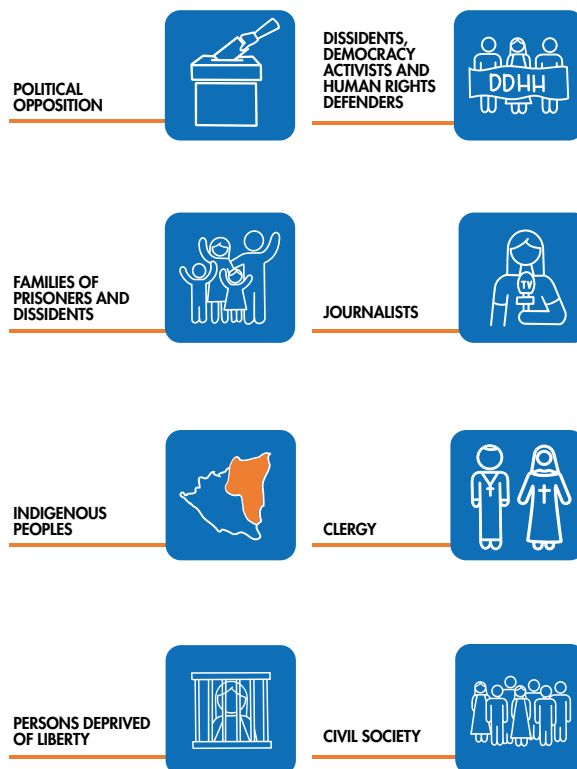


# Crisis in Nicaragua: 2022 in Facts and Figures

In 2022, widespread human rights violations by Nicaraguan institutions intensified. Many Nicaraguans were prevented from exercising their civil and political rights. The State gave prison sentences to the persons detained in the context of the 2021 elections for the mere fact of exercising their rights to political participation, freedom of expression and freedom of association, in criminal proceedings marked by systematic violations of basic due process guarantees, as documented by OHCHR. Hundreds of people were arbitrarily detained, including, for the first time since 2018, priests of the Catholic Church, and continued to subject persons deprived of their liberty to inhumane conditions of detention. In addition, between August and November, it prevented prisoners at El Chipote from receiving family visits for 86 days. In December it authorized visits on three occasions.

The civic space was further eroded by the Government with the cancellation of the legal personality of more than 3,000 civil society organizations and the closure of over twenty media outlets. The Government did not cease the persecution and harassment of people perceived as opponents, committing new types of violations such as the detention of their relatives or preventing them from re-entering the country, forcing them into exile. The municipal elections held in November, where there were multiple cases of intimidation and coercion, allowed the ruling party to gain control of all the mayors' offices in the country. Migration, exile and asylum requests in third countries increased dramatically, as evidence of a State that continues to depart from democratic principles, the rule of law and respect for human rights. Details of these developments are presented below.

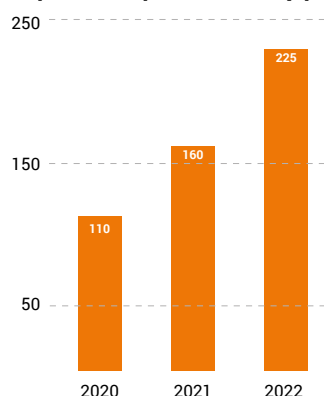
## Main targets of human rights violations in 2022



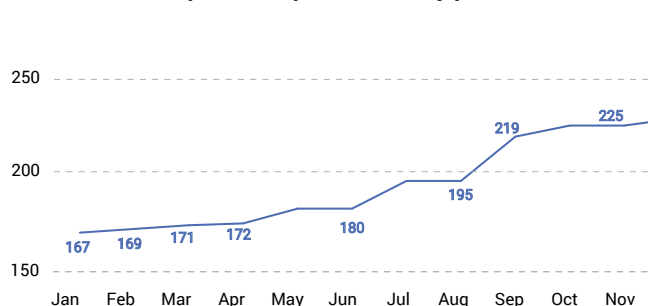
## A. Human rights violations

### Arbitrary detentions

Number of persons deprived of liberty per year



Number of persons deprived of liberty per month in 2022



The number of persons deprived of liberty in the context of the socio-political crisis has doubled from 2020 to November 2022. Prior to the November municipal elections, there was an increase in detentions, 45 people between June and November. [Civil society organizations](#) consider that there is an underreporting of data, due to the fact that relatives of detainees are afraid to report detentions because of possible reprisals.

# Crisis in Nicaragua: 2022 in Facts and Figures

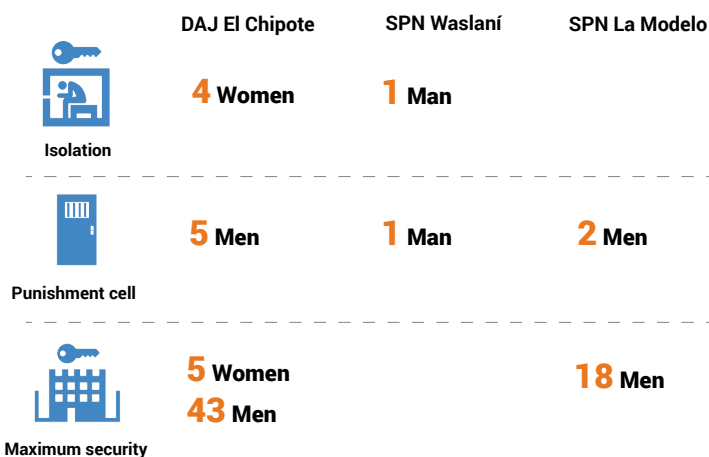
Number of persons deprived of their liberty by gender and age



Most of the persons deprived of their liberty are convicted and held in the men's prison of the National Penitentiary System "La Modelo" and in the Evaristo Vásquez Judicial Assistance Directorate, known as "El Chipote".

Number of persons detained by gender, detention status and place of detention

In some cases, they remain in prolonged solitary confinement, punishment cells or in maximum security. In the case of El Chipote, there is a marked component of gender discrimination since only women remain in solitary confinement since their arbitrary detention, one of them in the male ward.



DAJ = Judicial Assistance Directorate; SPN = National Penitentiary System

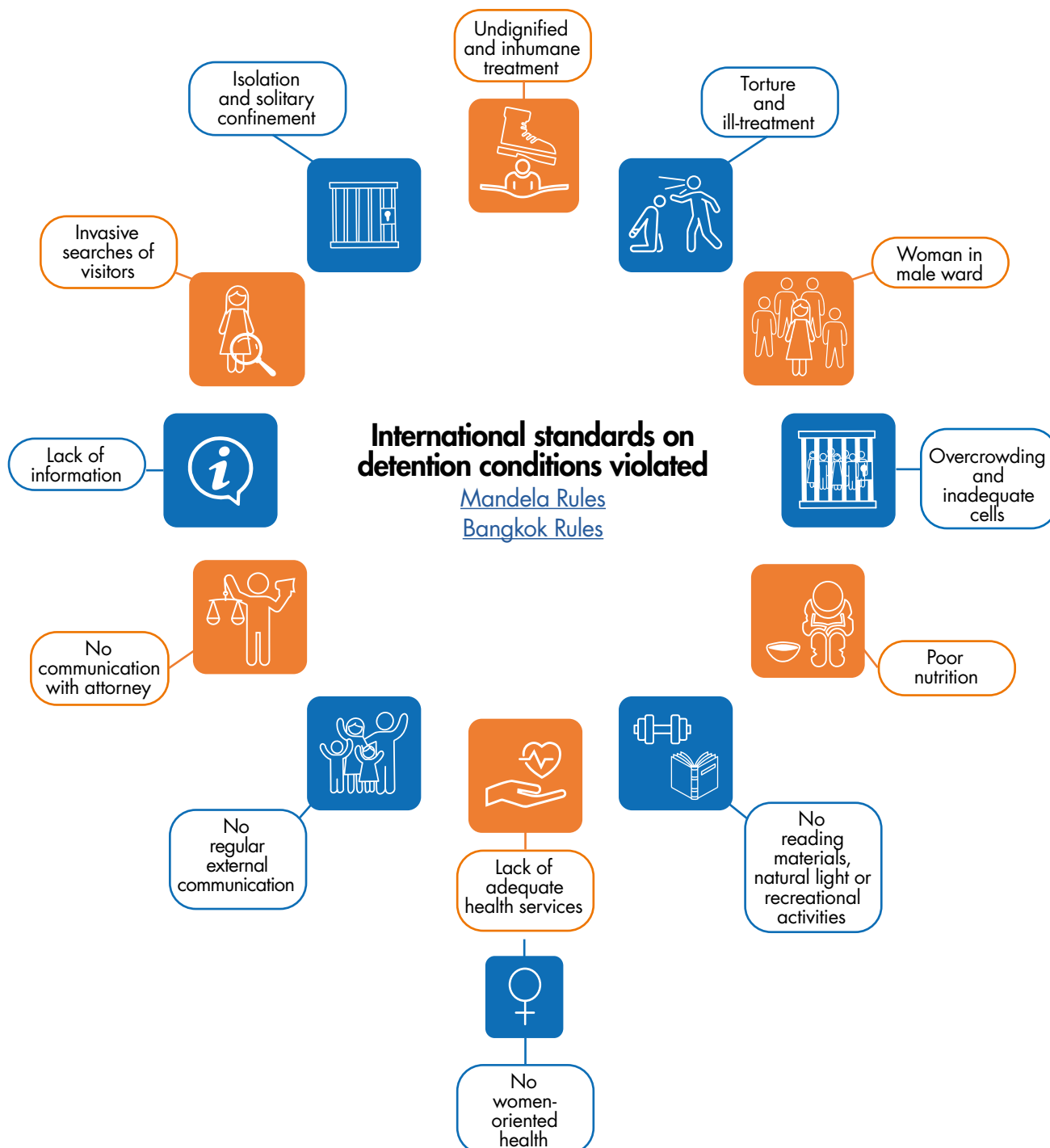
In 2022 another worrying pattern emerged, consisting of arresting the relatives of political opponents or those considered as such, when the police cannot find them. The aim of this practice is allegedly to get opponents to surrender in exchange for the release of their relatives. According to the [Human Rights Committee](#), this could be considered a particularly serious form of arbitrary detention.



# Crisis in Nicaragua: 2022 in Facts and Figures

## Detention conditions

The conditions of detention of many of the persons deprived of their liberty for their opposition to the Government - some have been imprisoned for more than 4 years - continue to breach Mandela and Bangkok Rules, which is reportedly severely affecting their physical and mental health.



# Crisis in Nicaragua: 2022 in Facts and Figures

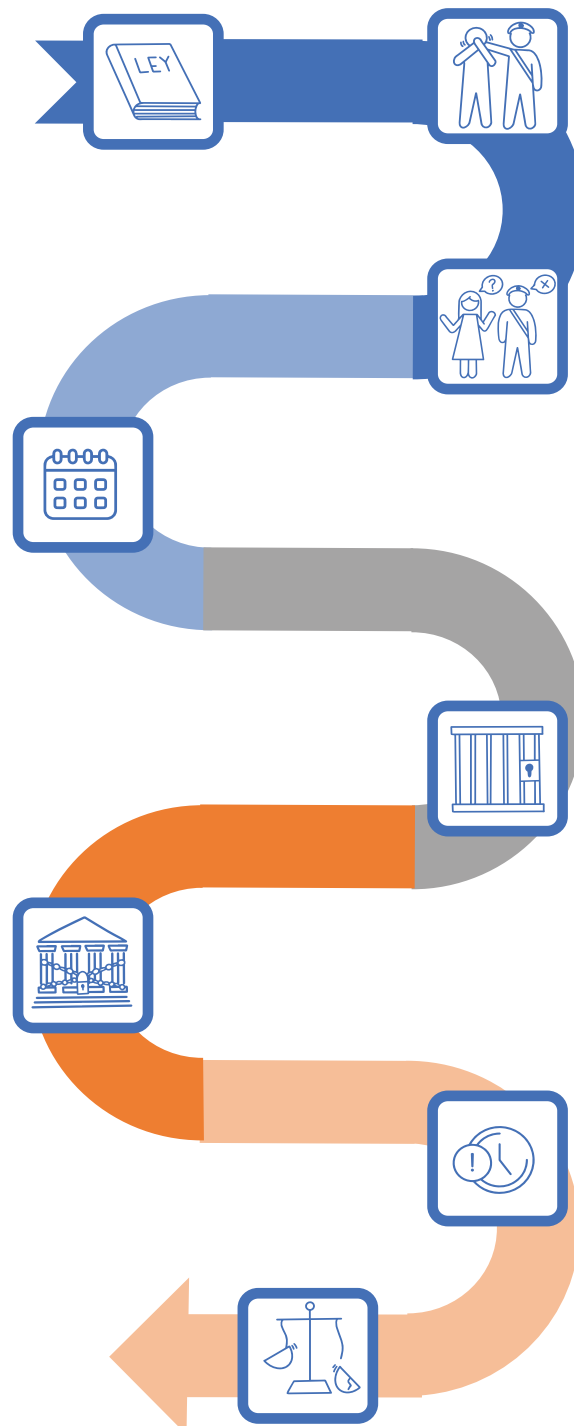
## The path of due process violations

Legislation incompatible with international human rights standards that require crimes to be precisely defined. Laws 1042 and 1055, for example, lack precision in the description of conducts. Their modification has been recommended by OHCHR since 2020.

The date on which arrests are made is altered in order to simulate that detainees were brought before a judge within 48 hours, when, in reality, they have been detained for much longer, even weeks.

Court hearings are not public, they are held behind closed doors, sometimes without prior notice and not in the courtroom, but in police detention centers.

In general, there is a pattern of systematic violations of the minimum guarantees of due process: the right to a competent, impartial and independent judge, the presumption of innocence, the right to defense and procedural equality.



Criminalization of freedom of expression, political criticism and dissent.

Arrests without warrants. No information is provided to family members or lawyers about the whereabouts of the detainees, who are deprived of any legal protection. This may qualify as short-term enforced disappearance, according to international standards.

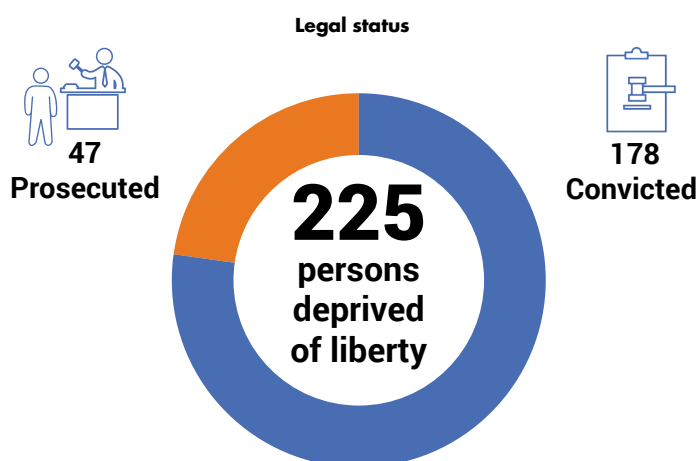
Detainees are prevented from communicating in a timely, free and confidential manner with their lawyers. Their lawyers have limited access to the files, and are often not given the records of hearings or court rulings.

As of the date of this report, only one conviction has been overturned out of 50 cases monitored by OHCHR. All other convictions have been upheld at the appeals stage.

# Crisis in Nicaragua: 2022 in Facts and Figures

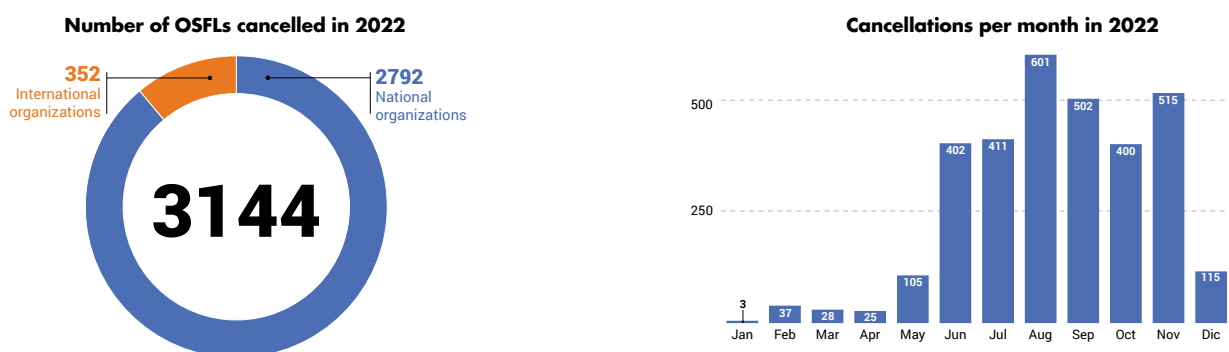
## Legal status of persons subject to criminal prosecution

According to civil society data, as of November 2022, of the persons deprived of liberty and criminally prosecuted in the context of the crisis, 178 had been convicted and 47 were being prosecuted.



## Freedom of association

Between January and December 2022, OHCHR has documented 3,144 nonprofit organizations (OSFL in its Spanish acronym) having their legal status cancelled in the 15 departments and two autonomous regions of the country. The months with the highest cancellations of OSFLs were August, September and November, coinciding with the calling and holding of municipal elections.

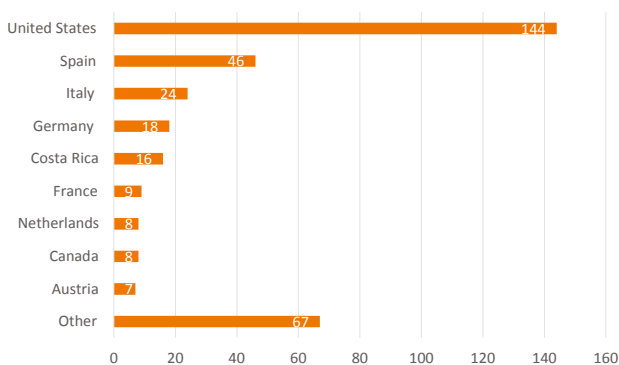


Of the total number of cancelled OSFLs, 2,792 are domestic and 352 are international. The latter correspond to 32 countries, with Germany, Costa Rica, Spain, the United States and Italy accounting for the largest number: 248, equivalent to 71% as of December 9, 2022.

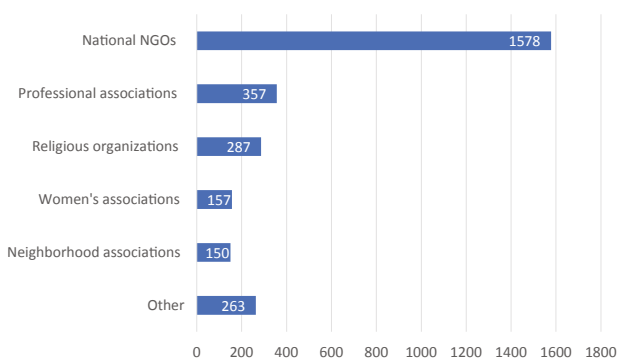
Fifty-seven percent of the national OSFLs cancelled worked on development, environmental, social and productive issues; 13% were professional associations, 10% were religious organizations and 6% were organizations dedicated to promoting women's rights. The rest, 9%, corresponded to other types of organizations, including medical, cultural, media, recreational, and others.

# Crisis in Nicaragua: 2022 in Facts and Figures

**Cancellation of legal personality of OSFLs by country in 2022**



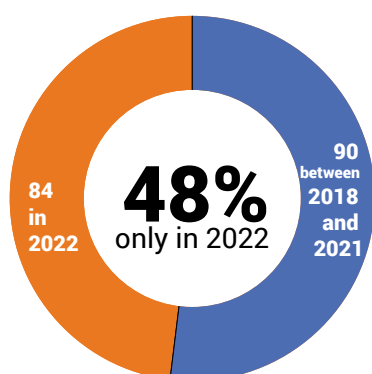
**Type of organizations cancelled from January 1 to December 9, 2022**



The legislation invoked by the State to cancel these organizations are, among others, [Law 1114](#), [Law 1115](#) and [Law 1127](#), among others, all of which were adopted in 2022. The cancelled OSFLs were not informed that they were being subjected to a cancellation process; they did not have a due process or the right to file administrative or judicial appeals.

## Freedom of expression

**174 journalists exiled**



From 2018 to December 7, 2022, at least 174 journalists and press workers went into exile. In 2022 alone, there were 84, or 48% of the total since the beginning of the socio-political crisis.



At least 26 media outlets have been cancelled in 2022. However, there is a warning about a possible underreporting due to the fact that the closures have not been officially notified, but through telephone calls.



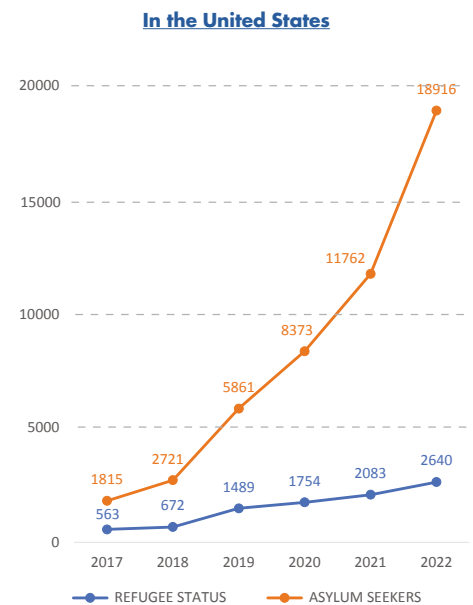
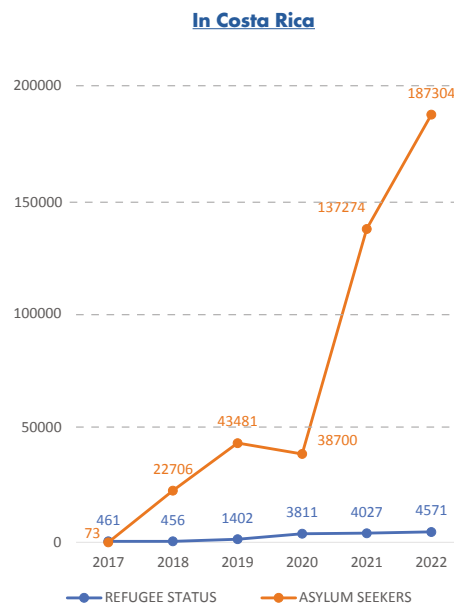
Also in 2022, [Law 1132](#) was enacted, which imposes mandatory registration and government authorization for the production, filming and exhibition of audiovisuals in Nicaragua.

# Crisis in Nicaragua: 2022 in Facts and Figures

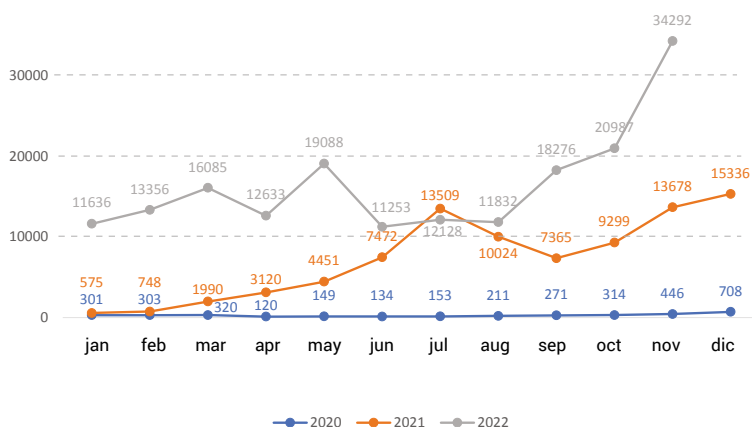
## Human mobility

Since the beginning of the socio-political crisis in 2018, the number of people who have left the country into exile to seek asylum has increased exponentially, especially in the countries that receive the largest number of people: Costa Rica and the United States.

Asylum seekers and refugees 2022		
2022	Asylum seekers	Refugees
 Costa Rica	187,304	4,571
 U.S.A.	18,916	2,640
 Mexico	7,123	1,850
 Panama	4,987	183
 Spain	4,725	2,049



### Nicaraguans encountered by border authorities in the U.S.



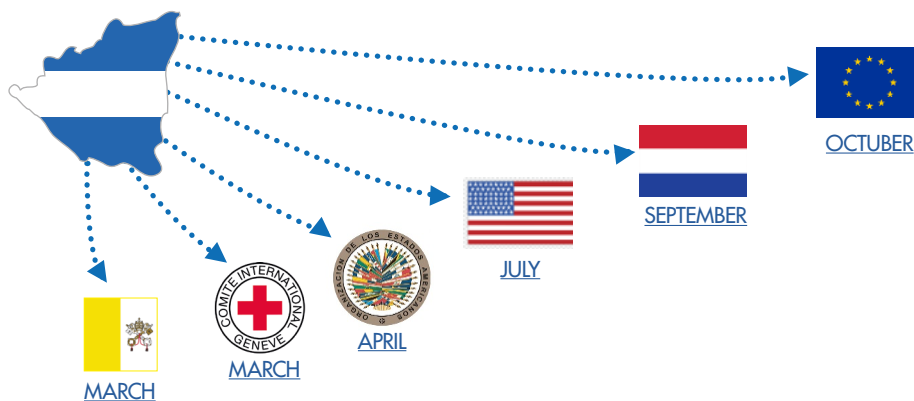
The search for better opportunities, especially employment, has also led to increased emigration from Nicaragua. U.S. authorities reported 181,566 encounters with Nicaraguan persons at its borders between January and November 2022.

In addition to arbitrarily preventing Nicaraguans from leaving the country by, for example, withholding their passports, and controlling the destination and purpose of their trips to students and university staff, in 2022 the Government also denied entry to Nicaragua to at least 12 nationals (including human rights defenders, journalists, religious and relatives of prisoners) when they tried to return to their country from various activities abroad. The violation of the right of these individuals to enter their own country has devastating consequences on several of their human rights, such as the right to family life (several of these individuals have minor children in Nicaragua), to work and to adequate living conditions, as they often suddenly lose all sources of income.

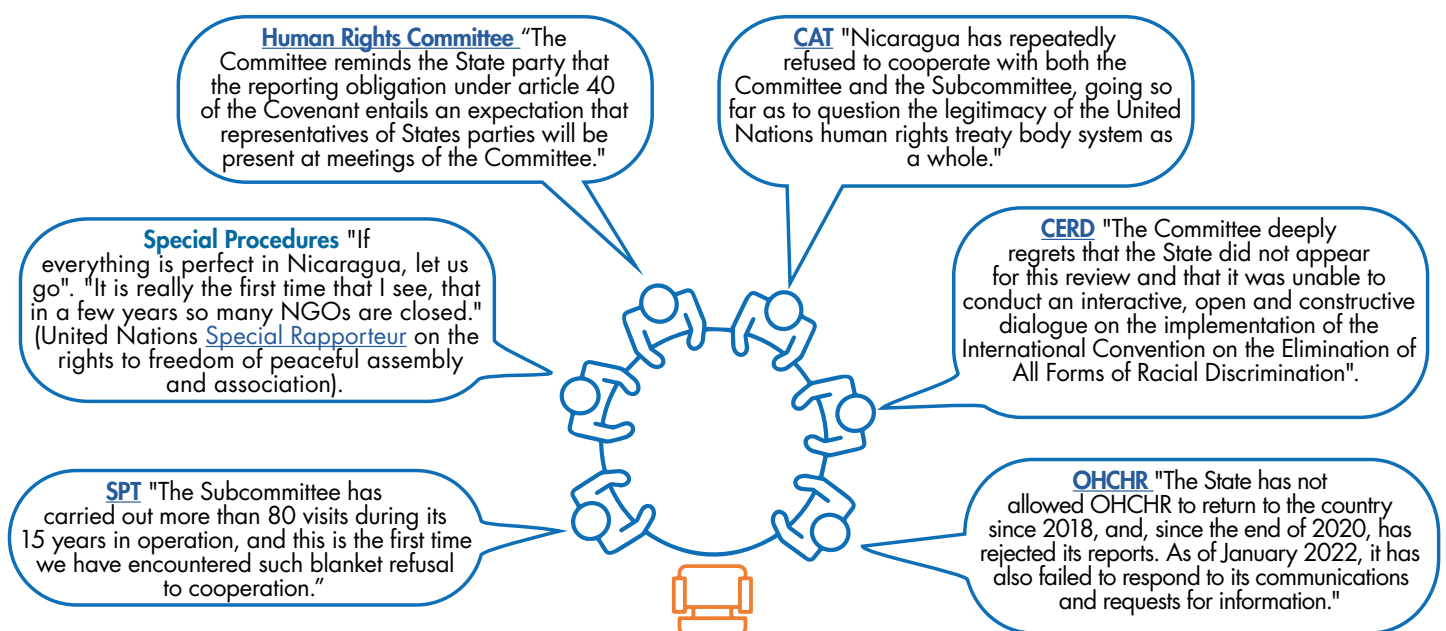
# Crisis in Nicaragua: 2022 in Facts and Figures

## B. Nicaragua and its relationship with the international community and human rights mechanisms

Nicaragua's international isolation deepened in 2022 with the expulsion and declaration of persona non grata of diplomatic representatives, international humanitarian organizations and multilateral agencies, as well as the severance of relations with one State.



The Government did not attend the review of its periodic reports and constructive dialogues with the Treaty Bodies. Despite Nicaragua's absence, the respective concluding observations were adopted by those bodies. The Government did not cooperate with the Subcommittee on Prevention of Torture so that this mechanism could visit Nicaragua in 2023, nor did it respond to the communications and concerns transmitted by the Special Procedures of the Human Rights Council. Likewise, Nicaragua has ignored the Group of Human Rights Experts on Nicaragua established by the Human Rights Council on resolution 49/3 and has not complied with the recommendations and determinations of the human rights bodies of the Inter-American system. In November, the Inter-American Court of Human Rights declared the State of Nicaragua in "permanent contempt".





# Crisis in Nicaragua: 2022 in Facts and Figures

## C. OHCHR's 2022 work in figures

OHCHR, through its [Regional Office for Central America and the Caribbean](#), based in Panama, has continued to remotely monitor the human rights situation in Nicaragua. In this context, it has documented cases, conducted missions to Costa Rica and the United States, held meetings, interviewed victims, family members and their lawyers, and prepared reports and other public communications.

**2** comprehensive reports to the Human Rights Council in [March](#) and [September](#).

**2** oral updates to the Human Rights Council in [June](#) and [December](#).

**8** monthly [flash reports](#) on the human rights situation in Nicaragua.

**1** [press](#) release in August.

**2** editorials, in the [Washington Post](#) and [El País](#).

**+60** [tweets](#).

**5** missions to third countries to meet with Nicaraguan individuals and organizations in exile.

**+60** interviews with victims, their families or advocates.

**+75** in-person and virtual working meetings.