migrants. Although to a lesser degree, these situations are also linked to security policies in the country.



In order to delve even deeper into the problems that the interviewees might consider the most urgent in the country, the following graph shows some important aspects.



The highest peaks reflected between 80% and 90% indicate that insecurity again stands out as an issue of concern among respondents, the highest at 90% being drugs, followed by assaults at 86.1% and organized crime at 80.8%.

With almost 80%, domestic violence and poverty also stand out as urgent problems.

Between 65% and 70% also highlighted the following problems as the most urgent:

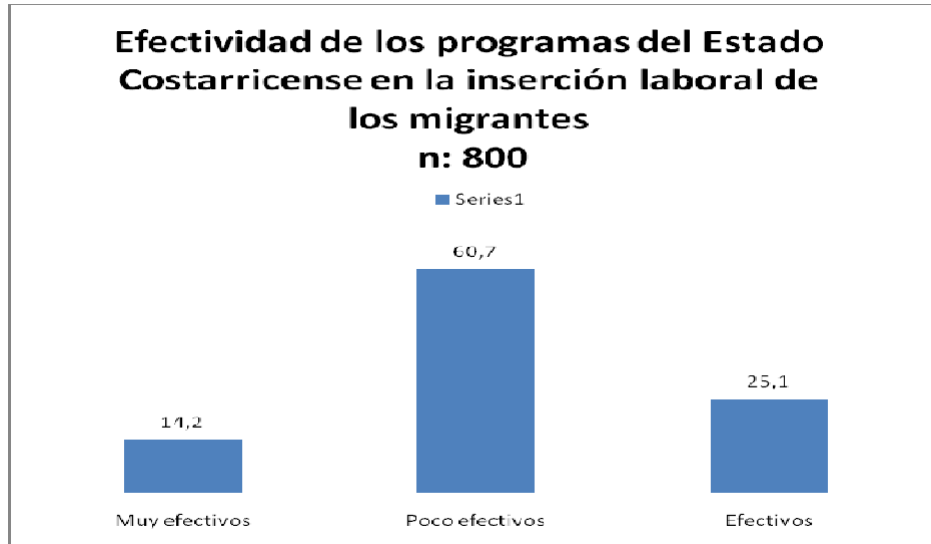
- Traffic accidents
- Sexual tourism
- Unemployment

From 60% to 65% highlighted the following responses:

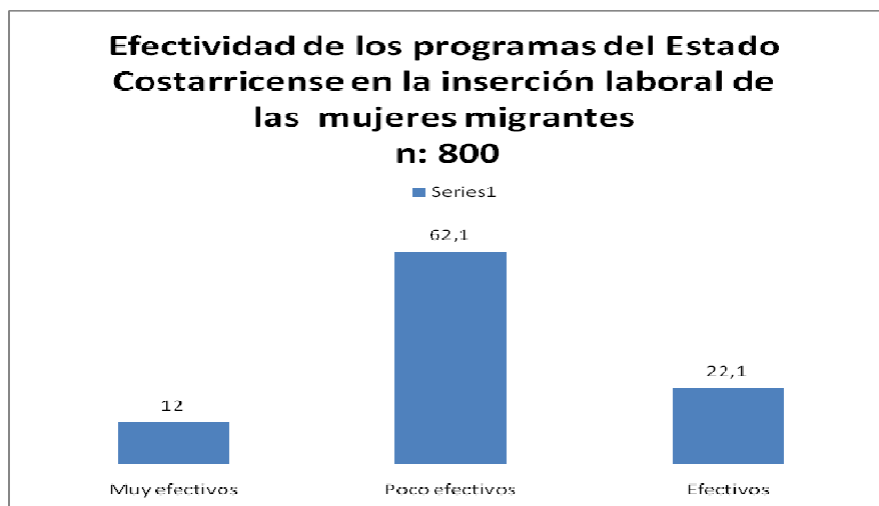
- Indigence
- Migration
- Child labor

b) The phenomenon of migration: The case of Costa Rica according to a survey

For example, in the same consultation, but this time directed especially to the labor market insertion of migrants, 60% of the respondents again stated that the programs carried out by the Costa Rican government have not been very effective.

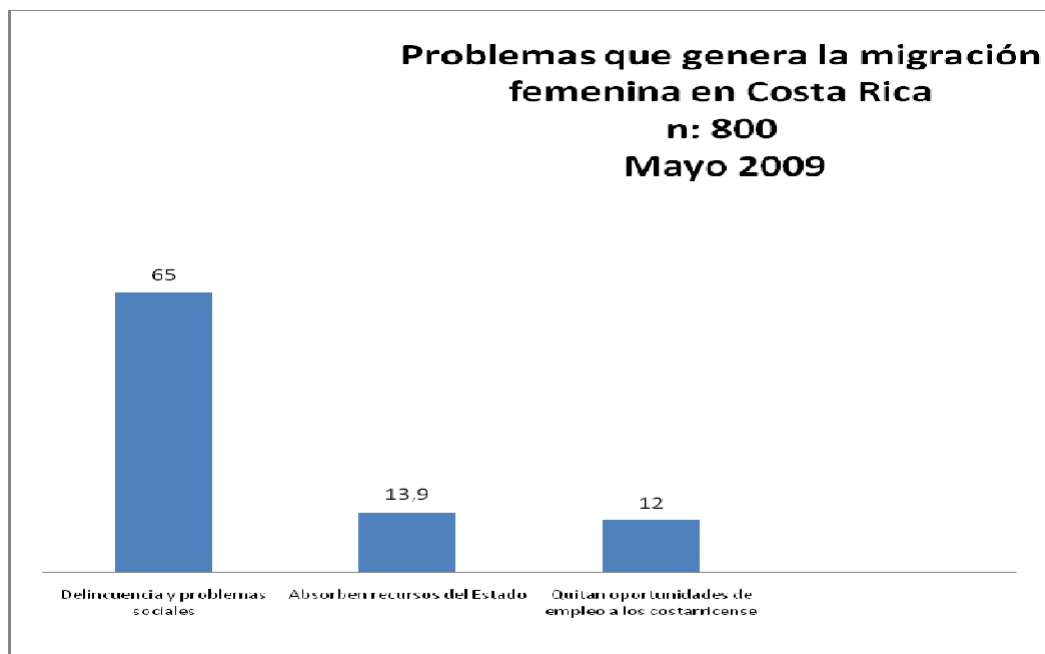
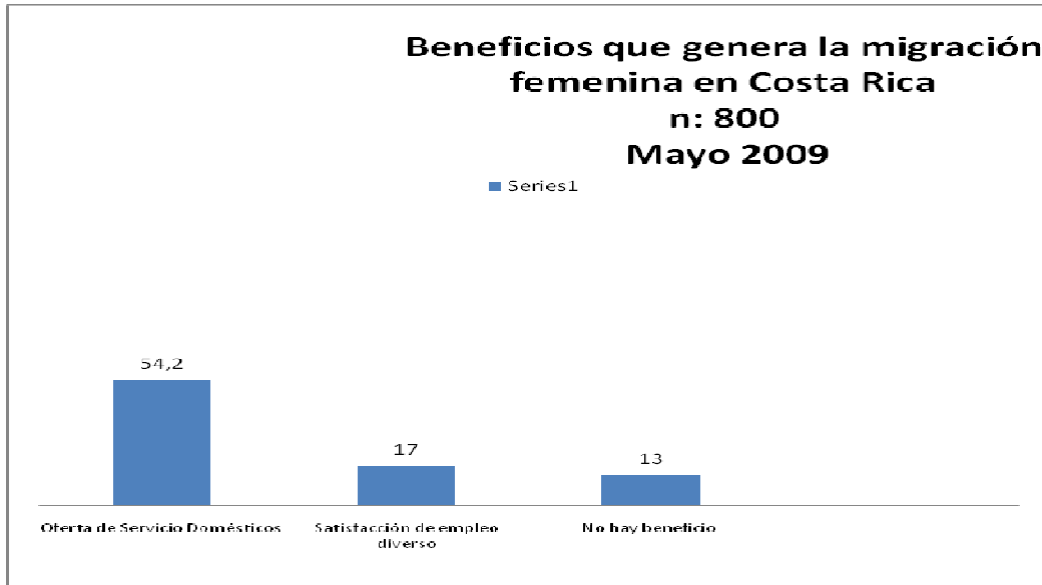


In order to make the analysis with a gender focus, the same question was asked but in the population of migrant women, obtaining similar results:



The opinion on State policies to favor labor market insertion was not favorable for women either, with more than 60% saying that these policies have not been effective, possibly because migrant women's informal employment or unemployment is perceived to be more visible than that of men.

The following results were obtained for this sector of the population (women) regarding the benefits and problems of female migration to the country:



Thus, the main benefit of female migration to the country is the contribution they provide in the supply of domestic services, a task that seems to have ceased to be carried out by Costa Ricans, however, this benefit is confronted as the main problem perceived by Costa Ricans linked to crime and social problems caused by the arrival of migrant women, on which it will be necessary to delve deeper into what problems are blamed on these women.

In the same vein, and in order to determine whether migrant women have the same opportunities as Costa Rican women in different areas of well-being, the following was obtained:

More than 60% of those interviewed believe that migrant women are more likely to fall into the trap:

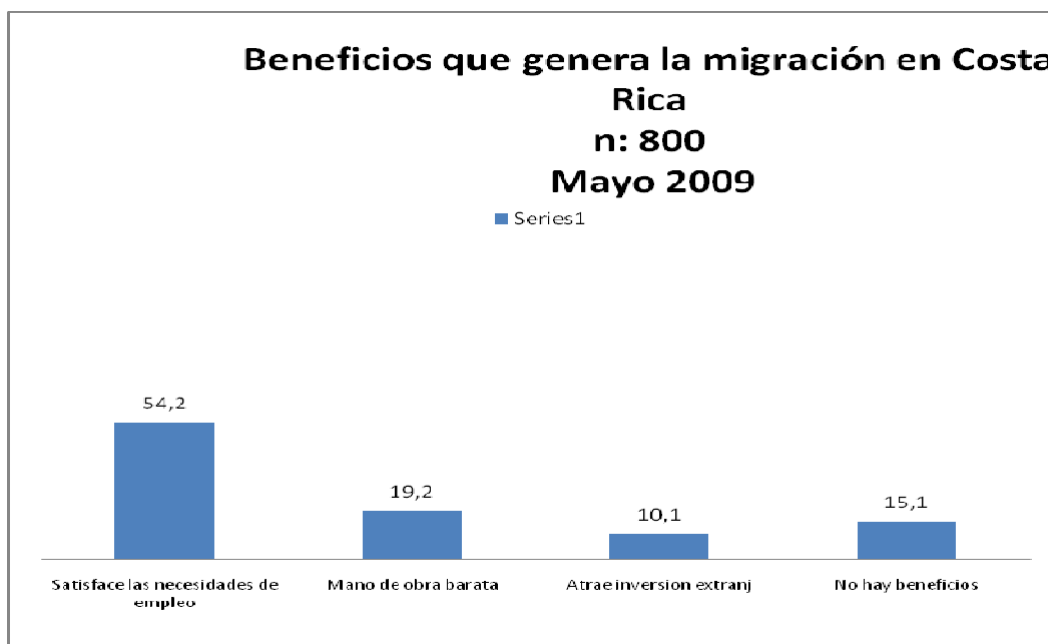
- Sexual Exploitation
- Labor exploitation

However, they consider that migrant women do have guarantees from the State in accessing public services such as education, health and nutrition, with a favorable opinion of 59%.

In terms of employment opportunities, the opinion was shared, as 43.7% considered that migrant women always have equal employment opportunities as Costa Rican women, although perhaps in terms of the quality of employment this opinion does not refer to this opinion. Some 50.9% considered that migrant women sometimes have employment opportunities similar to Costa Rican women.

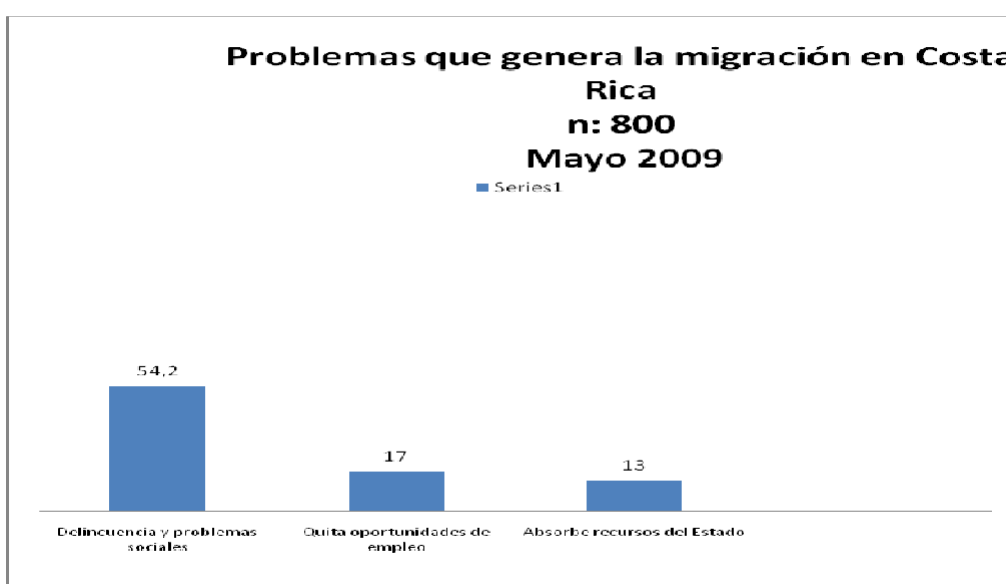
Another topic consulted in this survey is the relationship of migration with the social problems that attack the country, but also with the benefits or advantages that this phenomenon has generated for the country.

The following graph shows the main benefits of migration in the country according to the perception of those interviewed.



In a contradictory sense with the previous question, the opinion has given as the main benefit of migration to Costa Rica the satisfaction of employment needs, possibly because they attend labor fields where the Costa Rican supply is not able to satisfy. Contradictory in that they have pointed out that the State does not promote labor insertion, perhaps the phenomenon would be more linked to the business sector than to the State itself, which would have other functions or tasks with migrants.

Regarding the problems generated by migration, the population interviewed expressed their opinion according to the following graph.

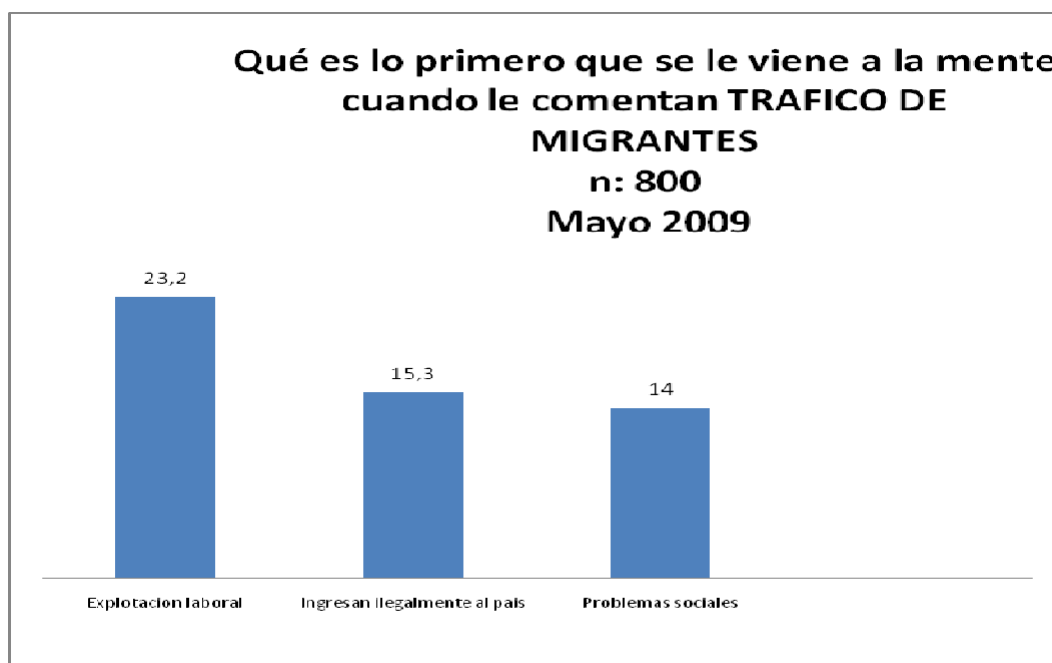


The perception of the interviewees is striking in two ways:

- The sometimes misreported position that migrants absorb state resources, such as medicines and medical consultations, is not so true, as this opinion is held by only 13% of the population.
- The main problem is linked to one of the most serious problems that the country is going through, which is citizen security, so migration policies are possibly one of the most urgent tasks that the Costa Rican State must address in the protection and welfare of national citizens and migrants.

In fact, 60% of those interviewed felt that the issue of foreign migration is an urgent matter that the State must address, although other issues obtained an even more significant percentage, such as domestic violence, organized crime, poverty and unemployment, aspects that respondents also linked to the problem caused by migration.

Continuing on the same topic of migration, the survey sought to know the general perception of Costa Ricans regarding this issue, so when asked what is the first thing that comes to mind when they are told about "migrant trafficking", the following distribution of responses was obtained:



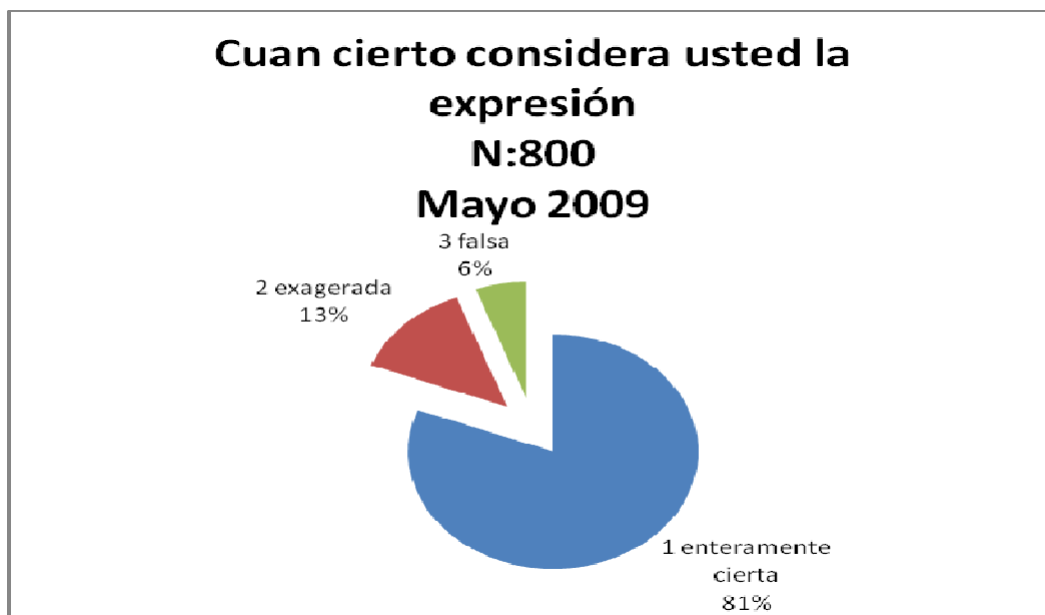
With these responses, it could be considered that although the population may not know very well the problem of migrant trafficking, it does give some indicators of what it means, mainly in terms of the transfer from one country to another, exploitation and social problems, such as prostitution in different manifestations and violation of human rights. This is due to the fact that 75% of the consulted population has expressed the opinion that migrants are people with a higher risk of living a situation of human trafficking.

c) Human Trafficking: The Perception of the Phenomenon in Costa Rica

The following results were obtained in the survey conducted on the subject of human trafficking:

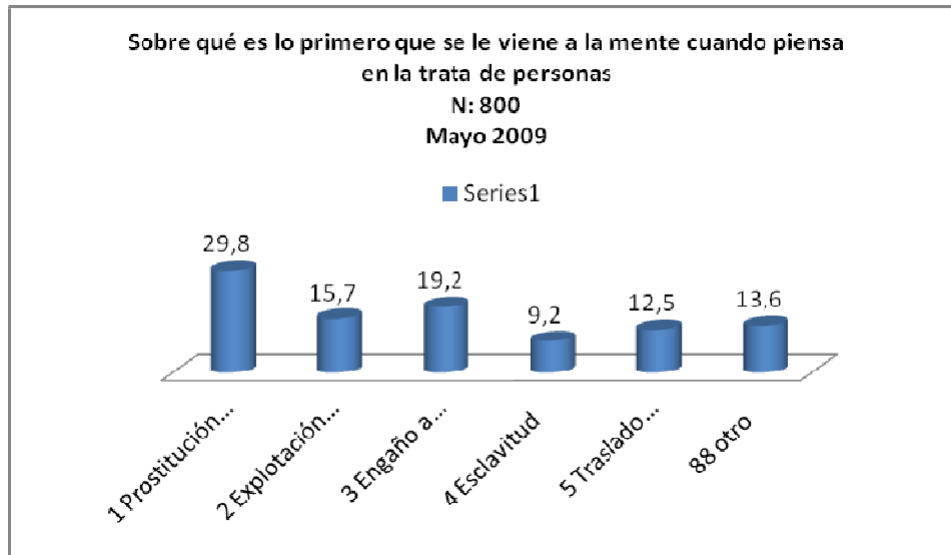
To introduce an idea about human trafficking, the survey began with the following expression, asking respondents whether they thought it was true or exaggerated:

"Young Costa Rican women were offered a good job in a bar in Japan. When they arrived "their employers" confiscated their passports and cut off any line of communication with friends and family in Costa Rica. Without speaking the language of the Asian country, they were subjected not only to forced confinement, but also forced to have sexual relations".



More than 80% considered the above statement to be entirely true.

Next, in order for the respondents to gradually provide more information on how they perceive the phenomenon of human trafficking, the interviewees were asked what first came to mind when they thought of the issue in question, and the following results were obtained:



It is not possible to observe in the answer given a single element of weight when the interviewees indicated what is the first thing that comes to mind when they think of human trafficking, rather the answer was distributed in several aspects, obtaining a relatively higher percentage (30%), prostitution and sexual exploitation, closely related to the previous question where it was asked about the expression where sexual exploitation was given as an example.

However, this percentage is not so significant when compared to the perception of "deception" and "labor exploitation", which reached between 16% and 20% of the responses obtained.

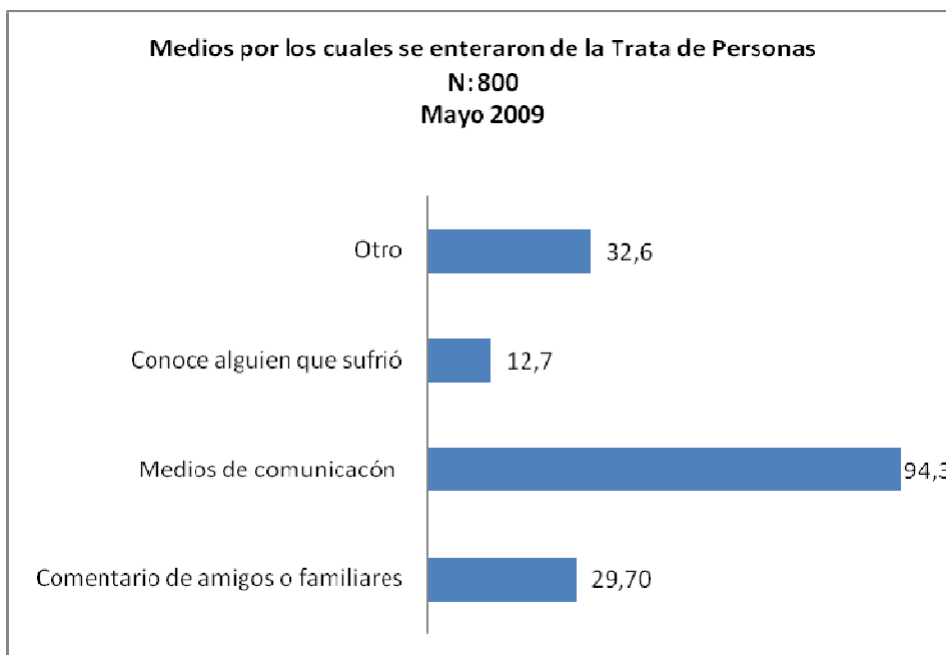
In this sense, a greater application of the true elements of the phenomenon consulted (trafficking in persons) is observed, that is: sexual exploitation, deception and illegal transfer of persons for the purpose of exploitation, the latter reaching 12.5% of the responses obtained.

The perception of the problem was not significant in terms of relating the phenomenon to slavery, as only 9% considered it to be so, and 13.6% considered other factors of various kinds in terms of what they thought of the issue.

To determine which are the main means that have generated this perception of human trafficking, it stands out that 94.3% have learned about it thanks to the media, but not from close relationships or knowledge of direct cases.

Possibly, the issue of human trafficking has been more widely publicized in terms of sexual exploitation rather than labor exploitation, deception and suffering of trafficked persons, given the certainty with which the interviewees took as entirely true the phase consulted: *"Young Costa Rican women were offered a good job in a bar in Japan. When "their employers" arrived, their passports were confiscated and they were cut off from any line of communication with friends and family in Costa Rica. Without speaking the language of the Asian country, they were subjected not only to forced confinement, but also forced to have sexual relations"*, as well as having obtained sexual exploitation as the highest percentage of the trafficking problem.

Below is the graph of the results obtained, where it can be seen that to a much lesser degree the knowledge of the problem has come from comments from family or friends (30%) or from knowing someone who has suffered the problem of trafficking, whose response was very low (12.7%).



Now, it was important to know who is perceived as the main responsible or "exploiters" of people who suffer or have suffered from human trafficking, a response in which it is related to wealthy or higher social strata with 45%, also related to drug trafficking although at a lower level of response with 22% or foreigners who would have in this case greater resources to exploit the services they require from trafficked persons, which was obtained with 25%.

See graph below:



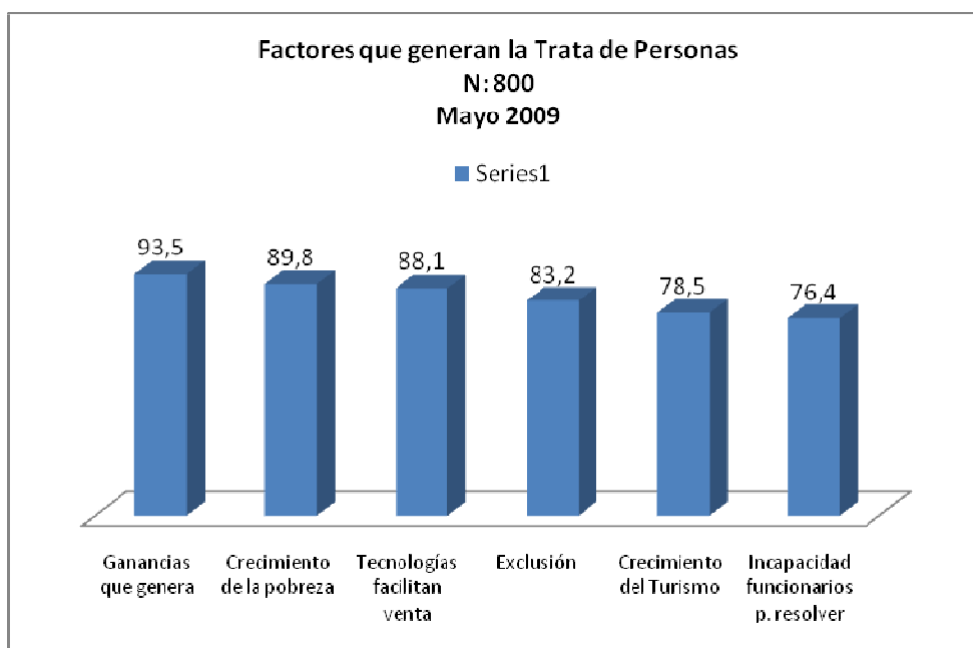
Related to the previous question, we asked about the situations that give rise to human trafficking, obtaining a high percentage (93.5%) that the phenomenon originates from the profits that this "business" generates, which is not contradictory with the statistics that cite human trafficking as the third source of millionaire financing, placing it only two places behind the sale of arms and drug trafficking.

However, the response is combined with the perception of internal problems within the country, such as the growth of poverty, exclusion, and the growth of tourism, with percentages ranging from 78% to 89.8%.

The response that the problem is also caused by the increase in technologies that facilitate the disclosure of sexual services is striking, with 88.1% of the responses obtained.

They also relate the problem to the inability of public officials to address and solve this problem with a 76.4% response rate.

It is worth noting that although a lower percentage (67.2%), it is important to highlight that although it is not indicated among the main factors that the interviewees considered as a generator of human trafficking, the lack of education, housing and health services.



The following chart shows the main tasks that, in the opinion of those interviewed, the Costa Rican government should undertake to address human trafficking.

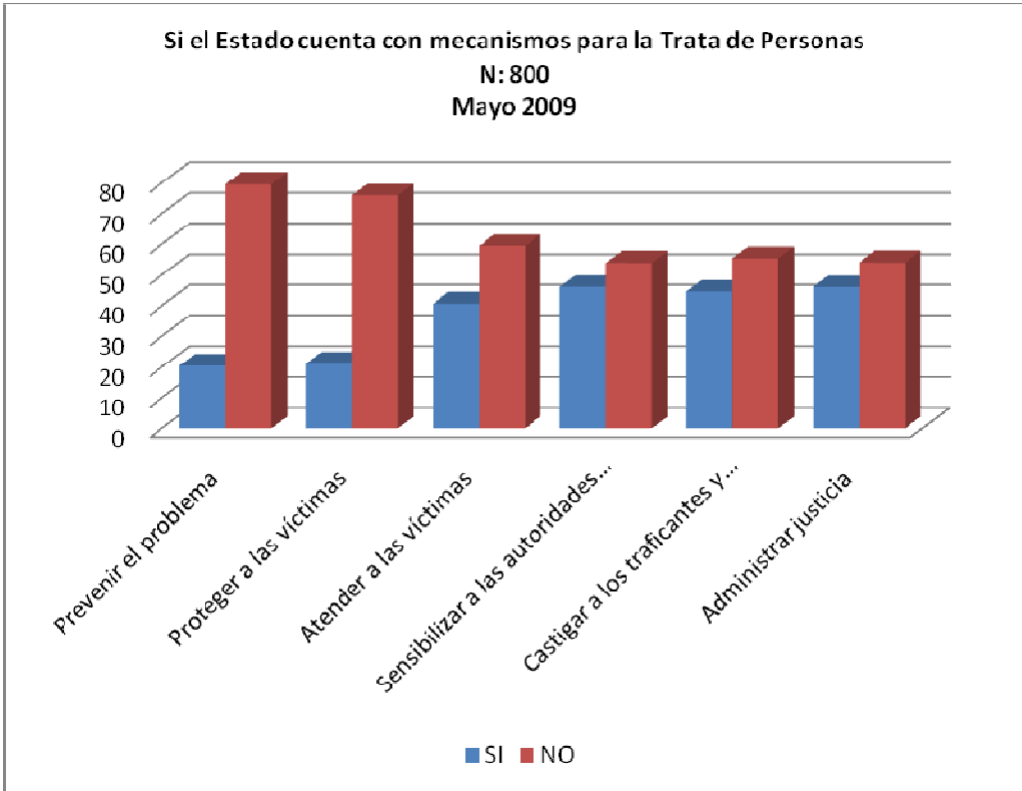


This graph shows that the main tasks that the State should assume are the implementation of systems of care, information and prevention (97.8%), as well as the development of mechanisms for the insertion or rehabilitation of victims of human trafficking (96.9%).

This is important, since people's opinion shows the importance of early prevention actions and information systems that provide a national alert on the problem. The interviewees also consider that they support programs to achieve the social insertion or rehabilitation of trafficked persons.

The construction of shelters for this purpose is a concrete response to the actions considered in lower percentages, but always of high importance, with 82.1% of the population interviewed considering it convenient.

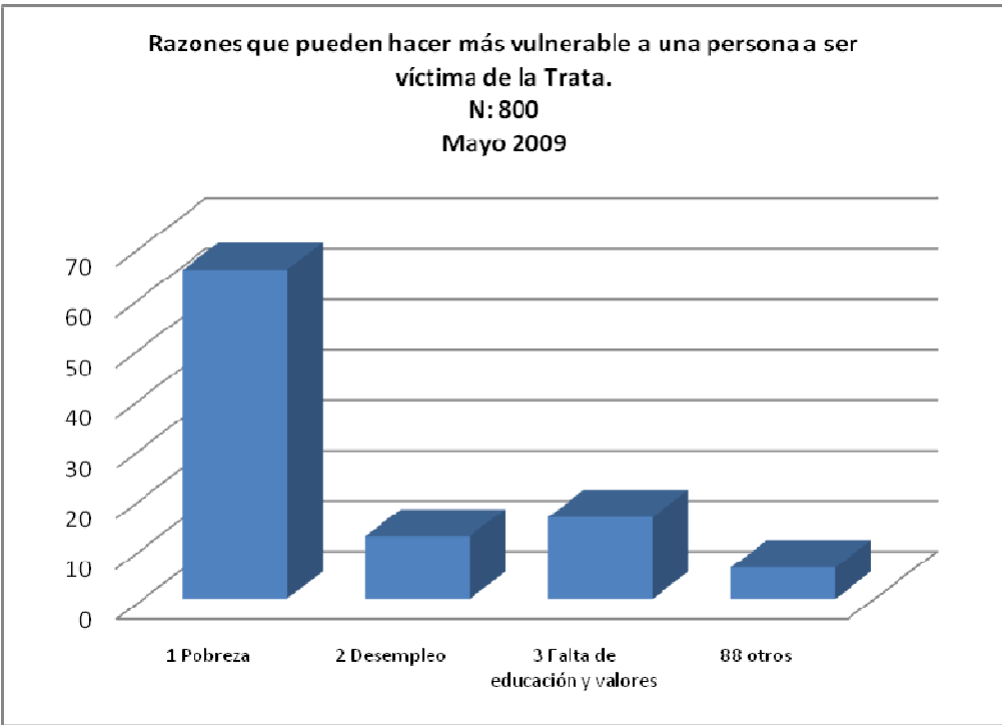
However, as to whether the interviewees consider that these proposals are feasible in the State, we also asked whether the Costa Rican State has mechanisms in place to address this problem, with the following results.



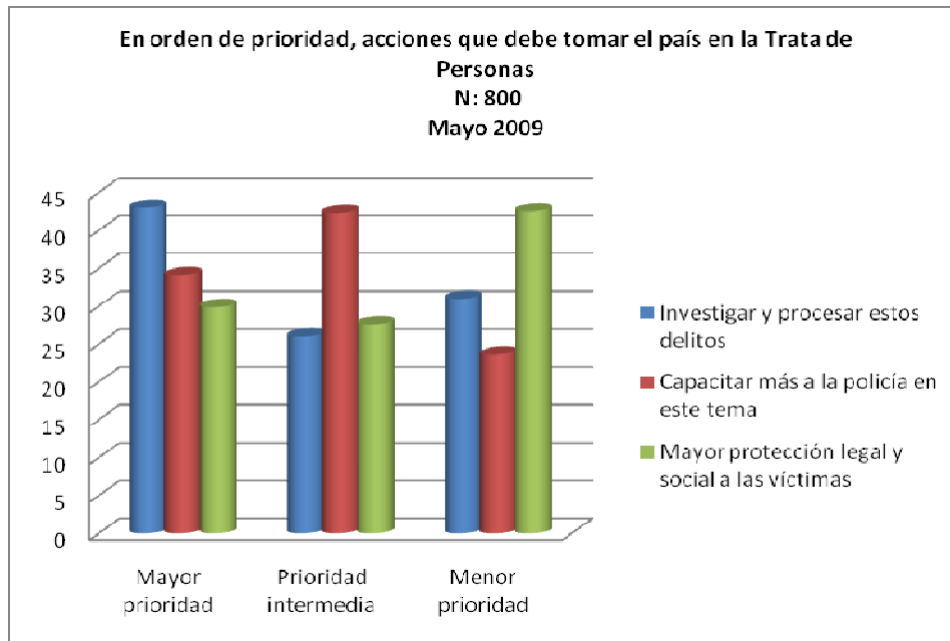
This graph shows that approximately 80% of those interviewed consider that the Costa Rican State does not have mechanisms to prevent human trafficking and protect its victims.

In the rest of the topics consulted, such as whether the State has mechanisms to assist victims, sensitize authorities, punish traffickers and exploiters, as well as the administration of justice, there was a parity of response since there was not much difference between those who considered that the State does have mechanisms and those who did not. Although in all of them the level of negative responses was lower, but slightly in comparison with those who have indicated that the State does have mechanisms to address human trafficking, which ranged between 45% and 59% between them.

Another question aimed at finding out the perception of Costa Rican citizens as to what is the reason that would make a person more vulnerable to being a victim of trafficking, showed that more than 65% of those interviewed considered poverty to be the main reason. To a much lesser degree, unemployment, lack of education and lack of values were considered to be important in making a person vulnerable to this problem.



In addition, the following level of opinion was obtained when asked about the measures that Costa Rica should take to address the problem of human trafficking:

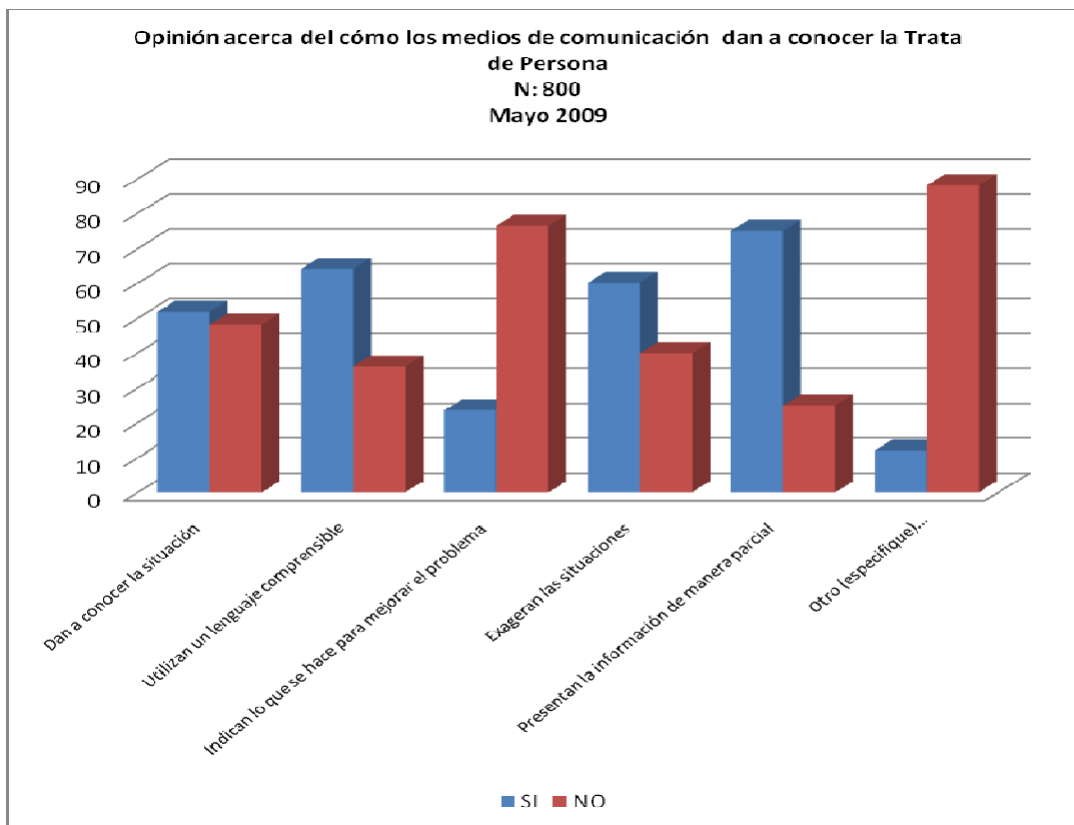


It can be seen in the previous graph, how the investigation and prosecution of human trafficking crimes was the one that obtained the highest level of priority among the aspects that were pointed out to them, then at an intermediate level, the training of police officers and with lower priority the legal and social protection of the victims.

However, when asked about their opinion on the way in which the media reports on the problem, the following graph shows that more than 70% of those interviewed considered that the information presented by the media is partial and that it does not indicate what is being done to improve the problem.

Also, almost 60% thought that the media exaggerate situations and there was almost a tie in opinion in the question on whether the media publicize the situation, with 51.8% of those interviewed considering the situation positively and 48.2% negatively.

In summary, it would seem that the media in Costa Rica are not really succeeding in making the objective causes and solutions to the problem of human trafficking known, according to the following graph.



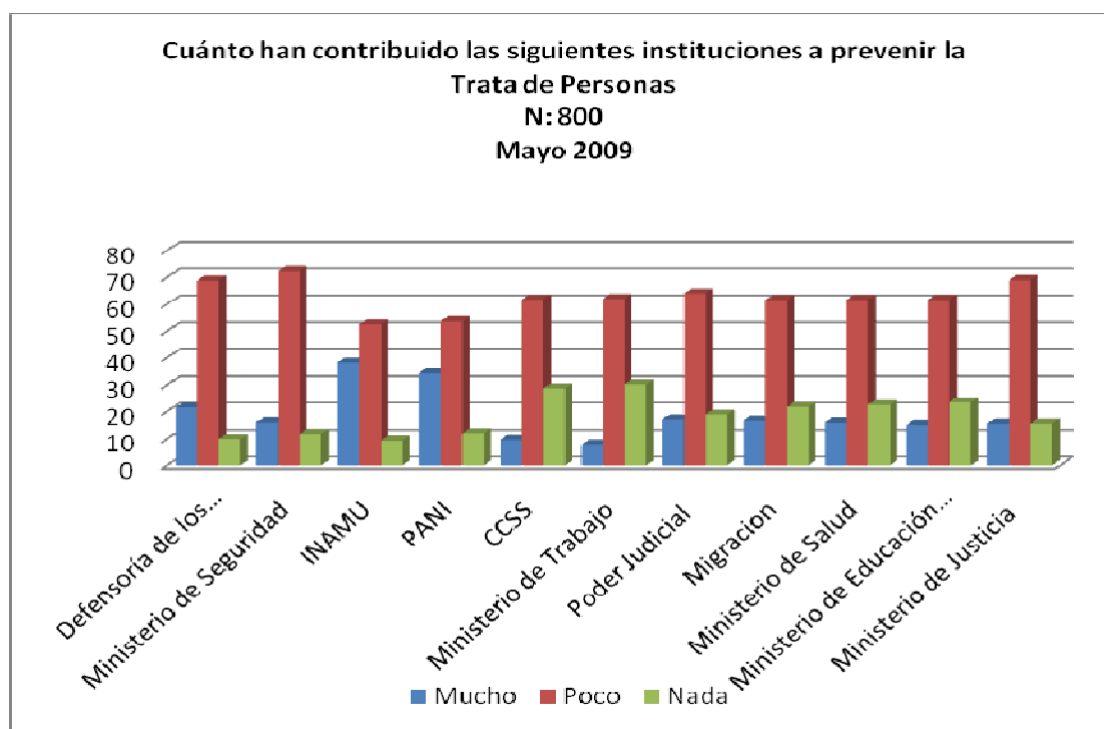
Regarding the question on which institutions consider that they have managed to prevent human trafficking in the country, high percentages of those interviewed considered that all the institutions mentioned do little to prevent this problem.

Among these institutions, the Ministry of Security stands out, followed by the Ministry of Justice, followed by the Ombudsman's Office, all with more than 62% who believe that these institutions have contributed little to the prevention of trafficking.

Perhaps the institutions with the best opinion for this were the National Women's Institute (INAMU) and the National Children's Board (PANI), but with a timid percentage that did not exceed 38% of the total population interviewed.

It is important to keep in mind that entities such as the Costa Rican Social Security Fund and the Ministry of Labor and Social Security play an important role in controlling the formality of employment contracts, given the rights established in labor and social security matters, especially if we remember that human trafficking violates these rights.

The graph summarizing the answers given in the survey is presented below.



Finally, more than 80% of those interviewed considered that the populations most vulnerable to human trafficking are children, youth, young adults and especially women. Respondents considered that these populations are more vulnerable if they are migrants, especially Nicaraguans. It is noteworthy that approximately 50% of the respondents considered that men are the least vulnerable to suffer from the problem.

7. Conclusions:

- Globalization, more than a merely economic process, has generated social transformations. In the case of Latin America, the problems of poverty and inequality, far from being overcome, are becoming more complex and widespread in the region.
- In addition to the above, and also as a consequence of this, informal employment is increasing, which, together with structural unemployment figures, makes the appearance or deepening of social problems difficult to address and control by the State, such as migration and human trafficking, phenomena that are increasingly difficult to contain.

- Migration and human trafficking are phenomena that once again call into question the effectiveness of Latin American States in solving their main problems.
- Costa Rica, despite social spending that exceeds by a high percentage those allocated by the rest of the Central American countries, also suffers the effects of the constant global crises affecting the Isthmus, such as poverty, exclusion and inequality, issues that will undoubtedly require further research to reach their true dimensions.
- The new challenges of a globalized economy and the social transformations that are taking place with the deepening of their effects are aspects that will put the effectiveness of state institutions under greater debate, including Costa Rica, a country characterized by the construction of universal policies and a low level of inequality in the region.
- The Costa Rican State, despite its advanced conformation in relation to the rest of Latin American countries, especially in welfare regimes, seems to find new challenges that also call into question its effectiveness in dealing with migration and the more recent appearance of human trafficking.
- Costa Rica's traditional public policy schemes are no longer sufficient to effectively address the most urgent national problems. Such schemes are not even sufficient for citizens to favorably perceive the solution of social problems.
- This is consistent with the opinion of Costa Rican citizens, a high percentage of whom consider that state institutions do little to guarantee the right to housing and employment, as well as health and prompt justice.
- It is relevant that a high percentage of those surveyed considered that the Costa Rican State does little to guarantee the monitoring of human rights, an aspect that should be investigated in greater depth.
- In the same sense, the population interviewed considered that the State does not promote effective employment policies that favor the labor insertion of disadvantaged populations, such as indigenous people, people with physical or intellectual disabilities, the poor and the unemployed.

- The perception that Costa Rican citizens have of the term "socially responsible *Human Rights*" is distributed in three elements that are cited in order of importance: a) Equality, b) Right to State services, and c) Violation of Human Rights. This last point could be linked to the social problems that are most frequently perceived in the country and that will be mentioned below.
- Most of those interviewed consider it entirely true that Costa Rica is a country that facilitates prostitution networks, that begging is a growing and unavoidable problem, and that deceptive job offers that violate basic rights are increasingly being offered for sexual and labor exploitation.
- These forms of exploitation, as well as the perceived ineffectiveness of the State in guaranteeing the right to its services, may be part of the reasons why only 37% of those interviewed considered that it is entirely true that human rights are respected in Costa Rica.
- In addition to the above, when analyzing the most frequent situations and their relative importance, highly significant percentages cited that violent events, organized crime and family abandonment can increase the negative perception of human rights.
- In fact, citizen security, the fight against drugs and poverty are the most urgent problems to be addressed in the country, according to the research results.
- The perception of Costa Ricans regarding migration shows one of the major concerns of this society, which is the increase in violence and social problems, which are linked to a large extent to the phenomenon of migration, since the country is a receiving state.
- The benefits of migration are seen only in terms of labor supply, especially in the case of women because of the supply of domestic services.
- Costa Ricans do not consider that migrants absorb state resources, and this is an aspect that draws attention to the fact that this situation is perhaps overreported in the country.

- The Costa Rican considers poverty as the main reason that makes people more vulnerable to being victims of human trafficking, especially migrants, children, youth and women.
- In addition to poverty, the Costa Rican believes that the profits generated by the human trafficking business and technologies are also reasons for the increase in this problem.
- Regarding human trafficking, there is a diffuse knowledge of the problem, perhaps due to the lack of cases followed or reported as in the rest of the countries in the region, where the problem seems to be greater, or due to the way in which the problem is communicated in the country.
- Costa Ricans believe that the State does not have the capacity to address these problems, nor that there are mechanisms to prevent or address the issues of migration and human trafficking, in which they rated the State and its institutions as ineffective in a high percentage of cases.
- The prevention of human trafficking, the prompt rehabilitation and insertion of the victims of this problem, as well as the investigation and prosecution of these crimes, were considered priority issues to be addressed by the Costa Rican government.
- While it is true that today's problems and complexities are the product of external phenomena such as globalization itself, this research shares that the State continues to be a necessary condition to achieve success in policies, therefore, the capacity of its institutions, human rights and equality are aspects that must be strengthened in Costa Rica, The perception of those interviewed was not favorable in these aspects, an issue that undoubtedly has to be analyzed by public authorities in the midst of the opening of public spaces that guarantee the best and greater discussion of national problems that reach the happy port of the real and sustainable effectiveness of welfare policies. The debate is still open!

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