

GLOBAL TRENDS

FORCED DISPLACEMENT IN 2024

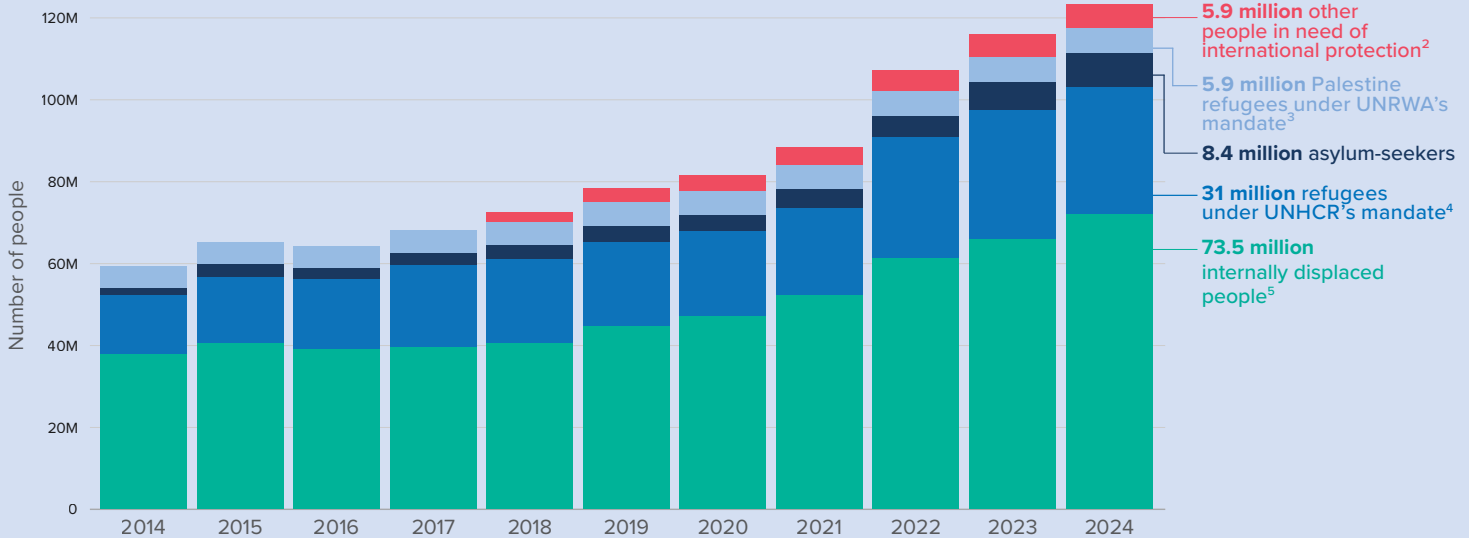


Trends at a Glance

123.2 MILLION

FORCIBLY DISPLACED WORLDWIDE¹

at the end of 2024 as a result of persecution, conflict, violence, human rights violations or events seriously disturbing public order.



73% HOSTED IN LOW-AND MIDDLE-INCOME COUNTRIES

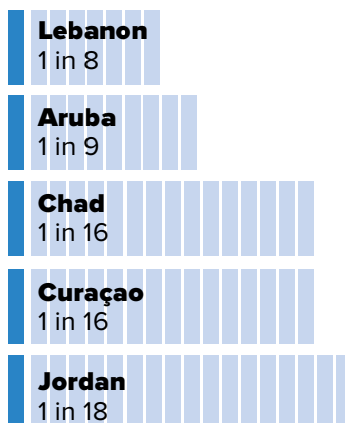
Low- and middle-income countries hosted 73 per cent of the world's refugees and other people in need of international protection.⁶ The Least Developed Countries provided asylum to 23 per cent of the total.

67% HOSTED IN NEIGHBOURING COUNTRIES

67 per cent of refugees and other people in need of international protection lived in countries neighbouring their countries of origin.

1 IN 8 ARE DISPLACED

Relative to their national populations,⁷ Lebanon (1 in 8) hosted the largest number of refugees and other people in need of international protection, followed by the island of Aruba (1 in 9), Chad (1 in 16), Curaçao (1 in 16) and Jordan (1 in 18).⁸



3.1 MILLION NEW CLAIMS

The United States of America⁹ was the world's largest recipient of new individual applications.

United States of America
729,100

Egypt
433,900

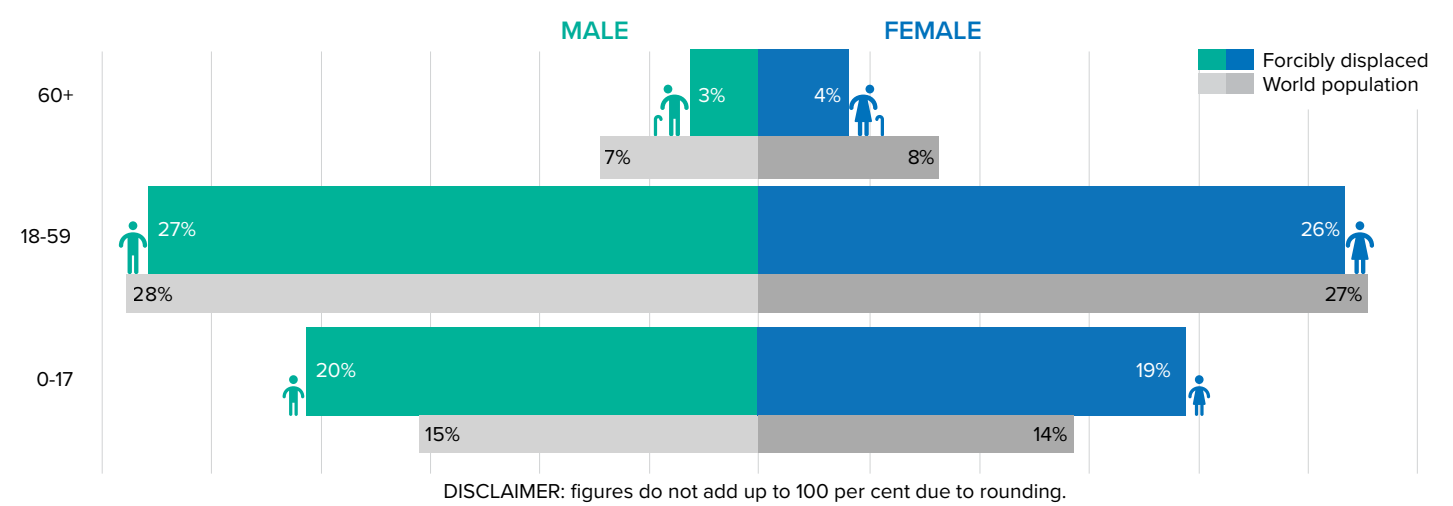
Germany
229,800

Canada
174,000

Spain
167,400

DEMOGRAPHICS OF PEOPLE WHO HAVE BEEN FORCIBLY DISPLACED END-2024

Children account for 29 per cent of the world’s population, but 40 per cent of all forcibly displaced people.¹⁰



SOLUTIONS

9.8 MILLION
DISPLACED PEOPLE
RETURNED

9.8 million displaced people returned to their areas or countries of origin in 2024, including 8.2 million internally displaced people and 1.6 million refugees.

188,800
REFUGEES
RESETTLED

188,800 refugees were resettled in 2024, according to government statistics. UNHCR submitted 203,800 refugees to States for resettlement.

47,200
STATELESS PEOPLE
RECEIVED
CITIZENSHIP

47,200 stateless people had their nationality confirmed or acquired citizenship during the year.

¹ The total number of people forcibly displaced is calculated using statistics by UNHCR, UNRWA and IDMC. See [UNHCR population groups explained](#) for more information. UNRWA estimates that 70 per cent of the 2 million IDPs in the Gaza Strip at end-2024 were Palestine refugees under its mandate. These internally displaced refugees under UNRWA's mandate are only counted once in the global forcibly displaced total.

² See the [Methodology](#) page of UNHCR's Refugee Data Finder for a definition of each population group.

³ Source: [UNRWA](#).

⁴ All references in this infographic to refugees under UNHCR's mandate includes people in a refugee-like situation.

⁵ Source: [Global Report on Internal Displacement 2025](#), IDMC. At the end of 2024, 83.4 million people remained displaced within their countries, including 73.5 million due to conflict and violence and 9.8 million due to disasters.

⁶ See [Key facts for countries hosting the world's refugees](#), UNHCR.

⁷ Limited to countries hosting at least 10,000 people. Excludes Palestine refugees under UNRWA's mandate.

⁸ Lebanon continues to be the highest, per capita, host country for refugees globally, with a government estimate of 1.5 million Syrians (some 755,400 registered by UNHCR) and 10,000 asylum-seekers and refugees of other nationalities. When the 486,300 Palestine refugees in Lebanon and 2.4 million Palestine refugees in Jordan registered with UNRWA are included, the proportions in Jordan and Lebanon increase to one in four and one in five.

⁹ All statistics reported by the United States of America apart from resettlement arrivals are as of mid-2024. Hence, the data of new individual asylum applications only include the period between January and June 2024, and the number of pending applications is as of 30 June 2024. The full year statistics for each of these are likely to be higher.

¹⁰ Sources: Estimation of IDP demographics (IDMC); Palestine refugees under UNRWA's mandate (UNRWA); Refugees, people in a refugee-like situation, asylum-seekers and other people in need of international protection are based on the available data (UNHCR) and World Population estimates (UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs).

Statistics for forcibly displaced and all other people protected/assisted by UNHCR

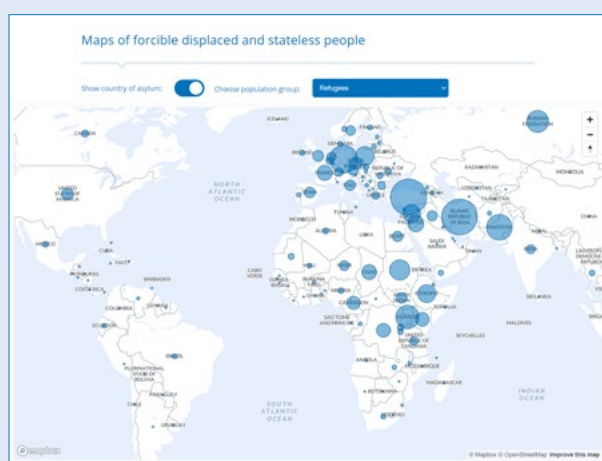
This report's main focus is the analysis of changes and trends in forced displacement from January to December 2024 among people covered by UNHCR, the UN Refugee Agency's mandate.¹¹ The data presented are based on information received as of 21 May 2025 unless otherwise indicated.

At the end of 2024, the number of forcibly displaced people worldwide was estimated at **123.2 million**.¹² This figure encompasses refugees under UNHCR's mandate, Palestine refugees under the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East's (UNRWA) mandate, asylum-seekers, internally displaced people (IDPs) and other people in need of international protection.

UNHCR also estimates the population that it protects and/or assists. This includes those who have been forcibly displaced (refugees, asylum-seekers, internally displaced people and other people in need of international protection); those who have returned home within the previous year; those who are stateless (most of whom are not forcibly displaced); and other groups to whom UNHCR has extended its protection or provided assistance on a humanitarian basis. At the end of 2024, this figure stood at 129.9 million people.

These two categorizations are compared in the graphic below. A detailed breakdown of the population that UNHCR protects and/or assists is provided in the [Annex Tables](#) by category and country.

The figures in this report are based on data reported by governments, non-governmental organizations, UNHCR and other UN agencies. Numbers are rounded to the closest hundred or thousand. As some adjustments may appear later in the year in the Refugee Data Finder,¹³ figures contained in this report should be considered as provisional and subject to change. Unless otherwise specified, the report does not refer to events occurring after 31 December 2024.



[View maps showing totals by population group and country.](#)

Annex 3 - Populations protected and / or assisted by UNHCR by country/territory of origin

Refugees, asylum-seekers, other people in need of international protection, internally displaced persons (IDPs), returnees (refugees and IDPs), stateless persons, and others of concern to UNHCR, by country/territory of origin.

Location	ISO 3 Code	Refugees	People in self-governance situations	Total refugees and people in self-governance situations	Asylum-seekers (pending IDPs)	Other persons in need of international protection	Returned refugees	IDPs of concern to UNHCR	Returned IDPs	Persons under UNHCR's humanitarian mandate	Others of concern to UNHCR	Total number of people protected and / or assisted by UNHCR
High income	400	2,758,555	5,794,726	8,553,281	204,453	0	4,355	5,255,052	250,766	0	60,650	5,555,863
Algeria	ALG	25,847	0	25,847	36,896	0	0	0	0	0	0	62,743
Algeria	ALG	7,688	0	7,688	9,633	0	0	0	0	0	107	16,731
Algeria	ALG	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Algeria	ALG	11,751	0	11,751	16,524	0	13	0	0	0	13,215	41,288
Algeria	ALG	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Algeria	ALG	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Algeria	ALG	179	0	179	2,371	0	0	0	0	0	1	2,551
Algeria	ALG	14,711	136	14,847	15,474	0	0	0	0	0	0	28,317
Algeria	ALG	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Algeria	ALG	26	0	26	35	0	0	0	0	0	0	61
Algeria	ALG	12	0	12	16	0	0	0	0	0	0	32
Algeria	ALG	14,545	21,447	35,992	37,848	0	0	0	0	0	0	73,840
Algeria	ALG	161	0	161	2,119	0	0	0	0	0	0	2,280
Algeria	ALG	302	0	302	398	0	0	0	0	0	0	699
Algeria	ALG	23,811	16	23,827	32,258	0	0	0	0	0	0	56,085
Algeria	ALG	231	0	231	295	0	0	0	0	0	0	427
Algeria	ALG	11,459	16	11,475	15,256	0	0	0	0	0	0	26,731
Algeria	ALG	16	0	16	21	0	0	0	0	0	0	37

[View annex tables by category and country.](#)

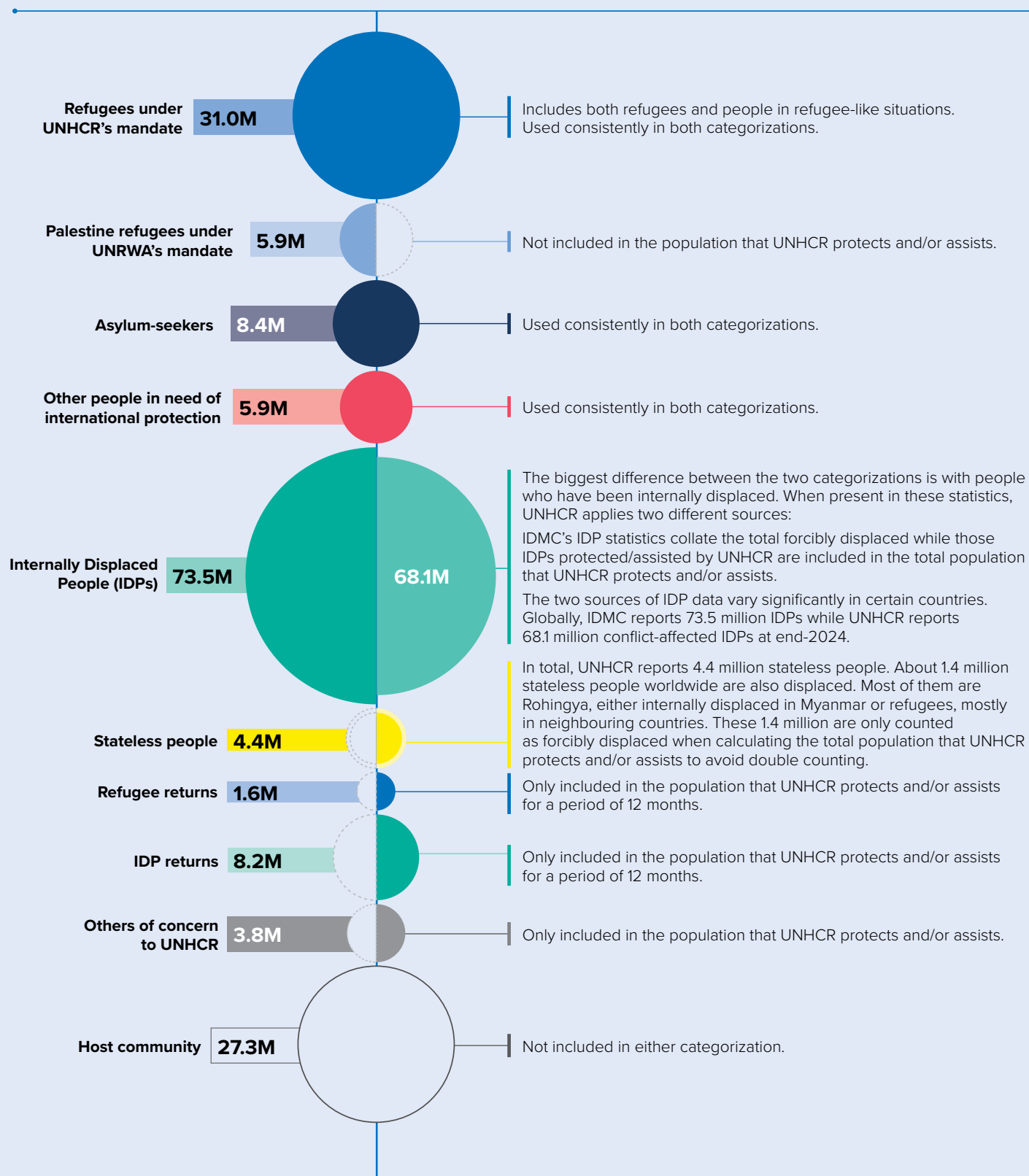
¹¹ See the [Methodology](#) page of UNHCR's Refugee Data Finder for a definition of each population group.

¹² See footnote 1.

¹³ Idem.

Forcibly displaced
people **123.2 million**¹⁴

Population UNHCR protects and/or
assists **129.9 million**



¹⁴ See UNHCR's [Refugee Data Finder](#)

CHAPTER 1

Global forced displacement

“The search for peace must be at the heart of all efforts to find long-lasting solutions for refugees and others forced to flee their homes.”

Filippo Grandi

UN High Commissioner for Refugees

Overview

The number of people forced to flee persecution, conflict, violence, human rights violations and events seriously disturbing public order rose in 2024, reaching a record **123.2 million**. This is an increase of 7 million people or 6 per cent compared to the end of 2023. One in 67 people globally were forcibly displaced at the end of 2024. Slightly more than one-third of all forcibly displaced people globally were Sudanese (14.3 million), Syrian (13.5 million), Afghan (10.3 million) or Ukrainian (8.8 million).

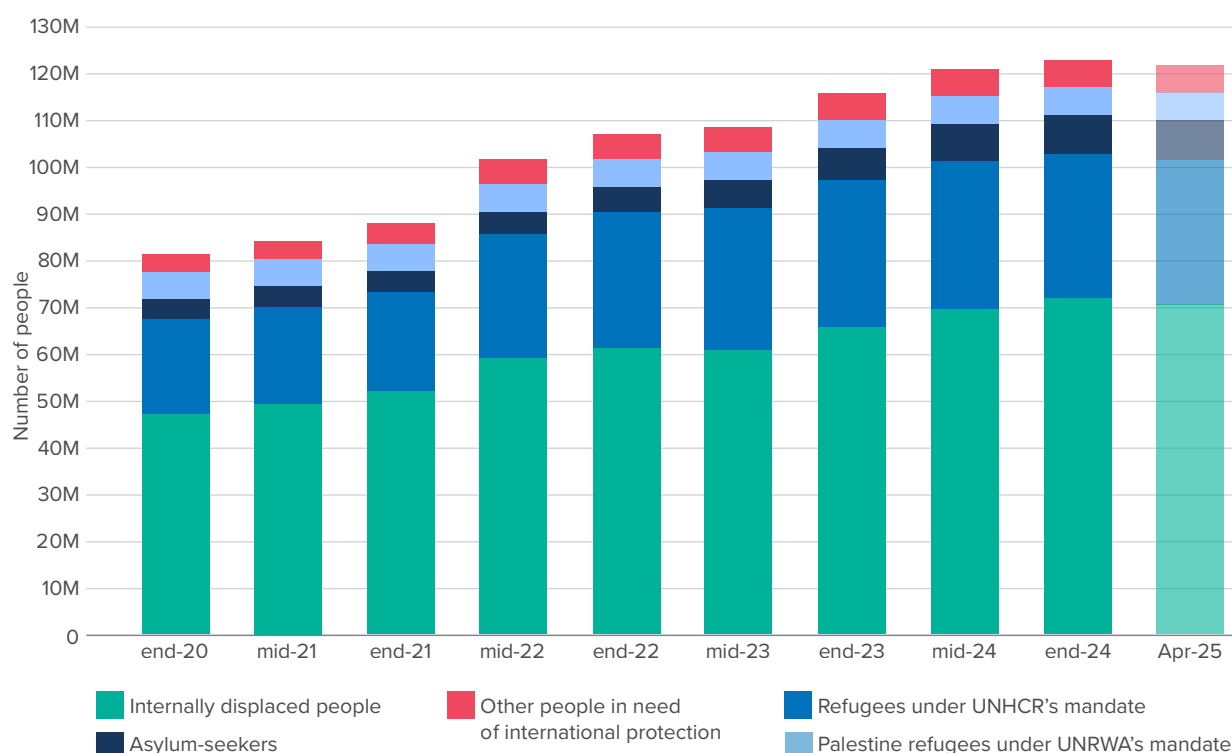
During 2024, millions of people were displaced, including an estimated 20.1 million within their own country¹⁵ and 5.4 million as refugees and asylum-seekers. Over the last decade, the number of forcibly displaced people has almost doubled. However, the rate of increase in the number of people forcibly displaced slowed in the second half of 2024. As shown in figure 1, while there was an estimated increase of

5.2 million forcibly displaced people in the first half of 2024, the increase in the second half of the year dropped to only a third of that, 1.7 million. Operational data and initial estimates for 2025 indicate that global forced displacement may begin to fall during 2025. By the end of April 2025, UNHCR estimates that total forced displacement globally has fallen slightly by 1 per cent to **122.1 million**.¹⁶ During the remainder of 2025, much will depend on the dynamics in key situations. This includes whether peace, or at least a cessation in fighting, is possible to achieve, particularly in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Sudan and Ukraine; whether the situation in South Sudan does not deteriorate further; whether conditions for return improve, in particular in Afghanistan and Syria; and how dire the impact of the current funding cuts will be on the capacity to address forced displacement situations around the world and create conducive conditions for a safe and dignified return.¹⁷

¹⁵ Source: [Global Report on Internal Displacement 2025](#), IDMC. There were 65.8 million new displacements in total during 2024, including 20.1 displacements due to conflict and violence and 45.8 million due to disasters. See also IDMC's video on [measuring internal displacement](#).

¹⁶ This estimates includes [nowcasted figures](#) for refugees under UNHCR's mandate and asylum-seekers as of the end of April 2025. Other people in need of international protection are as reported by UNHCR at end-2024. The estimate of internal displacement is calculated using [IDMC's end-2024 figure](#) (73.5 million people) as a base and then reflecting changes in the statistics for ten of the largest displacement situations for which [operational data](#) is available at the end of April 2025. Note also that IDMC's historical statistics have been retroactively updated and include approximately 1 million fewer people than previously reported. Palestine refugees under UNRWA's mandate are as reported by UNRWA at end-March 2025.

¹⁷ See [UNHCR: Funding crunch increases risks of violence, danger and death for refugees](#), UNHCR.

Figure 1 | **Forcibly Displaced People** | 2020 – April-2025 (mid- and end-year)

The global refugee population decreased in 2024 by 613,600 (-1 per cent) to **42.7 million**, including **31 million** refugees under UNHCR's mandate, **5.9 million** other people in need of international protection and **5.9 million** Palestine refugees under the mandate of UNRWA. The decrease in the number of refugees globally reflects lower estimates of Afghan refugees, fewer Syrian refugees, and updated reporting of Ukrainians.¹⁸ By contrast, the number of Sudanese refugees increased by nearly 600,000 to 2.1 million due to ongoing hostilities across the country.

Internally displaced people (IDPs) continue to constitute the majority of all people that have been forced to flee globally (60 per cent). According to data by the Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre (IDMC), **73.5 million** people remained displaced within their own country at the end of 2024 as a consequence of conflicts, an increase of 6.3 million.

The increase was driven by conflict intensifications in Sudan and Myanmar, further escalations of indiscriminate gang violence in Haiti and revised IDP population estimates in Colombia.

During 2024, at least 4.8 million people sought international protection, 13 per cent fewer than in 2023. This figure includes those that applied for asylum on an individual basis (3.1 million), were recognized through group procedures (835,600) or were granted temporary protection (954,600).¹⁹ The lower overall figure reflects fewer people being granted temporary protection and underreporting of statistics.²⁰ The number of asylum-seekers pending a decision on their individual applications stood at **8.4 million** at end-2024, the highest ever recorded, surging by 22 per cent from 6.9 million the year before.

Refugee and IDP returns rose in 2024, with a year-on-year increase of 60 per cent. Most of them took place

¹⁸ Moreover, as of mid-2023 an estimated 1.2 million Ukrainians were recorded in the Russian Federation under different legal forms of stay (other than refugee or temporary asylum status) and reported by UNHCR as people in a refugee-like situation. However, this figure has not been updated since June 2023, and therefore can no longer be included in UNHCR's official statistics for end of 2024.

¹⁹ Temporary protection granted to Ukrainians does not necessarily mean new displacement since it could include reapplications or reactivations from the refugees who were already granted refugee status following temporary visits to Ukraine as well as duplicated registrations across countries. Furthermore, Ukrainians that have been granted temporary protection may also have lodged individual asylum applications. See [Ukraine Refugee Situation: Population movements, Factsheet #2](#), UNHCR.

²⁰ See footnote 9.

in the second half of 2024. During the year, 1.6 million refugees returned to their home country and 8.2 million IDPs returned to their area of origin. Over 9 in 10 refugees and IDPs returned to or within just eight countries.²¹ Many of those who returned did so in adverse conditions or encountered extremely fragile socio-economic situations on their return. However, by the end of April 2025, returns to and within Syria had increased. Compared to the previous years, more refugees and IDPs also expressed their intention to return in the next twelve months.²²

The number of known stateless people, including people with undetermined nationality, totalled **4.4 million** at end-2024. While this figure is broadly in line with the previous year's estimate, the number of stateless people who acquired citizenship rose by 47 per cent to 47,200. In addition, several countries took important political and legislative steps to resolve and prevent statelessness. New or revised estimates of the number of stateless people were also reported for at least eight countries.

Key displacement situations in 2024

Conflicts in some of the largest displacement situations escalated further during 2024, such as in **Sudan** and **Myanmar**. Gang violence in **Haiti** worsened with little end in sight. The war in **Gaza**, which remains unresolved, had a devastating impact on the civilian population. As a consequence of the regional crisis in the Middle East, displacement erupted in neighbouring **Lebanon** between September and November. The prolonged conflict in the **Democratic Republic of the Congo** has led to one of the largest, yet also most overlooked, internal displacement crises globally, with an escalation in the eastern region in 2024. Fighting on the frontlines in the war in **Ukraine** remains intense and was combined with coordinated aerial attacks. As active fighting has largely ceased in **Afghanistan**, countries hosting large numbers of asylum-seekers are enacting policies to remove millions of Afghans. In the

year's most unforeseen development, after the Assad government in **Syria** fell in December, there were renewed hopes among forcibly displaced Syrians that they would be able to return.

Forced displacement from and within the **Central Sahel**²³ grew to 3.5 million people due to intensifying conflicts in the region, an increase by 89 per cent from end-2020. For more information about [Myanmar](#), [Syria](#) and the [countries in the Sahel](#), see the *Spotlights* on these situations below.

The war in **Sudan** triggered the world's largest displacement crisis with a total of 14.3 million Sudanese remaining displaced at the end of 2024, almost all within the country or in neighbouring countries. This was 3.5 million more people than 12 months prior and the population remaining displaced at the end of 2024 represents nearly one in three of the national population. Amid further escalations of conflict across large parts of the country during the year, more people in Sudan became internally displaced. The number of IDPs grew by 2.5 million (+28 per cent), with the majority of them originating from the heavily affected regions of Khartoum, Southern and Northern Darfur and Aj Jazirah.²⁴ The overall rate of internal displacement in Sudan slowed towards the end of 2024. In early 2025, data indicated that the number of IDPs had decreased, as they began to return.²⁵ However, the situation remains critical across the majority of Darfur. An attack on the Zamzam IDP Camp in North Darfur in April 2025, led to the displacement of more than 406,000 people or 81 per cent of the total population hosted in the camp.²⁶

The number of Sudanese refugees and asylum-seekers also grew to reach 2.8 million at the end of 2024, up by more than a million. Most sought safety in Chad (1.1 million at end-year), Egypt (602,700)²⁷ and South Sudan (487,700). While generously extending protection to Sudanese refugees, South Sudan is also grappling with its own challenges. For example, reabsorbing the nearly three-quarters of a million South Sudanese refugees who have returned since the beginning of the conflict in April 2023, 404,700 of whom arrived in 2024 alone.

²¹ These were Afghanistan, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Ethiopia, Lebanon, Myanmar, South Sudan, Syria and Ukraine.

²² See the section on the [spotlight on the Syria situation](#) below.

²³ The Central Sahel comprises three countries: Burkina Faso, Mali and Niger.

²⁴ See [Sudan Mobility Overview \(4\)](#), International Organization for Migration (IOM).

²⁵ See [Two Years of Conflict in Sudan: Visualizing the World's Largest Displacement Crisis](#), IOM.

²⁶ See [DTM Sudan Focused Flash Alert: Al Fasher \(Zamzam IDP Camp\), North Darfur \(Update 008\)](#), IOM.

²⁷ As of December 2024, 930,000 Sudanese were registered by UNHCR in Egypt as asylum-seekers. The Government of Egypt reported 1.5 million Sudanese people having arrived in the country since the onset of the crisis. See also the [Sudan Situation](#) on the Operational Data Portal.

Sudanese refugee populations also rose sharply in Libya (+198,400)²⁸ and Uganda (+50,400). Operational data as of the end of May 2025 indicates that people have continued to flee, but at a lower overall rate than during 2024, although nearly 65,000 arrivals have been reported in Chad during May 2025.²⁹

Rampant gang violence spread from the capital of Port-au-Prince to other parts of **Haiti** in 2024. As a consequence, the number of people displaced within the country tripled during the year, from 313,900 to over 1 million. The humanitarian situation in Haiti deteriorated rapidly as the year progressed, with the impact most acute on the protection situation of women and children.³⁰ Almost half of Haiti's 11.9 million civilians require humanitarian assistance and acute food insecurity affects more than 5 million people. The number of Haitian refugees and asylum-seekers grew by 72,700 during the year to reach 423,300. Almost all of them were hosted by other countries in the Americas.

Prolonged conflict between the Congolese army and multiple non-state armed groups in the eastern **Democratic Republic of the Congo** has been characterised by continuous grave violations and human rights abuses against the civilian population, generating one of the world's largest internal displacement crises. During 2024, several million people were repeatedly forced to flee violence perpetrated by all parties to the conflict, most notably in the regions of North Kivu, South Kivu and Ituri. At end-2024, 7.4 million Congolese were forcibly displaced, with more than 8 in 10 of them remaining within their country. Many of those forced to flee have been displaced several times. In 2025, the conflict has escalated further, triggering repeated internal displacement. Close to 140,000 people had also fled the country by early May 2025, primarily to neighbouring Burundi and Uganda.³¹

The ongoing conflict in the Gaza Strip in the **State of Palestine** has uprooted 90 per cent of the entire

civilian population. Since October 2023, the majority of civilians in Gaza have been displaced multiple times. At the end of 2024, 2 million people remained internally displaced. A temporary ceasefire in January 2025 brought some desperately needed relief to a civilian population faced with widespread hunger, devastated infrastructure and very limited humanitarian support, but the conflict resumed anew in March 2025.³²

In September 2024, the war between Hezbollah and Israel escalated across **Lebanon**, particularly in the south, Bekaa and southern suburbs of Beirut. At the height of the crisis, at least 1.3 million people had been affected by the violence, with nearly a million people displaced within the country (984,500). In late November, an interim ceasefire was agreed and despite ongoing violations, most displaced people were able to return to their areas of residence by the end of the year. By the end of April 2025, despite sporadic conflict and widespread destruction, particularly in the South of Lebanon, the number of people remaining displaced had decreased to 90,000.³³ The conflict in Lebanon also affected the predominately Syrian refugee population within the country, who had fled to the country in prior years to seek safety and protection. Nearly 100,000 of them were forced to flee within Lebanon,³⁴ and at least 254,700 Syrians had no option but to return to Syria in adverse circumstances between September and October 2024 alone.³⁵

In 2024, the international armed conflict between **Ukraine** and the Russian Federation continued to drive large-scale displacement. During 2024, 740,000 Ukrainians were newly displaced within the country, with 3.7 million remaining internally displaced at end-year. In the eastern and southern parts of the country, the intensity of the fighting increased. An estimated 12.7 million people are in need of humanitarian assistance in 2025, as coordinated aerial attacks on civilian infrastructure and energy systems continue to

²⁸ The increase in Libya is due to the arrival in 2024 of a total of 228,800 Sudanese. Almost 30,800 of them were registered as asylum-seekers by UNHCR and the remaining 198,000 are estimated based on the issuance of health cards in areas outside of Tripoli and are reported as people in a refugee-like situation.

²⁹ See [Sudan situation](#), UNHCR.

³⁰ See [Haiti: Humanitarian Needs and Response Plan Executive Summary \(February 2025\)](#), UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UNOCHA).

³¹ See [CORE - Eastern DRC Situation Dashboard - 07 May 2025](#), UNHCR.

³² See [Gaza: 'Dramatic escalation' as bombardments intensify and displacement surges](#), UN News.

³³ See [Lebanon Mobility Snapshot, Round 86](#), IOM.

³⁴ See [Protection Monitoring Findings in Lebanon, Q4 2024](#), UNHCR.

³⁵ Operational estimates are higher with 557,000 people estimated to have fled Lebanon to Syria, 63 per cent of whom were Syrian. See [Middle East Situation, 25 Nov 2024](#), UNHCR.

have devastating effects on the civilian population.³⁶ Nearly 856,800 Ukrainians were granted international protection in 2024, most receiving temporary protection in countries in the European Union.³⁷ In Europe, more than 5 million Ukrainian refugees were reported at end-2024.³⁸

There were 10 per cent fewer **Afghan** refugees reported at the end of the year (5.8 million). The Islamic Republic of Iran (3.5 million, -7 per cent) and Pakistan (1.6 million, -22 per cent) remained the largest host countries. The decreases in Pakistan reflect downwards adjustments to the estimated number of people remaining in a refugee-like situation.³⁹ The lower figures in both countries also reflect returns to Afghanistan, including through deportation.⁴⁰ Both countries enacted policies to remove undocumented foreigners.⁴¹ While active fighting has largely ceased in Afghanistan following the Taliban takeover in 2021, poverty and hunger are widespread within the country, infrastructure and services remain inadequate, and civil liberties, especially for women and girls, have been progressively and severely restricted. The scale of returns has exacerbated Afghanistan's ongoing humanitarian crisis, further straining scarce resources and hindering a dignified and sustainable reintegration of the returning refugees.

Solutions for forced displacement rose in 2024

Solutions for refugees and internally displaced people, including refugee and IDP returns, refugee

resettlement and the local integration of refugees⁴² all increased during 2024 (see figure 2). However, underlying these positive trends with each solution are concerns about the inherent protection risks to forcibly displaced people and the longer-term sustainability of these solutions.

Refugee returns reported in 2024 were the highest for more than two decades. For most refugees, returning home remains the preferred solution to their displacement situation. However it is essential that returns remain voluntary and take place in safety and dignity. As laid out in the fourth objective of the Global Compact on Refugees, for returns to be sustainable, especially on a large-scale, conditions in the countries of origin need to have improved sufficiently to support their reintegration. Lasting peace, or at least a cessation of fighting, is paramount.⁴³ In the past year, 92 per cent of the 1.6 million returns were to only four countries: Afghanistan, Syria, South Sudan and Ukraine. Many Afghans, Syrians and South Sudanese have returned in adverse conditions and arrived in extremely fragile situations. In Ukraine, despite the war entering its fourth year, many vulnerable refugees have chosen to return partly due to challenges in accessing rights and services in host countries.⁴⁴ In Afghanistan, returnees have arrived in a country gripped with pervasive poverty, soaring unemployment, severely inadequate public services and widespread food insecurity.⁴⁵ For women and girls, returns are especially difficult, as they return to an environment where their basic rights, including the right to education, to freedom of movement and the right of expression, are being systematically eroded.

³⁶ See [Ukraine Situation: Three Years On](#), UNHCR.

³⁷ See footnote 19.

³⁸ See footnote 18. In addition, since February 2022, a number of Ukrainians have reached countries beyond Europe, where they are staying under various legal statuses. See UNHCR's Ukraine Situation Operational Data Portal for up-to date statistics of refugees from Ukraine recorded in Europe and beyond.

³⁹ During 2024, 143,900 Afghans with family ties to registered refugees were reported as refugees and an additional 108,300 people in a refugee-like situation were registered as asylum-seekers. The number of Afghans estimated to remain in Pakistan at end-2024 was revised downwards by 190,200.

⁴⁰ Total returns refer to all types of returns, including deportations, assisted voluntary repatriation and other returns of Afghans of all statuses in Pakistan, including undocumented Afghans. See the [Afghanistan situation overview](#), UNHCR.

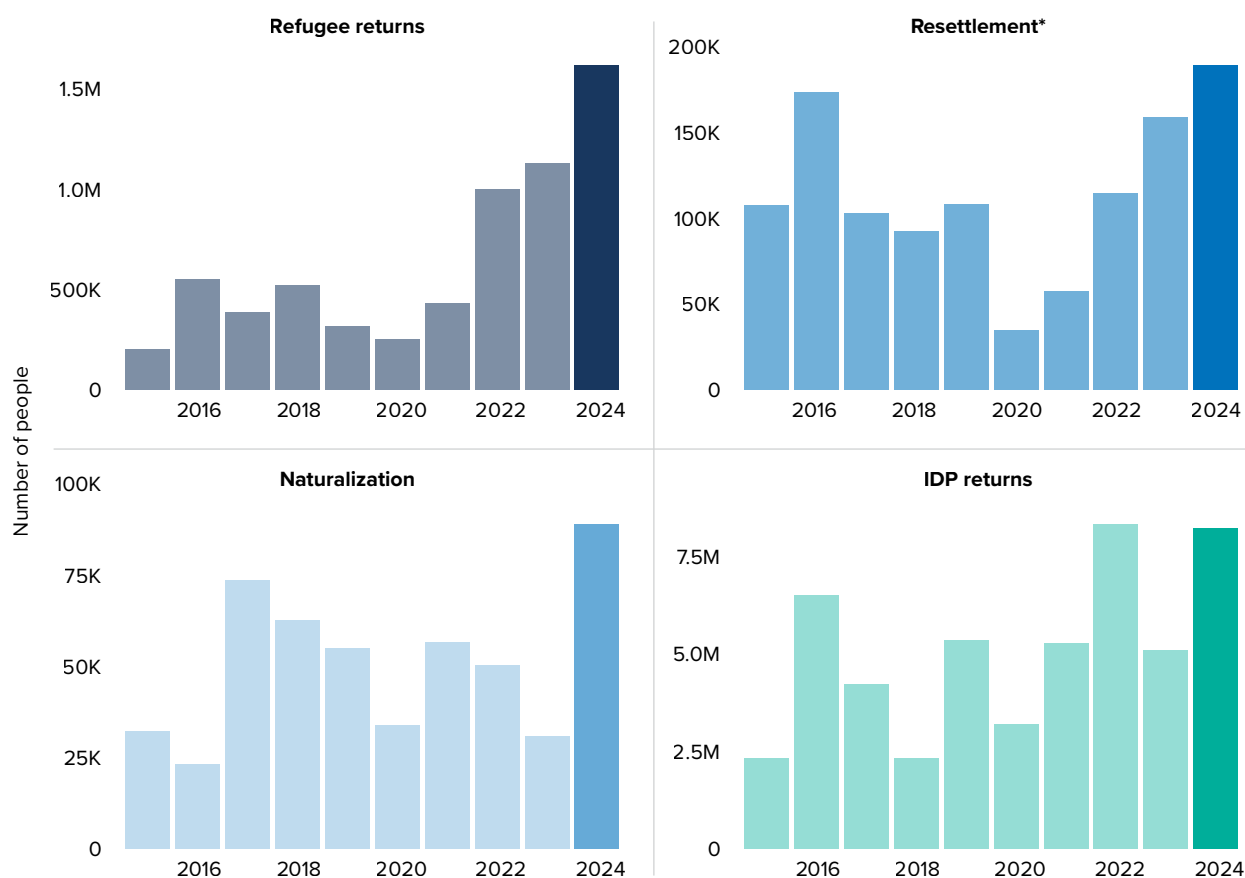
⁴¹ In October 2023, the Government of Pakistan announced a new 'Illegal Foreigners' Repatriation Plan', unveiling a scheme to expel all undocumented foreigners. On 23 February 2025, the Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran announced that headcount slips will not be extended beyond 20 March 2025. After this date, the headcount slip holders are treated as individuals holding the same documentation status as undocumented foreigners and with no access to healthcare, medical services, real estate transactions and other public services, marking a significant shift from previous policies toward Afghans.

⁴² A durable solution for refugees that involves their permanent settlement in a host country. Local integration is a complex and gradual process, comprising three distinct but interrelated dimensions: legal, economic, and socio-cultural. The process is often concluded with the naturalization of the refugee. See the [master glossary of terms](#), UNHCR.

⁴³ Key objective 4: Support conditions in countries of origin for return in safety and dignity. See [The Global Compact on Refugees](#), UNHCR.

⁴⁴ See [The situation of vulnerable refugees from Ukraine](#), UNHCR.

⁴⁵ See [Returns to Afghanistan](#), UNHCR.

Figure 2 | **Refugee returns, refugee resettlement and naturalization and IDP returns** | 2015 - 2024

* Resettlement figures are according to government statistics.

The past year saw the highest number of refugees resettled for more than 40 years, as more than 188,800 refugees were able to start the process of rebuilding their lives in safety in a third country.⁴⁶ Expanding access to third country solutions strengthens refugees' protection as well as providing opportunities for them to rebuild their lives.⁴⁷ It also contributes towards more equitable responsibility-sharing with major refugee-hosting countries, helping to ease the pressure on them.⁴⁸ In addition, allowing refugees to work or study in another country can be mutually beneficial: refugees are protected and empowered, while States gain access to their untapped potential. Complementary pathways also

enable refugees to safely move to another country by applying for work, study or to reunite with family. While data is not yet available for 2024, between 2019 and 2023, at least 941,000 refugees were able to gain legal access to a third country through complementary pathways.⁴⁹ At times temporary opportunities to work or study provided through complementary pathways may lead to refugees attaining a more sustainable permanent status, allowing refugees to support themselves to reach a durable solution. In 2025, achieving similar levels of resettlement will be challenging as commitments by governments towards resettlement reduce.⁵⁰ Meanwhile UNHCR projects 2.9 million refugees will

⁴⁶ Reporting of refugee resettlement commenced in 1959. See the [data publication timeline and data availability](#) on the UNHCR Refugee Data Finder methodology page. Reported resettlement arrivals were higher in 1980 and 1981.

⁴⁷ Key objective 3: Expand access to third-country solutions. See [The Global Compact on Refugees](#), UNHCR.

⁴⁸ Key objective 2: Ease the pressure on host countries. See [The Global Compact on Refugees](#), UNHCR.

⁴⁹ See [OECD-UNHCR Safe Pathways for Refugees V](#), OECD and UNHCR. The project began in 2018 and compiles data from 38 Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) countries and Brazil. It focuses on the number of first-time entry permits issued to eight nationalities (Afghans, Eritreans, Iranians, Iraqis, Sudanese, Syrians, Somalis, and Venezuelans) for family, education, work and sponsorship purposes.

⁵⁰ Globally, despite [2.9 million refugees projected to be in need of resettlement in 2025](#) – including over half a million Afghan refugees – the available resettlement quota has dropped sharply, from 195,069 in 2024 to just 31,281 in 2025. See [UNHCR welcomes arrival of first Afghan refugee families under Brazil's pioneering Community Sponsorship Programme](#), UNHCR.

need resettlement in 2025, more than double the amount in 2021.⁵¹

Almost 88,900 refugees obtained their host country's citizenship or were granted permanent residence in 2024. Only 26 countries globally reported on naturalization, therefore this figure is unlikely to reflect all refugees that have been able to do so. Naturalization laws and policies have also become more restrictive in several countries.⁵² This has removed possibilities for refugees to contribute to the economies and social fabric of asylum countries that they have considered as their home for many years.

More than 8.2 million IDPs returned in 2024, the second highest total ever recorded. But in the absence of peace and stability in their country, many IDPs remain trapped in cycles of returns followed by new displacement and conflicts are becoming increasingly protracted. Many of these returns therefore may not be sustainable. For example, in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, millions of IDPs returned during 2024, but at the same time, many millions were newly displaced by the enduring conflict in the east of the country, which has deteriorated further in 2025. Positively, in Ethiopia and Lebanon returns of IDPs have continued in early 2025 and in Syria, reported returns by the beginning of May 2025 already exceed those recorded during the whole of 2024.

A humanitarian system at breaking point

As the number of people forcibly displaced around the world has grown over the last 13 years, resources to address the needs of those forced to flee have not kept up. UNHCR and the broader humanitarian community are facing detrimental funding cuts, that will severely impact millions of people globally.⁵³ Without sufficient funding,

there will not be enough food assistance and basic shelter support for displaced people, leaving them with little option than to resort to dangerous onward movements.⁵⁴ Protection services, including specialised interventions for children, or safe spaces for refugee women and girls at risk of violence are likely to be terminated.⁵⁵ Communities that have generously hosted forcibly displaced people for years will be left without the support they need, reducing access to essential services.⁵⁶ And, perhaps most critically, hopes for returns will either not materialize or the return will not be dignified and will not be accompanied by an increase in adequate services, housing, and livelihood opportunities in countries of origin. As a result, people that do return from within the country or from abroad may have no choice but to leave again.⁵⁷

Reliable and timely data underpins humanitarian actions. In the current context, the ability to maintain critical datasets is at risk, with potentially severe negative impacts on the efficacy of responses to crises worldwide.⁵⁸ Growing weaknesses in the production of these datasets will reduce the accessibility, accuracy, comparability, reliability and timeliness of key statistics that are derived from them. UNHCR assesses the quality of such statistics with its recently published Statistical Quality Assurance Framework for Official Statistics.⁵⁹

For the number of forcibly displaced people to reduce globally, meaningful progress is required in addressing the root causes of forced displacement – conflict, disregard for the basic tenets of International Humanitarian Law, other forms of violence and persecution. In the meantime, resources to meet urgent humanitarian needs, to support host countries, to protect people from the risks of dangerous onward movements and to help refugees and other forcibly displaced people find durable solutions to their displacement are more essential than ever. The consequences of inaction will be borne by those who can least afford it.

⁵¹ See [Projected global resettlement needs 2025](#), UNHCR.

⁵² Some countries have recently introduced restrictions include more stringent language tests for foreigners seeking to stay in the country; rejecting applications for citizenship depending on how refugees have arrived in the country as well as extending the minimum residency period required for citizenship applications by several years.

⁵³ See [US funding freeze global survey](#), Humanitarian Action.

⁵⁴ See [UNHCR: Funding crunch increases risks of violence, danger and death for refugees](#), UNHCR.

⁵⁵ See [Amid funding crunch, UNHCR issues urgent call to protect women and girls from surging violence](#), UNHCR.

⁵⁶ See [Costa Rica's solidarity with refugees threatened by major funding cuts, warns UNHCR](#), UNHCR.

⁵⁷ See [UNHCR: Needs intensify as 400,000 Syrians return](#), UNHCR.

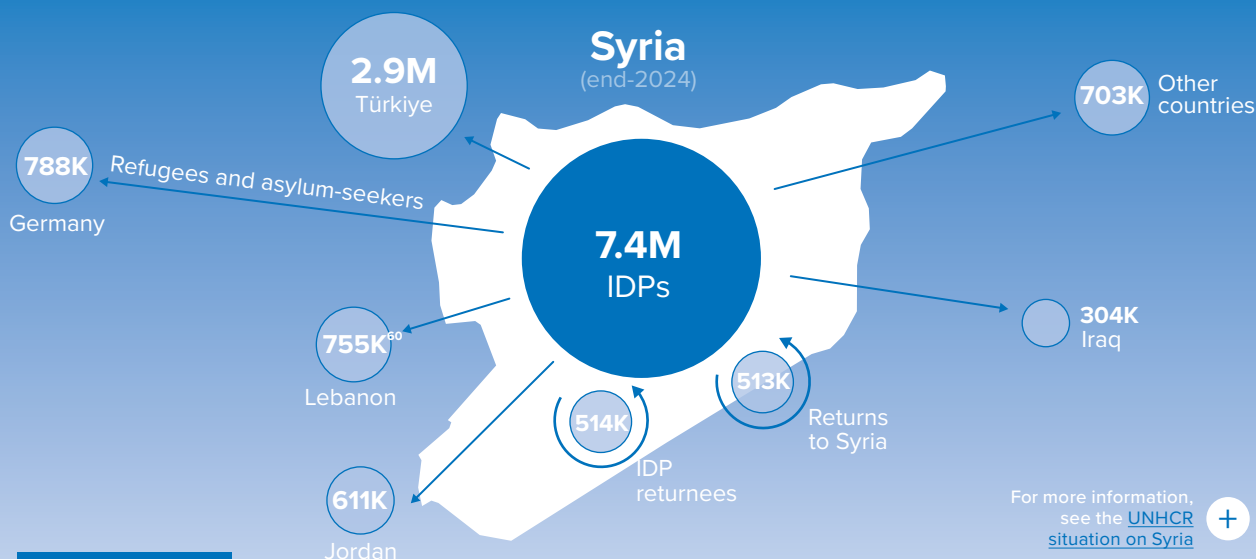
⁵⁸ See the [State of Open Humanitarian Data 2025](#), UNOCHA, Data availability risks, page 10.

⁵⁹ See [Statistical Quality Assurance Framework for Official Statistics](#), UNHCR.

SYRIA. More than 100,000 people are estimated to have crossed into Syria, following the intensification of Israeli airstrikes in Lebanon since 23 September 2024, including Syrians and Lebanese. Many arrive at the Jdaidet Yabous border point by bus, car, and on foot from Lebanon.

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SPOTLIGHT 1

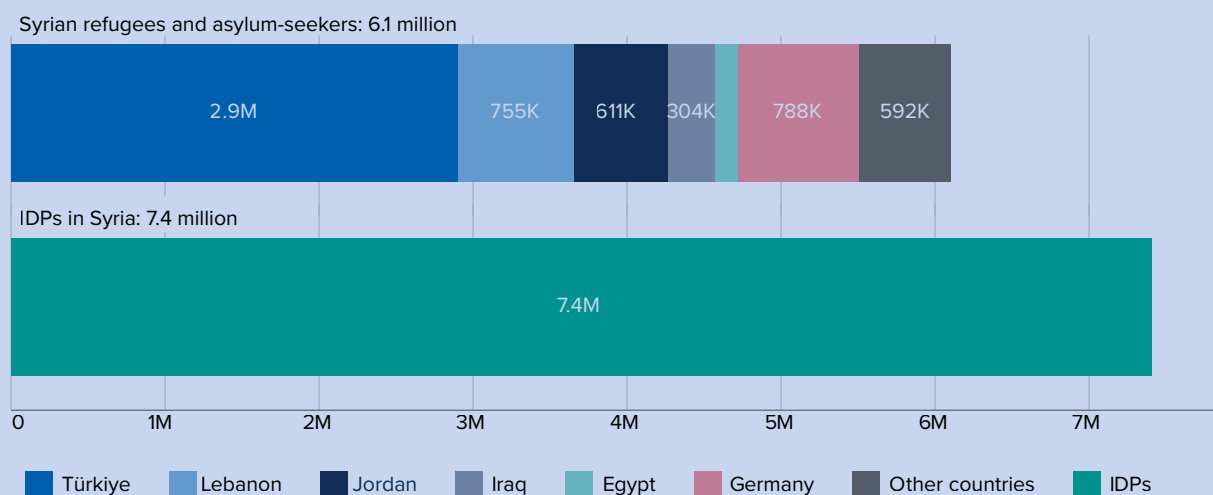
Syria at a crossroads

Background

Since it began in 2011, the crisis in Syria has produced one of the largest forced displacement situations in the world. Approximately one-quarter of the Syrian population has been displaced by the war. As of end-2024, the number of Syrian refugees and

asylum-seekers stood at 6.1 million, almost 80 per cent of whom were hosted in neighbouring countries.⁶⁰ Additionally, 7.4 million people remained displaced within Syria as a result of years of protracted conflict.

Figure 3 | **Number of IDPs in Syria and refugees and asylum-seekers from Syria | end-2024⁶¹**



On 27 November 2024, a coordinated offensive was launched by Syrian opposition forces, which quickly spread to several major cities, including Aleppo, Homs and parts of Damascus. The Assad government fell on 8 December. These unprecedented developments have already

considerably impacted the lives of millions of Syrians, both within and outside the country. The fall of the former government has generated a renewed hope to return for many displaced Syrians, yet the situation remains unstable, with ongoing risks of new displacement.

⁶⁰ See footnote 8.

⁶¹ Ibid.

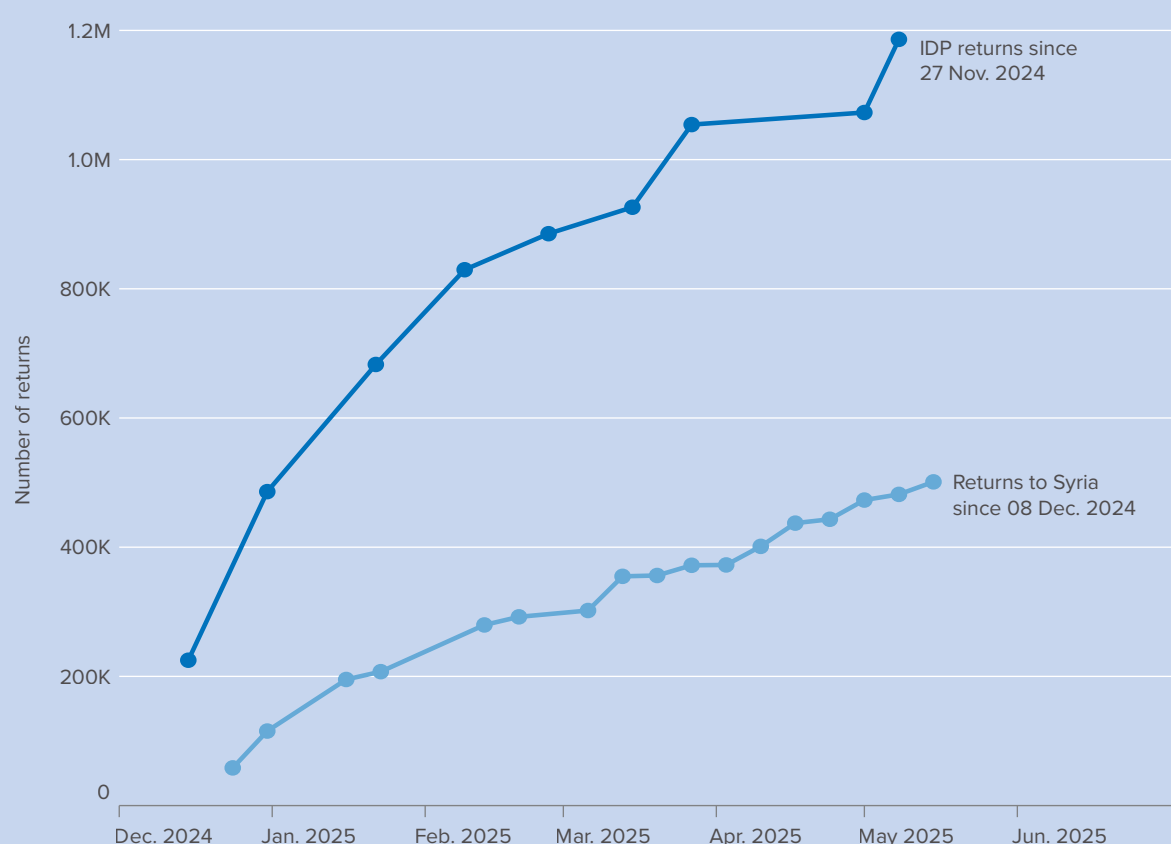
Momentum for returns

The events of 8 December significantly shifted the dynamics surrounding refugee returns to Syria, with an upsurge in the number of refugees in neighbouring countries expressing a positive intention to return home. The first months of 2025 saw rising numbers of Syrians returning and, despite a fragile security and socio-economic situation in parts of the country, returns have generally continued. As of mid-May 2025, more than 500,000

Syrians are estimated to have crossed back into Syria since the fall of the Assad government, overwhelmingly from neighbouring countries.⁶²

This positive trend is equally observed in the return of internally displaced people within Syria. An estimated 1.2 million IDPs have returned to their areas of origin since the end of November 2024.⁶³

Figure 4 | **Number of returns to Syria and IDP returns** | Dec. 2024 – May 2025



Whether these returns are sustainable will depend on many factors, including the overall development of the security situation within Syria, as well as the availability of housing, public services, infrastructure

and the revitalisation of the economy. However, it is estimated that up to 1.5 million Syrians from abroad and 2 million internally displaced people may return by the end of 2025 (see table 1).⁶⁴

⁶² These return estimates are derived by UNHCR from the triangulation of sources both inside and outside Syria, including UNHCR offices and Government sources in Türkiye, Lebanon, Jordan, Iraq and Egypt. See: [Syria governorates of return overview as of 15 May 2025](#), UNHCR.

⁶³ See: [Syria governorates IDPs and IDP returnee's overview 8 May 2025](#), UNHCR.

⁶⁴ See [UNHCR Operational Framework: Voluntary Return of Syrian Refugees and IDPs \(2025\)](#), UNHCR.

Table 1 | **Forecasts for returns to Syria and IDP returns | 2025**

Estimated returns to Syria in 2025					Estimated IDP returns in 2025
Türkiye	Lebanon	Jordan	Egypt	Total	
700,000	400,000	200,000	25,000	1.5 million⁶⁵	2 million

Refugees' return intentions

The number of Syrian refugees expressing a desire to return home has markedly increased following the fall of the Assad government. The most recent Regional Survey on Syrian Refugees' Perceptions and Intentions on Return to Syria (RPIS),⁶⁶ collected data on the return intentions of 3,368 Syrian refugees in Egypt, Iraq, Jordan and Lebanon in January 2025. This survey is the tenth in a series that UNHCR has been carrying out since 2017. Of the respondent refugees, 80 per cent indicated that they hoped to return to Syria one day, higher than all the prior surveys and far higher than the 57 per cent reported in the previous survey in April 2024. While the results differed across the countries surveyed, over a quarter (27 per cent) of refugees reported they intended to return within the next year. This was a marked increase from less than 2 per cent in the previous RPIS.

These results reflect the significant political changes in Syria that have created a window of hope among refugees that returning home may now be a possibility. Many of those who expressed an intention to return noted that the fall of the Assad government had increased the likelihood of them returning to Syria. For refugees who highlighted an intention to return in the next 12 months, the main drivers were the improvement of the security situation inside Syria and the desire to reunite with family. Many refugees intending to return also highlighted feeling homesick and wanting to go back to their own country and participate in its reconstruction. Other key drivers for return included push factors in host countries, such as difficulties in accessing work permits or livelihood opportunities, fear of arrest and limited freedom of movement. Almost all refugees (88 per cent) who stated that

they plan to return in the next 12 months, plan to go back to their place of origin. Alternative locations are most commonly considered by refugees where they have family ties or believe that the alternative location is likely to have more housing options or more job opportunities.

Despite increasing numbers of Syrians expressing an intention to return in the next 12 months, the surveys in Egypt, Iraq, Jordan and Lebanon also show that 55 per cent of refugees are not yet intending to return. Syrian refugees and asylum-seekers hosted in countries that do not directly neighbour Syria are also anticipated to be less likely to intend to return.⁶⁷ In the RPIS, refugees expressed concerns over availability of housing and the status of their property as barriers to their return. Many returning families find their homes damaged or destroyed and face significant obstacles in rebuilding their lives. Safety and security concerns, economic challenges in Syria and the availability of basic services in areas of return (particularly electricity, water, infrastructure, education and healthcare) are among the other concerns cited by refugees. Some voiced concerns about the new authorities and uncertainties regarding how the situation might unfold, indicating a reluctance to return at this time, preferring to wait for Syria to stabilize further.

The considerations made by Syrian refugees regarding their prospects for return closely mirror those identified in other research on return intentions. Drawing on empirical studies of refugee returnees in Burundi and Lebanon, IDP returns in Colombia and Iraq, and Syrians who returned in previous years, research identifies a set of recurring themes. Decisions about when, how and whether to return are made at both individual and household levels and are shaped by overlapping

⁶⁵ Includes also estimates of spontaneous returns from other countries.

⁶⁶ See [Regional Survey on Syrian Refugees' Perceptions and Intentions on Return to Syria](#), UNHCR.

⁶⁷ See [Intentions and perspectives of Syrian refugees and asylum-seekers in Europe](#), UNHCR.

and context-dependent factors.⁶⁸ Safety and security emerge as fundamental preconditions, without which voluntary return is unlikely to occur, yet economic opportunities in both countries of origin and the current host country are also pivotal. In addition, documented property rights and titles in the home country are strongly associated with a higher likelihood of return. The research also highlights the importance of social and emotional ties to both home and refugees' current host communities, which can exert competing influences on return intentions. The next round of UNHCR's return intention surveys will be conducted jointly with the World Bank. They will include broader socio-economic assessments conducted in host countries and within Syria to better identify the main drivers and obstacles for return.

International support is paramount to create an environment for sustainable return

Refugees have the fundamental right to return to their country of origin at a time of their choosing. At the same time, UNHCR continues to urge States not to forcibly return Syrians due to persistent challenges within the country.⁶⁹ It is critical that refugees continue to have access to asylum and protection in host countries. While UNHCR is not promoting returns to Syria, it is now facilitating voluntary, safe and dignified returns in response to increasing requests from refugees themselves. This shift is guided by UNHCR's Operational Framework for the voluntary return of Syrian refugees and IDPs, which emphasizes that all returns must be gradual and in phases. Returns must also be based on the informed and free choice of individuals. UNHCR has begun limited return preparedness activities in neighbouring countries, including strengthened protection counselling, assessments to confirm the voluntary nature of returns, transportation and cash grants. UNHCR is also scaling up communication with refugee communities, including through helplines, intention surveys and websites,⁷⁰ to both

inform refugees of their rights and options and to better understand their aspirations and concerns. To allow refugees to make informed decisions on their returns, UNHCR is strengthening its protection monitoring system inside Syria.

At this pivotal time, it is vital to support Syria's recovery to ensure the sustainability of returns. Furthermore, to ensure that refugee returns are voluntary and take place in dignity and safety, it is essential that UNHCR, governments and partner organisations continue supporting host countries, such as Türkiye, Jordan, Lebanon, Iraq and Egypt, to preserve the protection space, legal stay and access to essential services for refugees hosted in these countries.⁷¹ There is also a pressing need for increased investment inside Syria to support recovery, reconstruction of vital infrastructures and scaling up of public services such as schools and hospitals to create more favourable conditions for those refugees and IDPs who choose to return. During the Ninth Brussels conference held in March 2025, 5.8 billion EUR were pledged and this commitment now needs to be realised. The recent announcements on lifting EU and US sanctions are positive steps towards helping Syria progress towards recovery. However, with more refugee returns anticipated over the coming year, much more funding will be needed for Syria and its neighbouring countries, who will continue to host millions of refugees.

⁶⁸ See: Alrababah, Ala and Marine Casalis, (2024). "[Understanding Refugee Return: Key Findings, Gaps, and Future Research](#)"; World Bank – UNHCR Joint Data Center. Quarterly Digest on Forced Displacement, Tenth Issue. Washington, D.C.: World Bank Group.

⁶⁹ Syria continues to be affected by attacks and violence in parts of the country; large-scale internal displacement; contamination of many parts of the country with explosive remnants of war; a devastated economy and a large-scale humanitarian crisis, with over 16 million already in need of humanitarian assistance before the recent developments. In addition, and as noted above, Syria has also sustained massive destruction and damage to homes, critical infrastructure and agricultural lands. Property rights have been greatly affected, with widespread housing, land, and property violations recorded over the past decade, leading to complex ownership disputes that will take time to resolve. See [Position on Returns to the Syrian Arab Republic](#), December 2024, UNHCR.

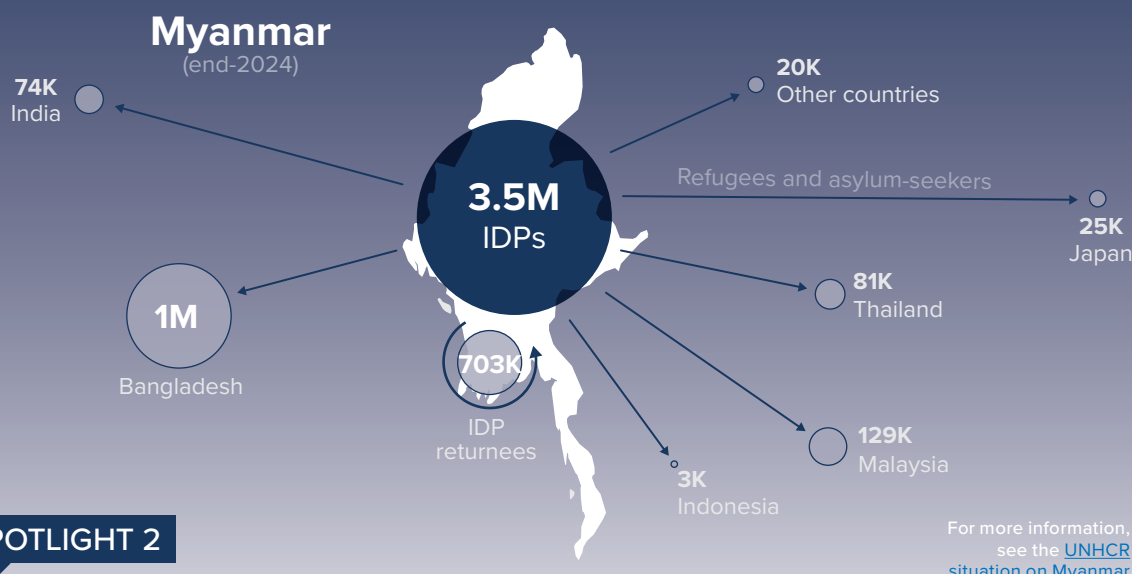
⁷⁰ See [Syria is home](#), UNHCR.

⁷¹ See [2025 Regional Strategic Overview](#), 3RP.

INDONESIA. *Sadeqa and her son are among 152 Rohingya refugees rescued in South Aceh, in October 2024, after enduring weeks at sea, making a perilous journey from Bangladesh. She sought refuge in the Cox's Bazar refugee camp after her husband was killed in a bombing in Myanmar but fled again after a few weeks due to harsh conditions and over-crowding in the camp. She boarded a boat with her son and others, not knowing where it would take them. Tragically, three people on board the boat lost their lives. "We are searching for a place where we can live in peace," says Sadeqa.*

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SPOTLIGHT 2

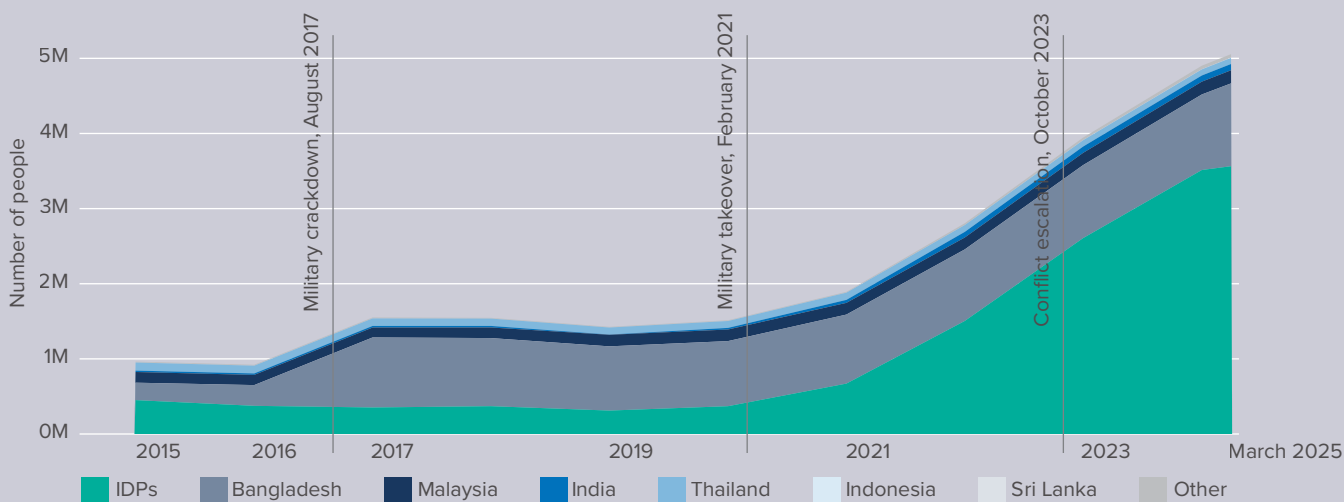
Myanmar

Background

The humanitarian crisis in Myanmar is one of the most complex and protracted in the world, marked by recurring waves of displacement and few prospects for durable solutions. In 2017, 655,500 Rohingya fled military crackdowns in Rakhine State and sought refuge in Bangladesh.⁷² Since then,

escalating conflict and human rights violations have displaced millions more people within Myanmar and to neighbouring countries. As of March 2025, there are 3.6 million people displaced within Myanmar and 1.5 million refugees and asylum-seekers from Myanmar.

Figure 5 | Number of IDPs in Myanmar and refugees and asylum-seekers from Myanmar | 2015 – March 2025



Humanitarian needs have grown since the military takeover in February 2021. They have escalated further after an intensification of the conflict and a surge in violence in late 2023, including in Rakhine

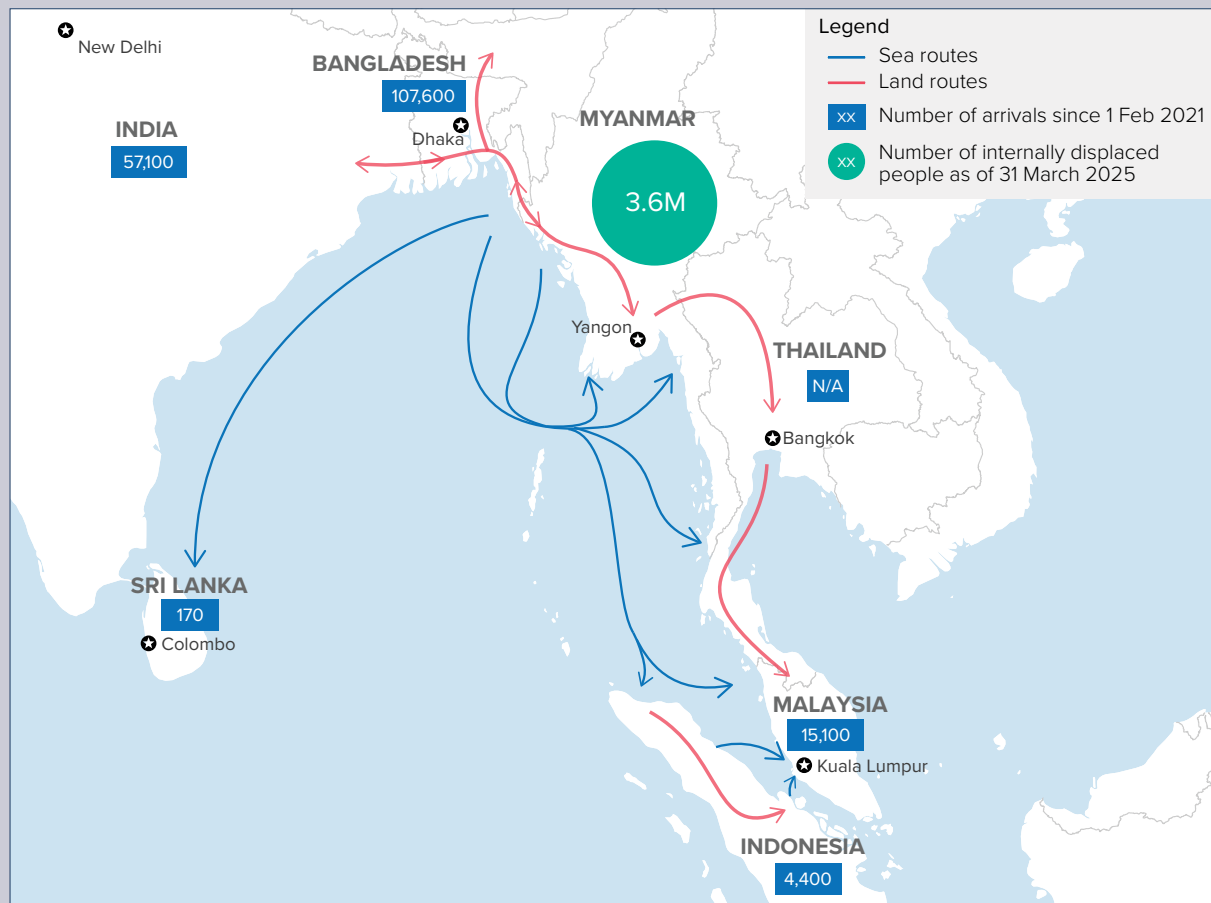
State. The deteriorating situation has placed additional strains on local communities and already overstretched services and facilities. Civilians continue to face grave violations and risks amid the

⁷² See [Global Trends 2017](#), UNHCR.

near collapse of essential services such as education and healthcare, worsening food insecurity and heightening protection concerns, particularly for women and girls. The impact of the violence and the absence of a political solution to the crisis in Myanmar continues to be felt across the region and

has triggered new and onward movements of refugees. As a consequence, UNHCR and its partners are implementing a route-based (or panoramic) approach in their response to ensure access to protection and solutions is available as early as possible.⁷³

Map 1 | **IDPs in Myanmar and the estimated number of refugees fleeing since February 2021 | February 2021 – March 2025**⁷⁴



The humanitarian crisis in Myanmar has been further compounded by disasters and extreme weather events in recent years, including Cyclone Mocha in May 2023, Typhoon Yagi in September 2024 and a devastating 7.7-magnitude earthquake in March 2025. A staggering 17.2 million people were affected by the earthquake, including 2.1 million people who were already displaced by conflict. The disaster

caused widespread devastation, killing over 3,500 people, leaving nearly 5,000 injured and hundreds missing.⁷⁵ UNHCR declared a humanitarian emergency in the aftermath of the disaster. It launched an emergency appeal to expand relief efforts, manage displacement sites and support 1.2 million vulnerable people in six affected regions until the end of 2025.⁷⁶

⁷³ See [Myanmar situation](#), UNHCR, which complements the [Myanmar Humanitarian Needs and Response Plan \(2025\)](#) and the [Joint Response Plan](#) launched by the Government of Bangladesh and partners.

⁷⁴ Arrows are indicative of movement and may not reflect exact routes. The boundaries and names shown and the designations used on this map do not imply official endorsement or acceptance by the United Nations. In Bangladesh, new arrivals are biometrically identified. The source of the estimated number of refugees who fled since 2021 to India and remain in the country is the State Governments, Community-based organizations and UNHCR registration. In Thailand, the number of new arrivals is not available, but the Operation Centre for Displaced Persons, Ministry of Interior of Thailand, estimates that 52,000 refugees fled Myanmar and subsequently returned home from Thailand's Temporary Safety Areas.

⁷⁵ See [Myanmar: Earthquake Response Situation Report No. 1](#), OCHA.

⁷⁶ See [Myanmar earthquake emergency - UNHCR response to urgent needs of displaced people and host communities](#), UNHCR.

Internal displacement in Myanmar

Prior to the military takeover in February 2021, 370,300 people were forcibly displaced within Myanmar, primarily within Rakhine State. By mid-2023, the number of IDPs in the country had grown nearly five-fold to 1.8 million, with displacement spreading across the entire country. Since violence escalated in October 2023 and throughout 2024, the conflict has continued to force more people from their homes.⁷⁷ As a result, the number of IDPs has doubled to reach 3.6 million by March 2025, up from 3.5 million at the end of 2024.

Northwestern Myanmar remains one of the regions hardest hit by the conflict. As of December 2024, Sagaing hosted 1.3 million IDPs, the largest number in the north-west. Displacement has also dramatically increased in Rakhine State in 2024, with 547,300 people remaining displaced at the end of the year. Meanwhile, southeastern Myanmar has also seen mounting instability, with the number of IDPs remaining displaced at end-2024 surpassing 1 million.⁷⁸

Extreme weather and disasters have compounded the crisis, exacerbating the humanitarian and protection situation of those already internally displaced by the conflict. In May 2023, over 80 per cent of the extensive damage caused by Cyclone Mocha was concentrated in Rakhine and Sagaing, devastating IDP camps and claiming many lives.⁷⁹ In September 2024, heavy flooding and landslides triggered by Typhoon Yagi displaced around 320,000 people.⁸⁰ The earthquake in March 2025 ravaged areas already hosting 1.5 million IDPs and deepened humanitarian needs across the country.⁸¹

Forced displacement from Myanmar

As of March 2025, violence and conflict have forced 1.5 million refugees and asylum-seekers from Myanmar to seek international protection, with most hosted by neighbouring countries.⁸² Bangladesh hosts the vast majority, with 1.1 million. Most of them are Rohingya who fled successive waves of violence in Rakhine State and the impact of Myanmar's discriminatory citizenship laws, which have rendered nearly all of them stateless, therefore restricting their access to rights. A military crackdown in August 2017 forced more than 655,500 Rohingya to cross into Bangladesh, joining refugees who were displaced to Bangladesh since the 1990s. This brought the total to over 932,200 by the end of that year. Conflict reignited in Rakhine State in late 2023 and continued to push more people across the border. Cox's Bazar in Bangladesh remains the world's largest refugee settlement.⁸³ By the beginning of May 2025, 118,300 new arrivals had been identified since the beginning of February 2021.⁸⁴

Elsewhere in the region, 174,300 refugees and asylum-seekers from Myanmar are hosted in Malaysia, 83,400 in India, 81,000 in Thailand and 3,200 in Indonesia. Together, this represents a near threefold increase since the end of 2015, reflecting the growing number of people forced to seek international protection due to escalating violence and instability. In Thailand, 81,000 refugees – many of whom have lived in Thailand since the mid-1980s – reside in nine camps along the border with Myanmar.⁸⁵ While the camp-based refugee population in Thailand has decreased by 15 per cent since 2021, the number of new arrivals fleeing ongoing violence in Myanmar continues to grow. People from Myanmar continue to reside across the region under different legal stay arrangements, with many who fled unable to return due to international protection concerns.

⁷⁷ See [Myanmar Emergency Update, December 2024](#), UNHCR.

⁷⁸ Ibid.

⁷⁹ See [Extremely Severe Cyclonic Storm Mocha, May 2023, Myanmar: Global Rapid Post-Disaster Damage Estimation \(GRADE\) Report](#), Global Facility for Disaster Reduction and Recovery (GFDRR) and World Bank.

⁸⁰ See [UNHCR Flash Update on Flooding in Myanmar, October 2024](#), UNHCR, [Myanmar Flood 2024 - DREF Operational Update](#), International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) and [Myanmar Floods Typhoon Yagi - Operation Update #2](#), IFRC.

⁸¹ See [Myanmar Earthquake Emergency: UNHCR response to urgent needs of displaced people and host communities](#), UNHCR.

⁸² UNHCR issued a guidance note urging States to grant civilians fleeing Myanmar access to their territories, protect their right to seek asylum and uphold the principle of non-refoulement. See [Guidance Note on the International Protection Needs of People Fleeing Myanmar](#), UNHCR.

⁸³ See [Where are the largest places hosting refugees?](#) and [Settlement Typologies in Emergencies](#). The proportion in settlements includes formal settlements, informal settlements, collective centres and transit centres.

⁸⁴ New arrivals biometrically identified by Government of Bangladesh and UNHCR. See [Myanmar situation](#), UNHCR.

⁸⁵ The camps in Thailand hosting refugees from Myanmar are Ban Don Yang, Ban Mae Surin, Ban Mai Nai Soi, Mae La, Mae La Oon, Mae Ra Ma Luang, Nu Po, Tham Hin and Umpiem.

Desperate journeys of Rohingya

The crisis in Myanmar shows no signs of abating, complicating prospects for the safe and voluntary return of refugees, among them the 1.3 million Rohingya. With resources for the humanitarian response in host countries increasingly stretched, thousands of stateless Rohingya refugees residing outside Myanmar have embarked on perilous journeys in search of protection, security, family reunification and livelihood opportunities.

In 2024, around 11,300 people attempted dangerous journeys over land or by boat. This is an increase of 74 per cent compared to the previous year, although the actual number is thought to be higher. Tragically, around 660 Rohingya refugees were reported dead or missing at sea in 2024, the highest number since 2015.⁸⁶ These estimates indicate that one Rohingya was reported to have died or gone missing for every 18 people attempting the journey during 2024, showing the perilousness of the journeys.

Some 87 per cent of boat movements resulted in interceptions or disembarkations in Myanmar or Bangladesh, leaving stateless Rohingya refugees in an even more desperate situation, including in prolonged immigration detention. In 2024, nearly 780 Rohingya disembarked in Indonesia, while almost 120 disembarked in Sri Lanka. Despite the grave risks, many vulnerable women, men and children continue to undertake these desperate journeys and are at risk of exploitation by smugglers and traffickers.⁸⁷ In Thailand, Rohingya refugees face prolonged immigration detention, however efforts are being made towards developing community-based alternatives to detention for some children.

In response, a route-based (or panoramic) approach has been taken by UNHCR to enhance access to effective protection and opportunities for solutions for refugees and asylum-seekers as early as possible. Ultimately, this will reduce the need for dangerous onward journeys. UNHCR continues to advocate with States across the region to promote greater coordination to save lives at sea, fully deploy rescue

capacities and enable safe and timely disembarkation, thereby upholding the principles of humanity, solidarity and responsibility sharing.

Towards durable solutions

Finding durable solutions continues to remain a critical part of the response to the crisis in Myanmar.⁸⁸ In 2024, around 31,900 refugees from Myanmar, including more than 19,500 Rohingya refugees, were considered for resettlement. Over 10,100 departed to resettlement countries, an increase of 47 per cent from 2023. Over three-quarters of the resettlement departures were to the United States of America. In addition, 1,790 refugees from Myanmar departed on complementary pathways from Bangladesh, India, Indonesia, Malaysia, Thailand and other countries of asylum. However, the availability of third-country solutions through resettlement will decrease in 2025.

To address statelessness among Rohingya, efforts continue to ensure birth registration and civil status documentation, with support provided through regional cooperation.⁸⁹

As global crises multiply and humanitarian resources become scarcer, the protection and humanitarian needs of forcibly displaced and stateless people within and from Myanmar must not be overlooked. The country's dire situation requires sustained focus from all parties to the conflict to stop attacks on civilians, to prevent further displacement and to allow forcibly displaced people to rebuild and recover in the wake of ongoing conflict and recurring disasters. It also calls for coordinated action to address the root causes of conflict and displacement, create conditions for safe, voluntary, dignified and sustainable returns, maintain humanitarian assistance for refugees in the region and expand pathways for lasting solutions. Lastly, the commitments made by member States and others in favour of resilience and solutions for the Rohingya refugees in the 2023 Global Refugee Forum must be translated into concrete progress.⁹⁰


⁸⁶ See [Desperate Irregular Journeys: Rohingya refugees in search of protection, December 2024](#), UNHCR and [Desperate Journeys: Rohingya refugees in search of protection, December 2023](#), UNHCR.

⁸⁷ See [Desperate Irregular Journeys: Rohingya refugees in search of protection, December 2024](#), UNHCR and [Guidance Note on the International Protection Needs of People Fleeing Myanmar](#), UNHCR.

⁸⁸ See [What are Durable Solutions for Refugees and IDPs?](#), UNHCR.

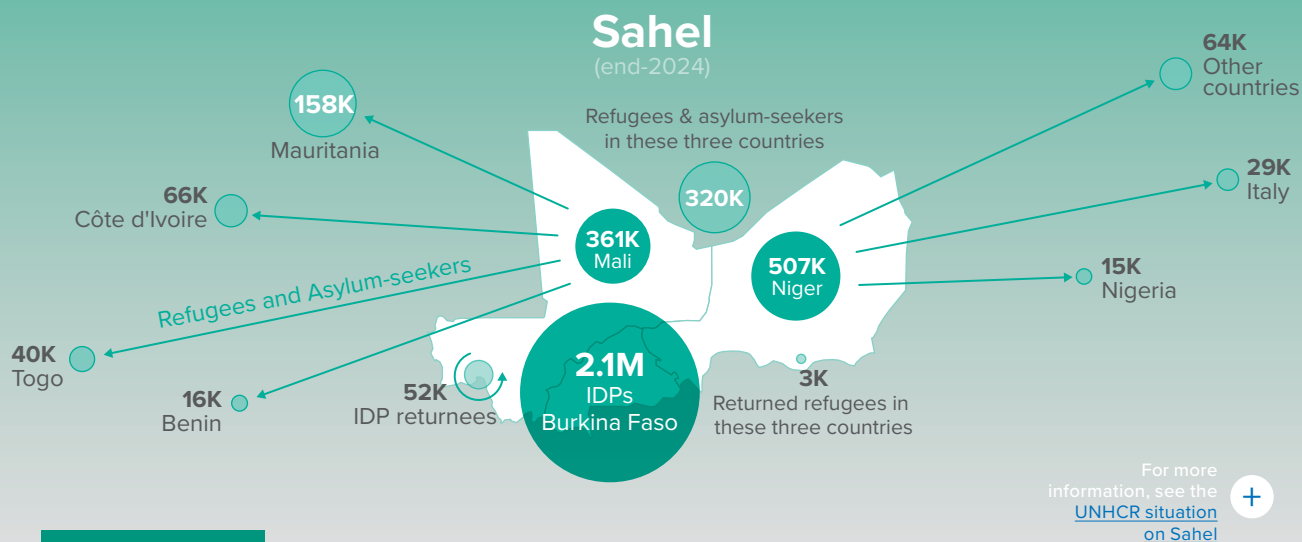
⁸⁹ See [Ensuring everyone counts: working together to include stateless and displaced persons in civil registration systems](#), UNHCR and [Towards the realization of the regional vision for inclusive civil registration and vital statistics systems](#), United Nations.

⁹⁰ See [Multi-stakeholder Pledge: Rohingya Refugees - Expanded Resilience, Enhanced Solutions](#).

A close-up photograph of a woman with dark skin, wearing a purple patterned headscarf and a grey t-shirt. She is holding a young child in her arms. The child is wearing a light blue shirt and a beaded bracelet. The woman is looking towards the camera with a slight smile. The background is blurred, showing some wooden structures.

NIGER. Seybata, a Malian refugee and mother of seven, describes how she survived the floods in Niamey. "I lost everything; I didn't have time to empty the house before it fell. I just grabbed my children and got out." Between May and October 2024, Niger experienced devastating floods leading to the deaths of at least 391 people, affecting over 1.4 million others including 9,000 refugees and many more internally displaced people. The floods devastated infrastructure, including roads and farmland and disrupted the education of thousands of children. The heavy rains and subsequent floods underscore the growing threat posed by extreme weather events.

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SPOTLIGHT 3

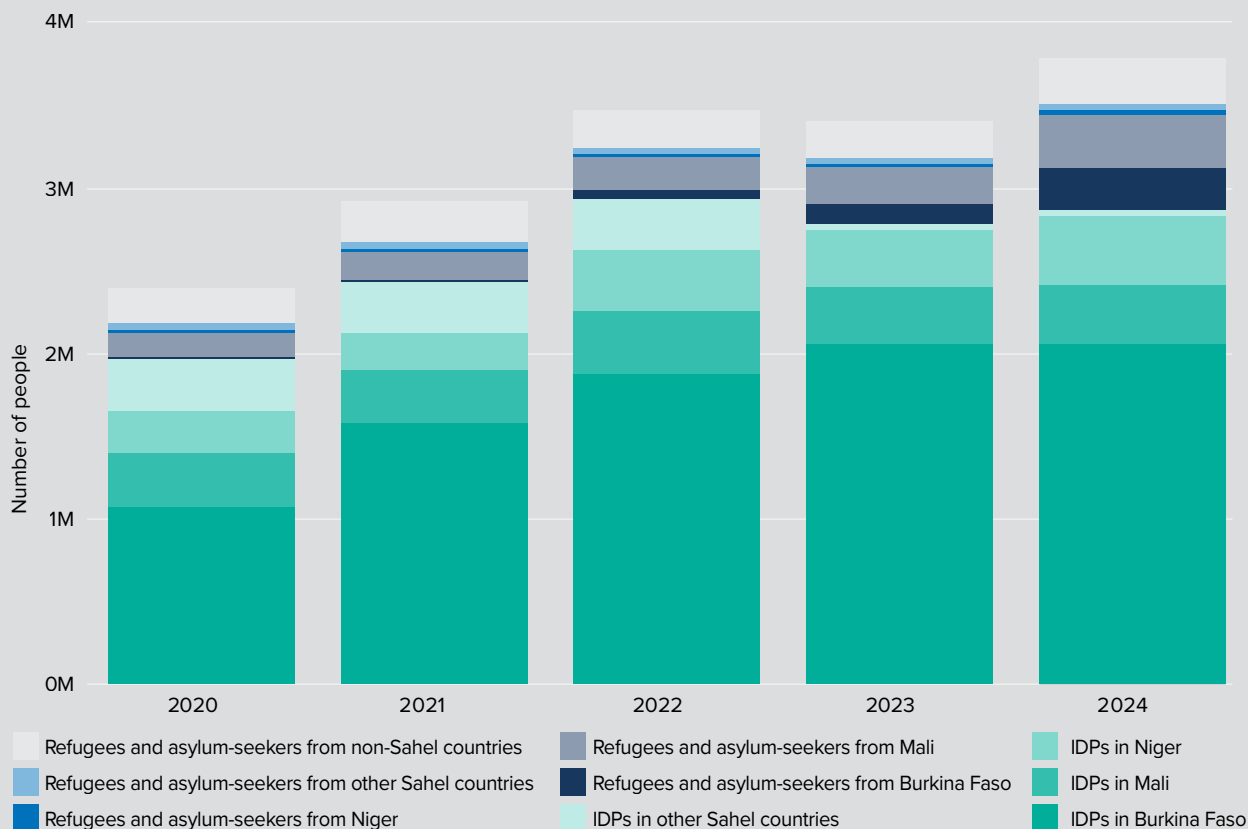
Spotlight 3: the Sahel

Forced displacement within and from the region

The Sahel region stretches across the southern edge of the Sahara Desert, from the Atlantic Ocean in the West to the Red Sea in the East. When referring to forced displacement within the Sahel region in this report, UNHCR includes countries in the “Sahel Plus”,

which comprises Mali, Niger and Burkina Faso in the Central Sahel and neighbouring countries affected by forced displacement from the Central Sahel. These include Mauritania and the Gulf of Guinea countries: Côte d'Ivoire, Benin, Togo and Ghana.

Figure 6 | **Number of refugees, asylum-seekers and IDPs in the Sahel | 2020-2024 (end-year)**



The number of forcibly displaced people within the Sahel has continued to grow. At the end of 2024, approximately 3.8 million people remained forcibly displaced across the Sahel. This is up by 379,100 or 11 per cent from the end of 2023 and is an increase of 58 per cent from the 2.4 million reported at end-2020 (see Figure 6). Over three quarters of forcibly displaced people in the Sahel region were internally displaced within their own country, with nearly 2.1 million of them in Burkina Faso, 412,000 in Niger and 361,000 in Mali at the end of 2024.

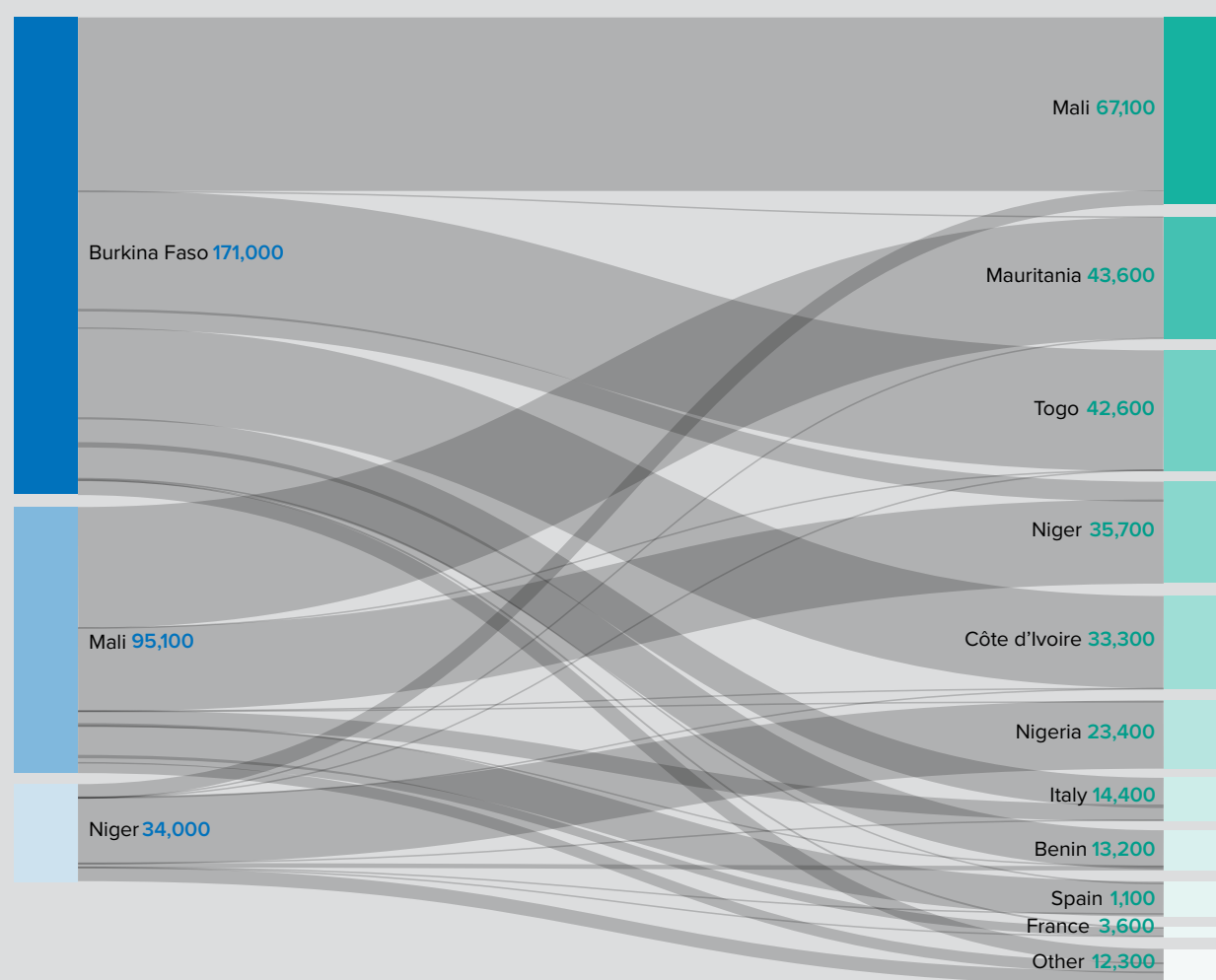
Seven in ten of the refugees and asylum-seekers originating from the Sahel remain within the Sahel and rely on support and solidarity from neighbouring countries within the region. At the end of 2020, there were 215,400 refugees and asylum-seekers originating from the Sahel who were still living in the

Sahel. This had reached 642,700 by the end of 2024, around a three-fold increase.

During 2024, 171,000 Burkinabe, 95,100 Malians and 34,000 Nigeriens were recognized as refugees or lodged new asylum applications mostly in Mali, Mauritania, Togo, Niger and Côte d'Ivoire (see figure 7). At least 1 in 8 of the forcibly displaced people in the region reported having been displaced multiple times.⁹¹

While most of the forcibly displaced people remain within the Sahel region, the number of people fleeing beyond the region is also increasing, as the situation in the Central Sahel has deteriorated. Worldwide, there were 708,300 refugees and asylum-seekers from the three countries in the Central Sahel at the end of 2024, three-times more than at the end of 2020 (219,500).

Figure 7 | **Movements of refugees and asylum-seekers from the Central Sahel to countries of asylum | 2024**



⁹¹ See [Project 21](#) for more details and the microdata is accessible in the [UNHCR Microdata Library](#).

Compounding causes of forced displacement

The Sahel region continues to face a complex and deteriorating humanitarian situation, marked by a steady rise in violence that disrupts lives, displaces communities and hinders access to essential services and protection. Civilians are particularly affected, and humanitarian needs have continued to grow. Between January 2020 and April 2025, over 53,400 casualties were recorded in the Central Sahel, over half of them (26,700) in Burkina Faso alone.⁹² In 2024, the Central Sahel accounted for more than half of all terrorism-related deaths and nearly one in five of all attacks worldwide.⁹³ In Mali, the conflict dynamics are shifting, with violence spreading from the north to the centre and more recently reaching the south of the country. As the crisis has intensified and its geographical scope has become broader, coastal countries in the region including Togo and Benin are reporting deadly attacks.⁹⁴

Political developments in the region continue to evolve against a backdrop of persistent insecurity and economic challenges. These factors have contributed to significant governance transitions in recent years, including in Mali (August 2020 and May 2021), Burkina Faso (January and September 2022) and Niger (July 2023). In early 2025, Burkina Faso, Mali and Niger formally withdrew from the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), marking a pivotal moment for regional dynamics. Their departure was followed by steps to operationalize the Alliance of Sahel States, an initiative launched in September 2023, reflecting a shift in regional cooperation

frameworks and a reconfiguration of institutional partnerships in the Sahel.

Extreme weather events are increasing across the region. Widespread floods in 2024 affected over 1.5 million people in Niger and 733,000 in Mali, destroying homes and infrastructure.⁹⁵ The floods have exacerbated an already challenging situation; the proportion of the population in the region facing extreme hunger is expected to increase by 20 per cent by June 2025.⁹⁶ As a result, an estimated 3.7 million people in Mali and Niger are projected to face food insecurity in 2025. The impact will be particularly acute in northern Mali.⁹⁷

Protection environment

Project 21, a community-based, regional and inter-agency protection monitoring system, is maintained by UNHCR and its 30 partners to monitor and analyse protection risks and needs across the region.⁹⁸ Of the reported protection incidents in Burkina Faso, Mali and Niger, half of the affected communities reported that armed attacks were the main driver of displacement. Violence against women and girls accounted for a further one in six reported protection incidents.

Forced displacement and subsequent movement restrictions due to insecurity have exacerbated protection risks and hindered access to essential services. In communities where the majority of surveyed families reported being subjected to movement restrictions, respondents were twice as likely to have reported feeling insecure, that some locations and activities put women and girls at risk, or that social cohesion is fragile (see figure 8).

⁹² See [Armed Conflict Location and Event Data \(ACLED\) data](#).

⁹³ See the [Global Terrorism Index 2025](#).

⁹⁴ See [April 2025 Monthly Forecast](#), Security Council Report.

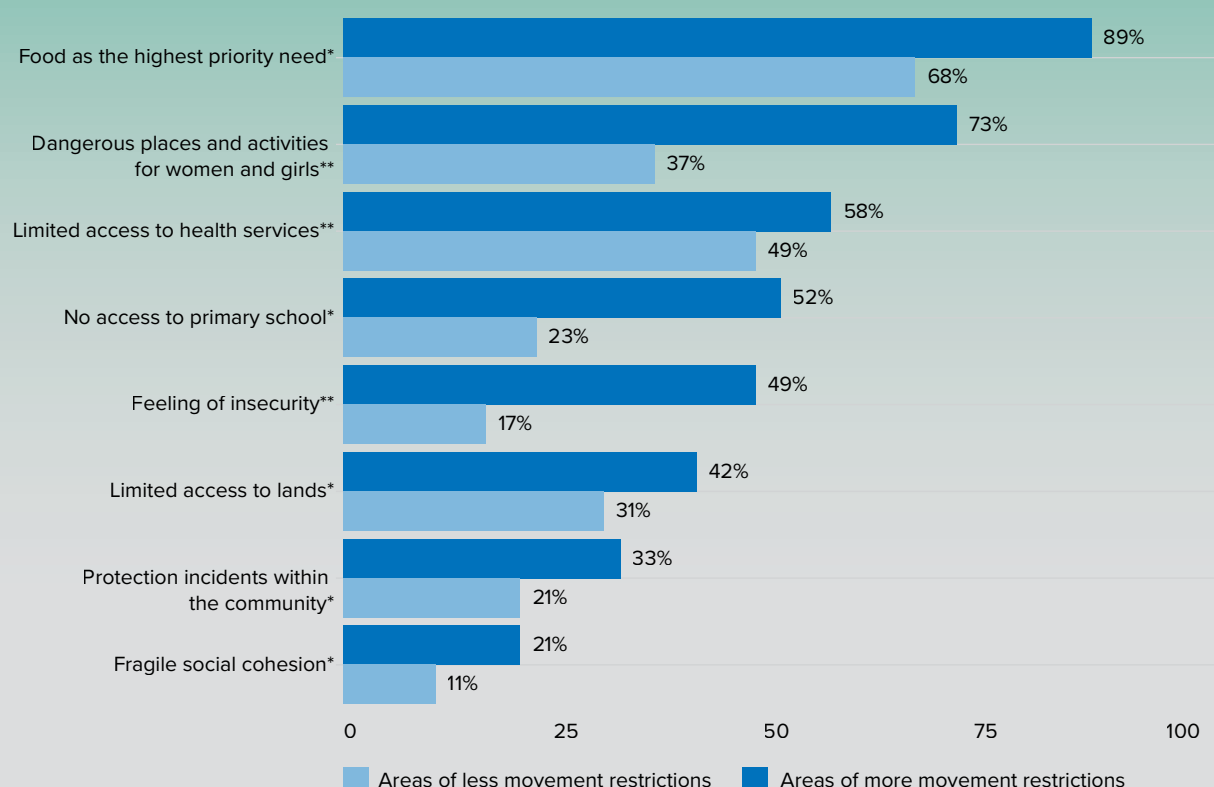
⁹⁵ See [UNHCR West and Central Africa: Flood emergency response](#), UNHCR. And [West and Central Africa: Flooding Situation 2024 Overview](#), UNOCHA.

⁹⁶ Population facing extreme hunger refers to those with an Integrated Food Security Phase Classification (IPC) Phase 3 or above. See [Millions in Central Sahel and Nigeria at risk of food cuts as the World Food Programme faces severe funding crisis](#), World Food Programme (WFP).

⁹⁷ See [Cadre harmonisé d'identification des zones à risque et d'estimation des populations vulnérables au Sahel et en Afrique de l'Ouest \(CH3.0\)](#) [Harmonized framework for identifying risk areas and estimating vulnerable populations in the Sahel and West Africa (CH3.0)], IPC.

⁹⁸ See [Project 21](#) for more details. The protection indicators including gender-based violence, education and access to services in this section are based on Project 21 data unless otherwise mentioned. Microdata are accessible at [UNHCR Microdata Library](#): Burkina Faso ([household](#) and [key informant](#) data), Cameroon ([household](#) and [key informant](#) data), Chad ([household](#) and [key informant](#) data), Mali ([household](#) and [key informant](#) data) and Niger ([household](#) and [key informant](#) data).

Figure 8 | **Impact of movement restrictions on the protection of communities in the Central Sahel | 2024⁹⁹**



Children's education was also severely disrupted. In many areas of Burkina Faso, Mali and Niger, one-third of communities reported that children do not have access to formal schooling. Access to basic services was also reported as critically low: two-thirds of communities needed more food and half had limited access to healthcare. The impact of these reported risks has been more pronounced for those communities with greater movement restrictions.

Advancing protection and local solutions in the Sahel: opportunities for engagement

In the Central Sahel, strong community-based protection initiatives have offered valuable entry points for humanitarian, development and peacebuilding actors to jointly support forcibly displaced people. In Burkina Faso, Mali and Niger, the forcibly displaced households that were surveyed by Project 21 in 2024 reported a strong sense of cohesion: 91 per cent said they felt

integrated into the host community and 82 per cent reported good intercommunity relations.

Additionally, eight in ten respondents confirmed the presence of community-based conflict management mechanisms and nearly six in ten considered these mechanisms to be effective. Communities have highlighted their willingness to continue their remarkable hospitality and solidarity. Examples of this hospitality are clear in respondents' answers: one-third of the displaced families reported being hosted by a local family.

Community-level respondents surveyed by Project 21 suggested that there could be greater focus on providing self-reliance and socio-economic opportunities. Throughout the Central Sahel, the lack of livelihood opportunities is consistently perceived as one of the main risks to social cohesion.

Countries across the Sahel have also maintained favourable asylum policies and have aligned their

⁹⁹ All indicators are based on Project 21 data. Areas of more or less movement restrictions refer to the admin 2 level areas where more or less than 50 per cent of respondents declared that they are subject to movement restrictions. *indicators are based on the data collected from key informants; **indicators are based on the data collected at the household level.

legislation with relevant international or regional conventions.¹⁰⁰ During 2024, the coastal countries in the south of the Sahel region, Côte d'Ivoire, Ghana, Togo and Benin, have registered more than 62,400 new asylum applications. Confirming the region's long-standing tradition of hospitality, in January 2025, the Ghanaian authorities granted prima facie refugee status to asylum-seekers from Burkina Faso, a decision that will benefit thousands of individuals that have fled to the country. Côte d'Ivoire also committed to proceed with granting refugee status to Burkinabe asylum-seekers in the country.

To support the States to address the challenges associated with refugee influxes, a sub-regional Dialogue on National Security and Refugee Protection has been held regularly since March 2024. This helps to support States of the Gulf of Guinea in implementing their international commitments on the protection of refugees, while addressing their legitimate national security concerns. UNHCR also responds to the increasing number of forcibly displaced people in the region by prioritizing local solutions at community levels that support self-reliance and foster cohesion.¹⁰¹

Despite efforts to ease pressures within the region, onwards movements towards Europe by land and sea have increased. This includes refugees and migrants and in 2024, the number of Malians moving via irregular routes rose by 57 per cent to 19,200 compared to the previous year, with a notable increase observed along the Northwest Africa Maritime Route.¹⁰² Many people moving along the route were surveyed and cited conflict and insecurity as the primary reasons for leaving Mali.¹⁰³ Statistics also showed that the number of civilian fatalities in Burkina Faso and Mali increased during 2024.¹⁰⁴ The number of Malians recognised as refugees in Europe reached 12,200 in 2024, a three-fold increase from the previous year and the total protection rate also increased for Malians in Europe to 82 per cent in 2024 from 65 per cent in 2023.¹⁰⁵

In response to mixed movements, UNHCR is implementing a route-based approach to protect lives. For example, through multi-purpose hubs in Chad and Niger, UNHCR, together with States and other partners, provides crucial services, guidance and accurate information, including on safe alternatives, to help people to make informed decisions before attempting dangerous journeys.

Increased investment in the Sahel region is crucial, to ensure governments can continue to manage and provide viable solutions to the rising numbers of forcibly displaced individuals. Despite numerous challenges, countries affected by the Sahel crisis continue to show strong political will to build resilience and to support sustainable, community-based responses to forced displacement. At the 2023 Global Refugee Forum, over 20 pledges were made by countries in the region. These included commitments to strengthen the inclusion of forcibly displaced populations into national systems such as education and health, reinforce protection environments, scale up climate action and transition from camps into sustainable human settlements. In parallel, at least 15 multilateral and bilateral development partners are actively supporting the integration of forcibly displaced people into national systems of health, water, sanitation and hygiene, education and social protection. These partnerships also aim to expand access to economic opportunities and increase community participation. Yet the scale and complexity of forced displacement in the region demand much more. Therefore UNHCR will continue to advocate for and assist forcibly displaced people in the region and the communities that so generously host them, seeking opportunities for lasting solutions.

¹⁰⁰ All 21 countries in the West and Central Africa region, plus Mauritania, have ratified or acceded to the 1951 Refugee Convention and its 1967 Protocol and 16 countries in the region (including all countries in the Sahel Plus situation) are party to the African Union's Kampala Convention to ensure protection and assistance provided to IDPs.

¹⁰¹ See [UNHCR Sahel Plus Strategy](#), UNHCR.

¹⁰² See [Detections of illegal border-crossings statistics](#), Frontex.

¹⁰³ See [4Mi data](#), Mixed Migration Centre.

¹⁰⁴ See [Quarterly Mixed Migration Update, Quarter 4, 2024: West Africa](#), Mixed Migration Centre.

¹⁰⁵ See [Asylum-seeker chapter] and [How are asylum indicators calculated?](#), UNHCR.

CZECHIA. A vibrant mural painted by Ukrainian refugee youth and the local community along the Vltava River in Prague, represents a collective journey of refugees from darkness to light, isolation to connection, and despair to hope. The mural shows the brighter side of life, where hands of support are extended to refugees, symbolizing harmony, connection, and peace.

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Insight – what do we know about the mental health of refugees?

Overview

With increasing displacement due to conflict and disasters, concerns have grown about the health and well-being of forcibly displaced people. These populations face many health challenges, such as infectious and chronic diseases, malnutrition, access to basic healthcare and interrupted treatment. People struggling with mental health issues are frequently overlooked. The World Health Organization estimates that 970 million people live with mental health issues worldwide (one in eight people).¹⁰⁶ Anxiety and depressive disorders are the most prevalent, affecting everybody: young, old, women and men. These disorders are prevalent in all countries, rich and poor. Notably, 82 per cent of people with mental health issues live in low- and middle-income countries.¹⁰⁷

While mental health issues can affect anyone, refugees and other forcibly displaced people often endure multiple stressors that affect their mental health and well-being.¹⁰⁸ These stressors can occur before, during and after their journey to safety, including during their settlement and integration into new environments. They can include abuse, violence, significant losses, economic hardship and uncertainty for the future. Therefore, the mental health of forcibly displaced people is an important indicator of refugee health and well-being.

There are clear interrelated and bidirectional links between mental health and sustainable development.¹⁰⁹ Addressing these mental health challenges will contribute to the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) on Health and Well-being. Progress in other SDGs, such as No Poverty, Zero Hunger, Quality Education and Reduced Inequalities could also have a positive effect on mental health.

Understanding localized situations

Situations of displacement differ in terms of their context, duration and severity, yet they each have a profound and broad impact on mental health. For example, depression is a common concern among forcibly displaced people. In displacement situations, its prevalence varies greatly, as shown by several large-scale studies.¹¹⁰ Newly available data from UNHCR's Forced Displacement Survey (FDS) and similar studies from several countries is helping to highlight the prevalence of mental health issues among refugees and other forcibly displaced people.

Insights from UNHCR's Forced Displacement Survey

One of the focus areas of the FDS is to systematically collect nationally representative data about refugees and host communities,¹¹¹ including their health and well-being.¹¹² To date, surveys have been conducted in South Sudan, Pakistan and Cameroon. In total, more than 12,000 refugees and members of host communities have been surveyed across the three countries, providing a rich and authoritative data source to better understand the mental health challenges affecting refugees and host communities.

The surveys show that refugees in all countries have a higher estimated prevalence of depression compared to the host populations (see figure 9).¹¹³ In the FDS surveys, the estimated prevalence of depression is 16 per cent among refugees and 12 per cent among host populations. While the specific circumstances vary across different displacement situations, the surveys show that whatever their situation, refugees are at a higher risk of depression than the host communities. These findings align with other studies that have consistently shown similar trends, highlighting the significant mental health challenges faced by refugee populations.

¹⁰⁶ See [World Mental Health Report](#), World Health Organization.

¹⁰⁷ These countries also host 73 per cent of refugees.

¹⁰⁸ See [New WHO prevalence estimates of mental disorders in conflict settings: a systematic review and meta-analysis](#), Charlson et al.

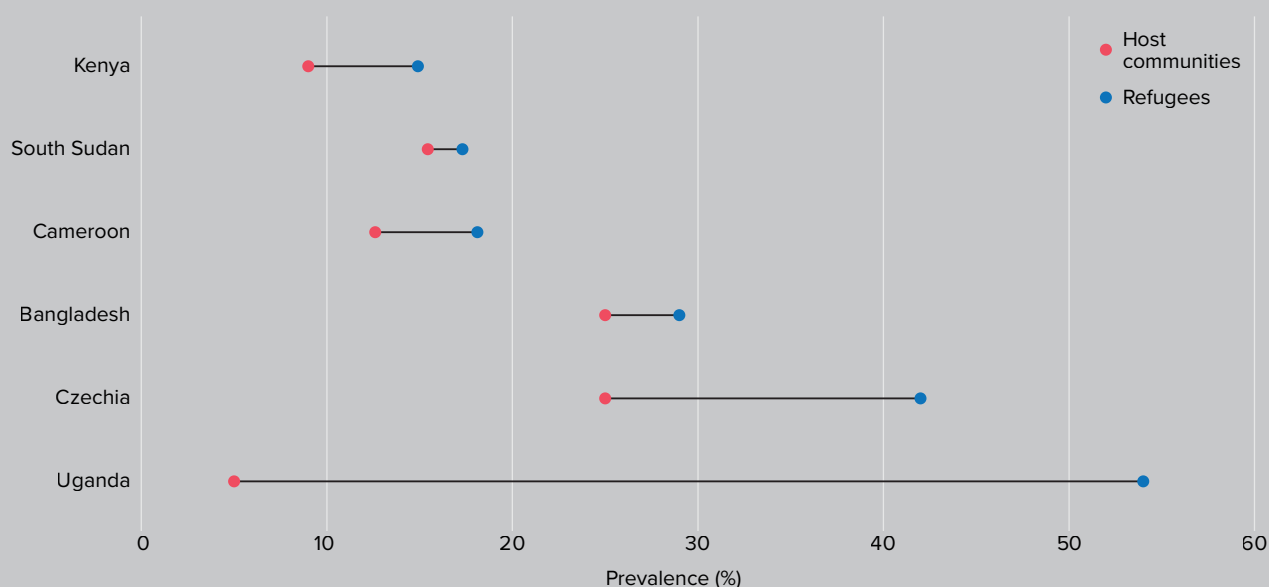
¹⁰⁹ See [World Mental Health Report](#), World Health Organization.

¹¹⁰ See [Epidemiology of depression among displaced people: A systematic review and meta-analysis](#), Bedaso and Duko; [Prevalence of Mental Distress Among Syrian Refugees With Residence Permission in Germany: A Registry-Based Study](#), Georgiadou et al; [The prevalence of mental illness in refugees and asylum seekers: A systematic review and meta-analysis](#), Blackmore et al; [Depression, violence and socioeconomic outcomes among refugees in East Africa: evidence from a multicountry representative survey](#), Pozuelo et al; and [Prevalence of mental disorders in refugees and asylum seekers: a systematic review and meta-analysis](#), Patanè et al.

¹¹¹ In the Forced Displacement Survey, host community is defined as "nationals who live in proximity to refugees/asylum-seekers". This includes refugees and asylum-seekers within camps and settlements, integrated into households, or living independently. The socio-economic or health-related characteristics or access to health services of the host community may differ from refugees and the general population of the host country.

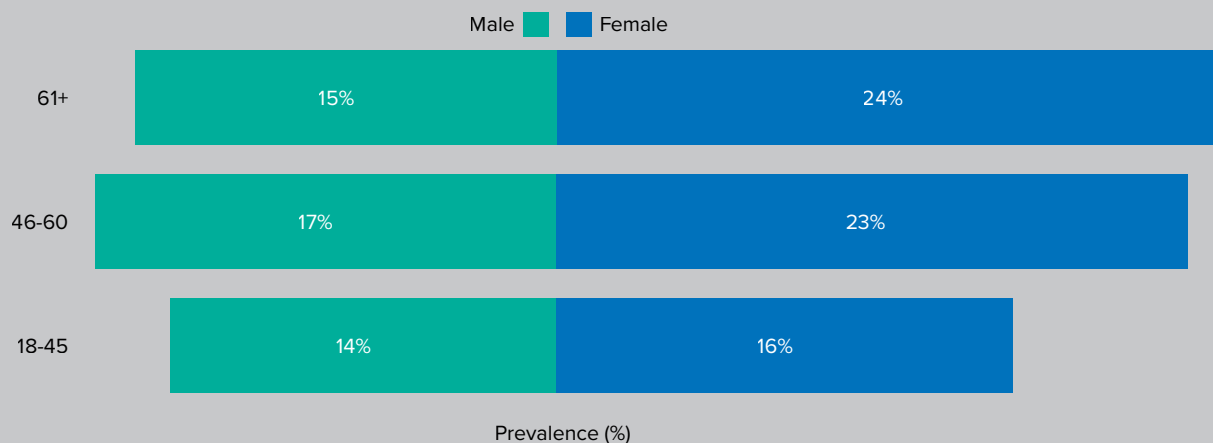
¹¹² See [Forced Displacement Survey](#), UNHCR.

¹¹³ In the Forced Displacement Survey, depression was assessed using respondents' answers to the Patient Health Questionnaire 9. The international standard score of 10 or higher was used as indicative for probable depression.

Figure 9 | Prevalence of depression among refugees and host communities | 2019 - 2024¹¹⁴

Certain groups of refugees are more likely to experience depression. Most significantly, refugees who have experienced a threatening event, such as violence, are more than three times more likely to suffer from depression than those who did not.

Among female refugees in South Sudan, Cameroon and Pakistan, the prevalence of depression is 18 per cent (from 14 to 29 per cent), with older women showing a higher prevalence. Households headed by refugees that had been widowed or were separated from their partner were also 40 per cent more likely to report suffering from depression.

Figure 10 | Prevalence of depression by age and sex | 2023 - 2024¹¹⁵

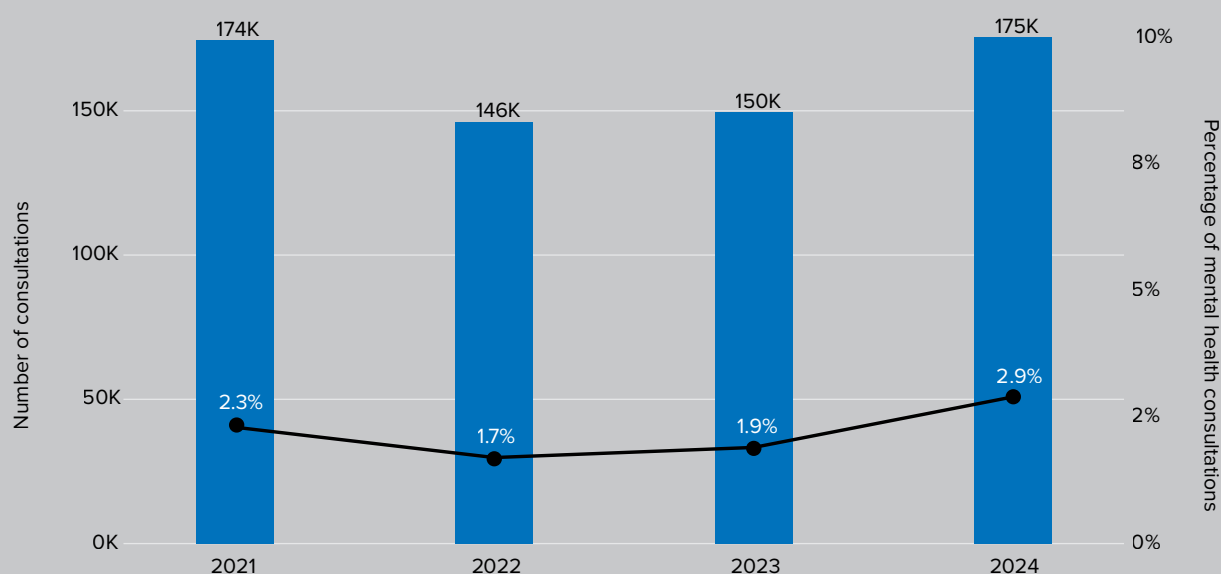
¹¹⁴ See [A data-driven look at how promoting employment fosters refugee mental health](#) and data from UNHCR's Forced Displacement Surveys in Cameroon (2024), Pakistan (2024) and [South Sudan](#) (2023). The data for Cameroon and Pakistan will be published on the UNHCR Microdata Library.

¹¹⁵ Data from UNHCR's Forced Displacement Surveys in Cameroon (2024), Pakistan (2024) and [South Sudan](#) (2023). Data for Cameroon and Pakistan will be published on UNHCR's Microdata Library.

The analysis also revealed that living conditions impact the likelihood of depression among refugees. Refugees living in camps or settlements are slightly less likely to experience depression than those living outside of them,¹¹⁶ while refugees hosted in urban areas are 40 per cent more likely to be depressed

compared to those in rural areas. Also, refugees living in households with worse living conditions, including limited access to electricity, water and sanitation facilities or those households that own fewer key assets for livelihood, are twice as likely to report suffering from depression.

Figure 11 | **Consultations for mental health disorders and related conditions in UNHCR-supported health facilities | 2021 - 2024**¹¹⁷



Access to mental health services

In 2024, medical staff in UNHCR-supported health facilities provided over 175,000 medical consultations for mental health and related conditions (see figure 11).¹¹⁸ Psychologists, social workers and community volunteers also provided psychological support. Overall, the number of consultations for mental health and psychological support declined by 6 per cent compared to the previous year. The fall was driven by reduced financial support, particularly for community-based psychosocial programmes.¹¹⁹

An assessment of health and well-being challenges affecting Ukrainian refugees in Europe identified several barriers to accessing care.¹²⁰ It found that 23 per cent of refugees experienced mental health

issues, yet less than half of them (46 per cent) sought care. The key barriers reported by refugees were the accessibility of services in terms of language, concerns about the affordability of care, the limited availability of services, long waiting times and the stigma associated with using these services.

These challenges are likely to increase as the impact of declining levels of humanitarian and development aid is felt. Worryingly, refugees' access to essential mental health services is likely to be disproportionately impacted, especially in low-income countries.

The uncertainty surrounding refugees' futures and pathways for durable solutions only deepens the challenges they face in accessing care. Refugees are concerned about the efficiency and fairness of the asylum process, their legal status and opportunities

¹¹⁶ See [Settlement Typologies in Emergencies](#). The proportion in camps or settlements includes formal settlements, informal settlements, collective centres and transit centres.

¹¹⁷ The statistics represent consultations by healthcare personnel in UNHCR-supported health facilities, but not psychological support provided in other settings. See [Annual Public Health Global Review – 2024](#), UNHCR.

¹¹⁸ See [Strengthening Mental Health and Psychosocial Support in UNHCR](#). Annual Report 2024, UNHCR.

¹¹⁹ Ibid.

¹²⁰ See [Navigating Health and Well-being Challenges for Refugees from Ukraine](#), UNHCR.

for livelihoods and education. These concerns magnify the difficulties refugees already encounter, making it even harder to cope and address challenges after their journey to safety.¹²¹

Priority actions and current response

At the global level, UNHCR, in collaboration with international partners, coordinates programmatic efforts to support refugees' mental health. This includes ensuring essential mental healthcare is available in health facilities, improving access to evidence-based scalable psychological interventions and strengthening community self-help and mutual support.¹²² Working with governments to implement policies that allow better access for refugees within the host countries' health systems is also crucial to shape health outcomes for refugee populations.¹²³ The evidence underscores the urgent need for tailored mental health support for both refugees and the communities that host them. For example, UNHCR's Executive Committee's Conclusion No. 116 calls for strengthened partnerships, capacity-building, sustainable funding and the use of evidence-based approaches to enhance the delivery and effectiveness of mental health programmes. It also reaffirms the role of international cooperation, the involvement of civil society and refugee self-help in shaping and supporting mental health systems

that promote well-being, protection and durable solutions.¹²⁴ Refugee women and girls face unique challenges, with exposure to traumatic events contributing to increased mental health risks. Obstacles for refugees' access to healthcare and social support services and a shortage of trained professionals further exacerbate these issues. Addressing these challenges requires urgent and targeted actions from refugee-hosting country governments, with support from international organizations and multilateral financial institutions where it is most needed.

Key strategic priorities include making the best use of existing resources, which are being rapidly depleted, to ensure that refugees are included in mental health service provision. This will require innovative approaches and new partnerships as the budget for health interventions continues to shrink globally.¹²⁵ These will foster better collaboration and more strategic allocation of resources to ensure the sustainable provision of services for refugees. Such investments in comprehensive mental health and psychosocial support can better empower refugees to recover from losses, trauma and other adversities, actively contribute to their host societies and ultimately rebuild their lives.

BULGARIA. Artists from nine countries together with refugee children from Syria and Ukraine created a striking mural in Sofia on the facade of a local school in September 2023. Facilitated by a non-profit organization, the artwork depicts the connection between different cultures and is a symbol of shared hope for the future. Refugees face harsh conditions that can put their mental health and wellbeing under significant stress. Using arts for protection and including refugees in artistic activities enhances their wellbeing and fosters connection and unity with host communities.

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¹²¹ See [Is legal status associated with mental illness among newly arrived refugees in Sweden: an epidemiological study](#), Delilovic et al.

¹²² See [Mental health and psychosocial support](#), UNHCR.

¹²³ See [The contemporary refugee crisis: an overview of mental health challenges](#), Silove et al.

¹²⁴ See [Conclusion No. 116 \(LXXIII\): Mental Health and Psychosocial Support - Adopted by the Executive Committee \(2022\)](#), UNHCR.

¹²⁵ See [Multi-stakeholder Pledge: Fostering Mental Health and Psychosocial Wellbeing](#), in the Global Compact on Refugees, UNHCR.



CHAD. Sudanese refugees arrive at the border in Adre fleeing violence. Adre, in eastern Chad, has become one of the most used border crossing points in the Sudan emergency. In October 2024, the rate of new arrivals to Chad spiked due to escalating violence in the Sudan, reaching almost 2,000 each day.

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CHAPTER 2

Refugees

42.7 MILLION

refugees at the end of 2024 (–1 per cent) including:

- 4 million people in a refugee-like situation (–31 per cent).
- 5.9 million other people in need of international protection (+2 per cent).
- 5.9 million Palestine refugees under UNRWA's mandate.

69%

of refugees under UNHCR's mandate originate from just five countries.

Overview

Compared to a decade ago, the global number of refugees under UNHCR's mandate has more than doubled, reaching 36.8 million by the end of 2024. Yet this total reflects an overall decline by 559,300 or one per cent from the end of the previous year, the first such year-on-year decline since 2011. The net decrease was driven primarily by fewer people in a refugee-like situation from Afghanistan and Ukraine being reported¹²⁶ and the number of Syrian refugees also fell. The global total included 4 million people in a refugee-like situation and 5.9 million other people in need of international protection. All further references to refugees in this chapter include all three of these population groups, unless otherwise stated.¹²⁷

During 2024, more than 2.6 million people were granted international protection including 775,900 who had made an individual asylum claim, 835,600 who were recognized on a group basis and a further 954,600 people who received temporary protection.¹²⁸ The total number of people granted international protection in 2024 represents a slight decrease from the 2.8 million people who received this in the previous year. In 2024, a further 392,000 people in a refugee-like situation were estimated to have been displaced during the year.¹²⁹

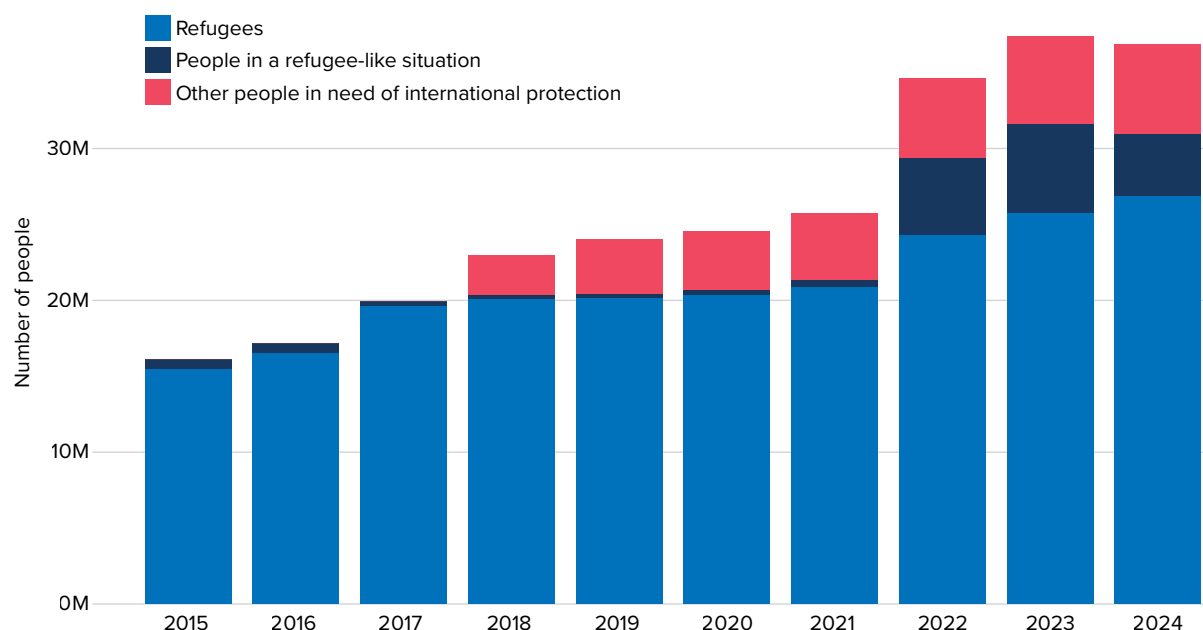
¹²⁶ See footnote 18.

¹²⁷ This does not include Palestine refugees under UNRWA's mandate.

¹²⁸ See [How is refugee status granted?](#), UNHCR.

¹²⁹ See [UNHCR's forced displacement flow dataset](#). Most people in a refugee-like situation are Afghans (2.8 million, –23 per cent compared to the previous year) or Ukrainian (662,400, –65 per cent). In 2024, 198,200 Sudanese were also reported in a refugee-like situation, primarily in Libya.

Figure 12 | **Refugees, people in a refugee-like situation and other people in need of international protection** | 2015 - 2024 (end-year)



Estimated demographic composition of refugees

UNHCR compiles data annually on the combined sex- and age-distribution of the populations that UNHCR protects and/or assists. At end-2024, demographic data by age and sex was available for 79 per cent of refugees and people in a refugee-like situation and disaggregation by sex only was available for a further 14 per cent. Coverage of demographic data by age and sex for other people in need of international protection has increased from 68 per cent in 2023 to 86 per cent, with sex-disaggregated data available for a further one per cent of them.

To fill these data gaps, statistical modelling is applied to impute the sex- and age-distribution of populations with missing demographic data.¹³⁰ For refugees, people in a refugee-like situation and other people in need of international protection, the estimated percentage of refugee children is 41 per cent and

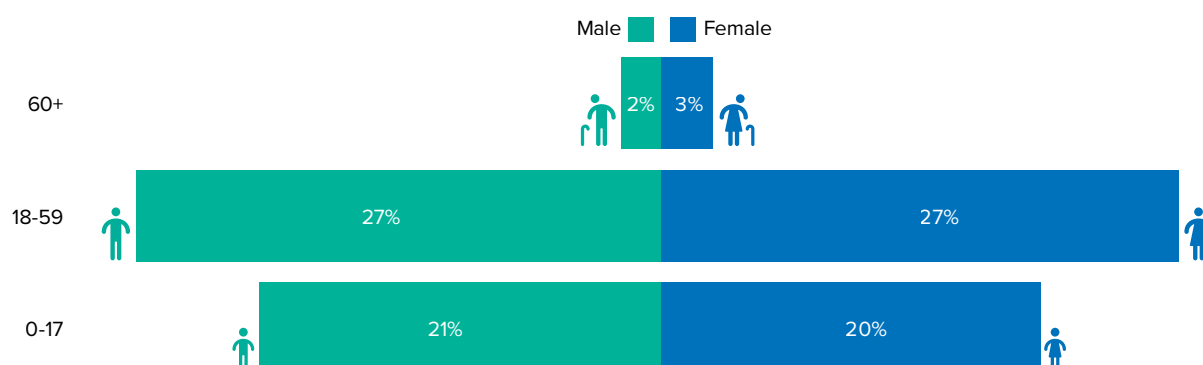
women and girls account for 50 per cent. Compared to the previous year, these two proportions remain similar despite changes in the number of refugees from Afghanistan, Syria, Sudan and Ukraine.

To estimate the global number of children born into refugee status, UNHCR calculated estimates by imputing missing birth data for the years between 2018 to 2024.¹³¹ Between 2018 and 2024, approximately half of the data on how many children were born into refugee status was missing in the reported statistics. Using statistical modelling, UNHCR estimates that more than 2.3 million children were born as refugees between 2018 and 2024, equivalent to some 337,800 children per year. In 32 countries globally, the children of refugees born in the host country have the right to attain the citizenship of that country and are therefore not included in these estimates.¹³² As this imputation is based on several broad statistical assumptions, the results should be considered as estimates and not precise figures.

¹³⁰ These models are generated using the available demographic data for a country of origin as a starting point. Where data for a particular country of asylum is missing, the values are estimated using statistical modelling from the available data for the same origin country in nearby countries of asylum.

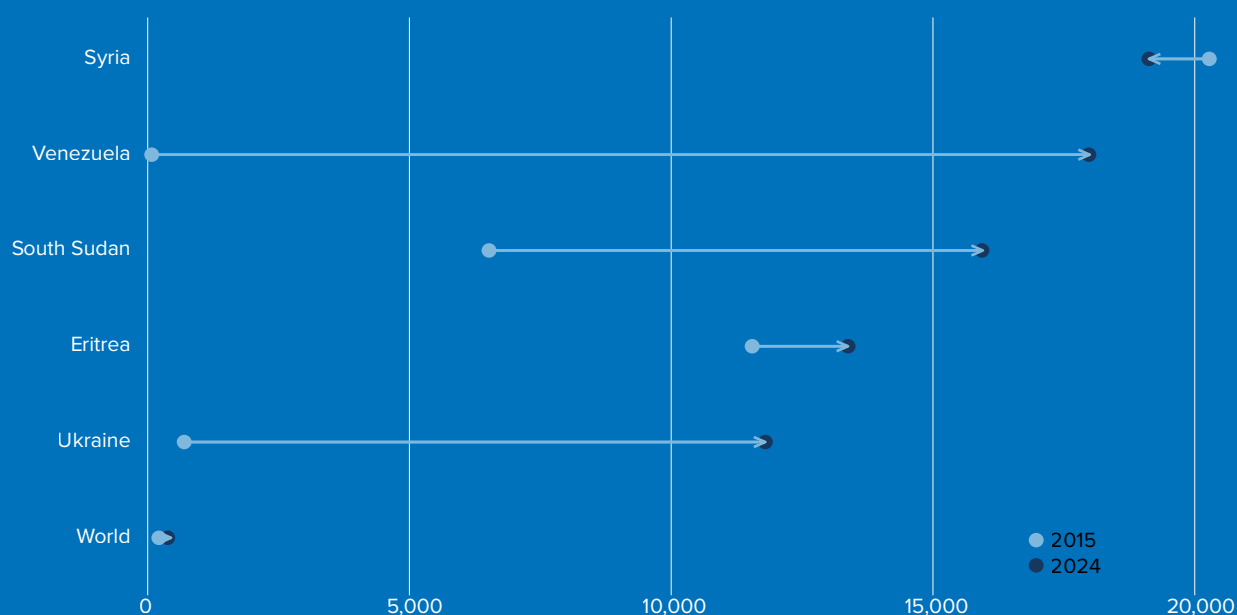
¹³¹ A key assumption in the estimates is that forced displacement is likely to impact the fertility pattern of refugees. Refugees face a situation that is drastically different from that of people remaining in their country of origin and birth rates in the country of origin are not necessarily indicative of refugee populations that have fled these same countries.

¹³² See the definition of *jus soli* in the [UNHCR glossary](#).

Figure 13 | **Estimated demographics of refugees** | end-2024¹³³

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS – INDICATOR 10.7.4

SDG Indicator 10.7.4 identifies the proportion of a country's population who become refugees or other people in need of international protection.¹³⁴ Syria (19,100 people per 100,000 inhabitants), Venezuela (18,000 people per 100,000 inhabitants) and South Sudan (16,000 people per 100,000 inhabitants) have seen the greatest proportion of their national population become refugees. Over the last decade, the proportion of refugees per inhabitants has decreased in Syria from 20,300 in 2015 to 19,100 in 2024, while it has increased in all other countries presented in Figure 15. Globally there are 450 refugees per 100,000 people.

Figure 14 | **SDG Indicator 10.7.4, Refugees, people in a refugee-like situation and other people in need of international protection**

¹³³ Disclaimer: Figures are rounded, thus may not sum up to 100.

¹³⁴ See the metadata of SDG Indicator 10.7.4. The indicator is computed as follows: $[\text{Number of refugees by country of origin at end-year} / (\text{End-year population in country of origin} + \text{number of refugees by country of origin at end-year})] \times 100,000$. For this report, refugees, people in a refugee-like situation and other people in need of international protection have been included. The indicator excludes Palestine refugees under UNRWA's mandate.

By country of origin

Almost seven in ten refugees and other people in need of international protection (69 per cent) originated from just five countries and 85 per cent of them are from just ten countries, consistent with the previous year. The number of Afghan and Syrian refugees dropped in 2024 and reporting of Ukrainian refugees was updated.¹³⁵ The number of Venezuelans that were refugees or other people in need of international protection, increased by 2 per cent from the previous year. At the end of 2024, there were 370,200 refugees and 5.9 million other people in need of international protection from Venezuela, the majority of whom have been granted residence permits and regular stay documentation.¹³⁶ As in previous years, almost all the reported Venezuelans have remained in Latin American countries, mainly in Colombia (2.8 million), Peru (1.1 million), Brazil (605,700), Chile (523,800) and Ecuador (441,600).

One in six refugees were **Syrian**, with the total decreasing by 6 per cent in 2024 to 6 million. As previous years, most of them were hosted by Türkiye (2.9 million, -10 per cent), Lebanon (755,400, -4 per cent),¹³⁷ Germany (725,100, +3 per cent) and Jordan (611,500, -6 per cent). The reported decreases reflect returns from Lebanon in adverse circumstances as well as spontaneous returns to Syria after the fall of the Assad government in December 2024.¹³⁸

Approximately 5.8 million **Afghan** refugees were reported at the end of the year, a fall of 10 per cent compared to end-2023. The Islamic Republic of Iran (3.5 million, -7 per cent) and Pakistan (1.6 million, -22 per cent) remained the largest host countries.¹³⁹ The decreases in Pakistan reflect downwards adjustments to the estimated number of

people remaining in a refugee-like situation.¹⁴⁰ The lower figures in both countries also reflect returns to Afghanistan, comprising of Afghans who have returned or are forced to return, including individual deportations, as well as Afghans who feel compelled to return in the context of an overall environment of discrimination, harassment and intimidation, with risks of arrest, detention and removal.¹⁴¹ From the Islamic Republic of Iran, almost a quarter of a million Afghan refugees and people in a refugee-like situation were estimated to have returned to their country in 2024.¹⁴² From Pakistan, an estimated 126,800 Afghan refugees and people in a refugee-like situation returned since October 2023, primarily driven by the implementation of the government's return plan for irregular persons.¹⁴³

The number of **Ukrainian** refugees hosted within Europe stood at more than 5 million at the end of 2024,¹⁴⁴ as the international armed conflict in the country continued. Most of them were hosted in Germany (1.2 million, +10 per cent), Poland (991,200, +4 per cent) and Czechia (388,400, +4 per cent).

There were 2.3 million refugees from **South Sudan** at the end of the year, a figure unchanged from the previous year. Most of them were hosted in Uganda (975,000), Sudan (613,100) and Ethiopia (420,100).

The number of **Sudanese** refugees jumped by 40 per cent and reached 2.1 million by the end of 2024. Almost all refugees from Sudan (93 per cent) were hosted by neighbouring countries, including Chad (1.1 million, +20 per cent), South Sudan (487,700, +36 per cent) and Libya (199,400, up 200-fold).¹⁴⁵

¹³⁵ See footnote 18.

¹³⁶ Cumulatively, over 4.8 million permits have been granted. See [Refugees and Migrants from Venezuela](#), R4V.

¹³⁷ See footnote 8.

¹³⁸ For more information on Syria, see the [Spotlight on the Syria situation](#).

¹³⁹ Iran hosts approximately 3.5 million refugees and people in a refugee-like situation who may require international protection. This represents a decrease from 3.8 million at end-2023, primarily due to returns, including deportations in 2024.

¹⁴⁰ See footnote 39.

¹⁴¹ Total returns refer to all types of returns, including deportations, assisted voluntary repatriation and other returns of Afghans of all statuses in Pakistan, including undocumented Afghans. See the [Afghanistan situation overview](#), UNHCR.

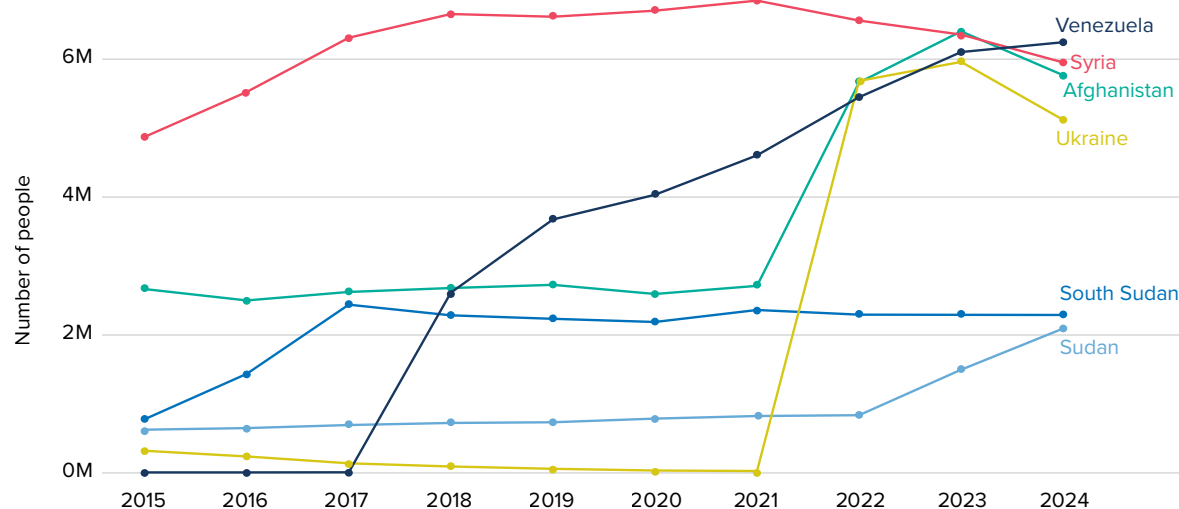
¹⁴² Returns are expected to increase in 2025, following the announcement by the Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran in February 2025 that headcount slips will not be extended beyond 20 March 2025. See [Iran-Afghanistan - Returns Emergency Response #1](#), UNHCR.

¹⁴³ The 126,800 returnees reported are those who have been assisted by UNHCR and partners. See [Pakistan-Afghanistan - Returns Emergency Response #26](#), UNHCR.

¹⁴⁴ See footnotes 18 and 38.

¹⁴⁵ See footnote 28.

Figure 15 | Refugees, people in a refugee-like situation and other people in need of international protection by major country of origin | 2015-2024 (end-year)



By country of asylum

Globally, the Islamic Republic of Iran (3.5 million), Türkiye (2.9 million), Colombia (2.8 million), Germany (2.7 million) and Uganda (1.8 million) hosted the largest refugee populations (see Figure 16). Almost all refugees hosted in the Islamic Republic of Iran and Pakistan are Afghans. Similarly, nearly all refugees in Türkiye are Syrians and most refugees and other people in need of international protection in Colombia are Venezuelans. Over the last decade, the numbers of refugees in these major host countries have all increased. However,

since 2021, the number of refugees has decreased in Türkiye by 22 per cent and since 2023 in the Islamic Republic of Iran (-7 per cent) and Pakistan (-21 per cent). In Uganda, the number of refugees from Sudan (65,400, a four-fold increase) and the Democratic Republic of the Congo (557,000, +10 per cent) both increased during the year. Most refugees in Germany were from Ukraine (1.2 million), Syria (725,100), Afghanistan (279,700) and Iraq (138,500) at end-year.

Figure 16 | Refugees, people in a refugee-like situation and other people in need of international protection by major country of asylum | 2015-2024 (end-year)

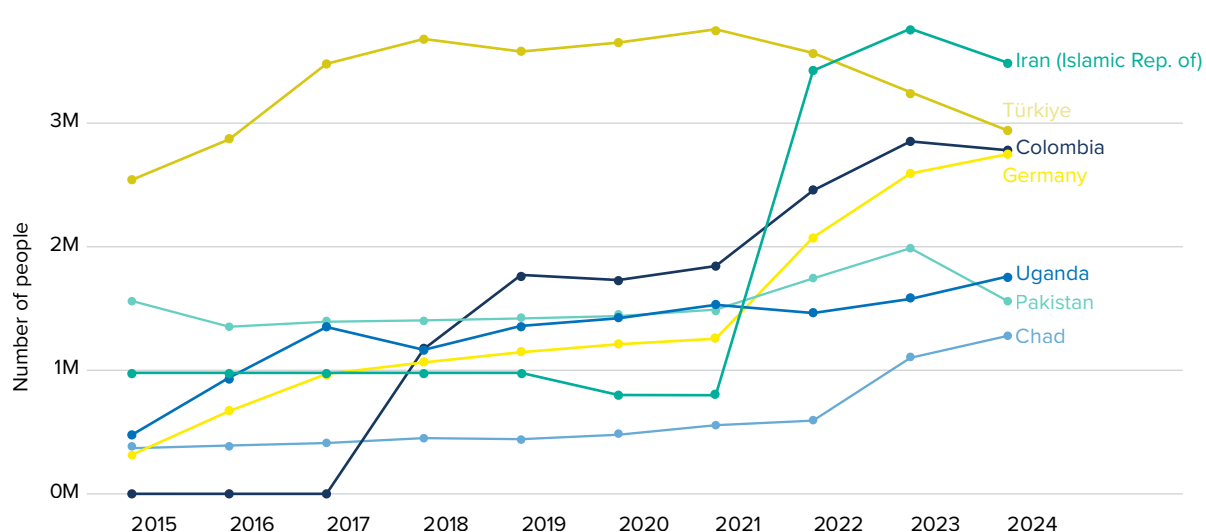


Table 2 | **Key facts for countries hosting refugees, people in a refugee-like situation and other people in need of international protection, by country of asylum | end-2024**

67 per cent were hosted by neighbouring countries.	Most people fleeing conflict and persecution remain near their country of origin. By the end of 2024, 67 per cent of refugees were hosted in neighbouring countries, consistent with previous years.
73 per cent were hosted by low- and middle-income countries.	Low-income countries continued to host a disproportionately large share of the world's displaced people, both in terms of their population size and the resources available to them. These countries represent 9 per cent of the global population and only 0.6 per cent of global domestic product, yet they hosted 19 per cent of refugees. This included very large refugee populations in Chad, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Ethiopia, Sudan and Uganda. The share of refugees hosted in lower-middle-income countries, including Bangladesh and Pakistan, decreased to 17 per cent by end-2024 from 28 per cent at end-2023 due to the reclassification of the Islamic Republic of Iran, which hosts 3.5 million refugees, as an upper-middle-income country by the World Bank. ¹⁴⁶ As a result of the reclassification, the percentage of refugees hosted in upper-middle-income countries increased to 37 per cent. Other upper-middle-income countries hosting large numbers of refugees are Türkiye, Colombia and Peru. High-income countries, which account for most of the global wealth, ¹⁴⁷ hosted 27 per cent of refugees at end-2024. This was 3 per cent more than at end-2023 as there was an increase in the number of refugees hosted by almost all high-income countries.
23 per cent were hosted by the Least Developed Countries. ¹⁴⁸	The Least Developed Countries consist of 44 countries, including Bangladesh, Chad, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Ethiopia, Rwanda, South Sudan, Sudan, Uganda, the United Republic of Tanzania and Yemen. Together, they account for 1.4 per cent of global gross domestic product, yet they were responsible for hosting nearly 23 per cent of all refugees worldwide. ¹⁴⁹ At the end of 2024, the number of refugees in Least Developed Countries stood at 8.4 million, 9 per cent more than at end-2023 (7.7 million).
67 per cent were in protracted situations.	<p>Protracted situations are defined as those where more than 25,000 refugees from the same country of origin have been in exile in a given low- or middle-income host country for at least five consecutive years.¹⁵⁰ This definition should be seen as a reflection of the situation as a whole and does not refer to circumstances of individual refugees.</p> <p>At the end of 2024, an estimated 24.7 million refugees and other people in need of international protection were in a protracted situation, 200,700 less than the previous year. This represents the first decrease in the scale of protracted situations globally since 2020. At end-2024, there were 57 protracted situations in 36 host countries.</p>

¹⁴⁶ See [World Bank country classifications by income level for 2024-2025](#).

¹⁴⁷ High-income countries account for 64 per cent of [global gross domestic product](#). This compares with 0.6 per cent, 7 per cent and 28 per cent for low-, lower-middle- and upper-middle-income countries respectively.

¹⁴⁸ There are [44 Least Developed Countries](#) classified by the United Nations Statistics Division. These are typically low- or lower-middle-income countries confronting severe structural impediments to sustainable development. The list of countries is revised every three years.

¹⁴⁹ Data source of gross domestic product (in current US dollars) in 2023 is the [World Bank](#).

¹⁵⁰ Includes people in a refugee-like situation and other people in need of international protection. Palestine refugees under UNRWA's mandate are excluded from this analysis.

CHAPTER 3

Internally Displaced People (IDPs)

73.5
MILLION

people were estimated to remain internally displaced due to conflict or violence as of end-2024, a 9 per cent increase from the end of 2023.¹⁵¹

11.6
MILLION

people in Sudan remained displaced within the country at the end of 2024 (+2.5 million) and this remains the largest internal displacement crisis ever recorded.

20.1
MILLION

new displacements were reported due to conflict or violence in 2024.¹⁵² Over six in ten of these occurred in Sudan, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Myanmar, Ukraine and Haiti.

8.2
MILLION

IDPs returned to their place of origin, 61 per cent more than in 2023. Most returns were reported in Ethiopia, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Lebanon, Syria and Ukraine (see the Solutions chapter for details).

WHO IS INCLUDED IN STATISTICS ON INTERNAL DISPLACEMENT?

Internal displacement overview

UNHCR reported on internal displacement situations in 38 countries and by the end of 2024, a total of 68.1 million people remained internally displaced within these countries due to armed conflicts, generalized violence, or human rights violations.¹⁵³ Unless otherwise noted, the figures in this chapter refer to IDPs protected/assisted by UNHCR.

Over 20.1 million new internal displacements were reported by the Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre worldwide in 2024. Some 13.5 million of these took place in 25 of the 39 countries in which UNHCR reported on internal displacement, with most reported in just six countries: the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Haiti, Lebanon, Myanmar, Sudan and Ukraine.

¹⁵¹ See footnote 5.

¹⁵² See footnote 15. See also IDMC's video on [measuring internal displacement](#).

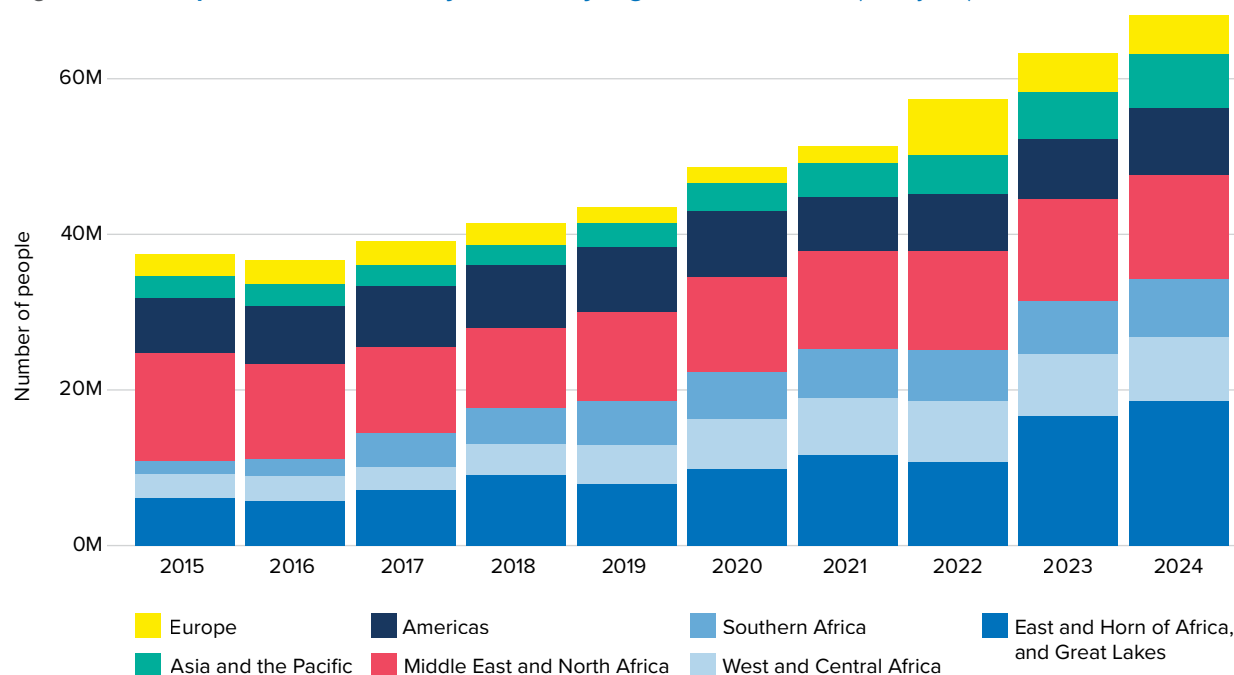
¹⁵³ See [Who is included in statistics on internal displacement?](#), UNHCR and [What is the difference between population statistics for forcibly displaced and the population that UNHCR protects and/or assists?](#), UNHCR.

HAITI. Gang violence in the country increased in 2024, resulting in severe human rights violations and the displacement of more than one million people. Displaced people face challenges such as severe shortages of food, water, shelter, and medical care.

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Figure 17 | IDPs protected/assisted by UNHCR by region | 2015 – 2024 (end-year)



Key changes in internal displacement by country

In **Sudan**, the conflict between the Sudanese Armed Forces and the Rapid Support Forces persisted throughout 2024, driving large-scale displacement across the country. More than 3.5 million people were newly displaced during the year, primarily due to intensified fighting in North Darfur as well as clashes in Sennar and Al Jazirah states. Many sought safety in Gedaref and River Nile States as well as in locations across Darfur. By the end of 2024, the total number of IDPs in Sudan has risen to 11.6 million, an increase of 28 per cent. Sudan therefore continued to be the largest internally displaced population globally.¹⁵⁴ The conflict continues to affect civilians, with many displaced several times in 2025. In April alone, heightened insecurity forced more than three-quarters of the estimated 406,300 people hosted in Zamzam IDP camp in North Darfur to flee once again to other areas of Darfur or to cross into neighbouring Chad.¹⁵⁵

During 2024, 3.1 million people fled clashes between non-state armed groups and the armed forces in the **Democratic Republic of the Congo**,

most notably in the regions of North Kivu, South Kivu and Ituri. Many of those forced to flee have been displaced several times. At the end of 2024, the number of people remaining displaced within the country stood at more than 6.9 million people, 11 per cent more than at end-2023.

In September 2024, the war between Hezbollah and Israeli forces escalated with indiscriminate and large-scale airstrikes across **Lebanon**. Nearly a million civilians (984,500) were displaced within weeks. In November, a ceasefire was agreed and most people were able to return, leaving 123,800 internally displaced at end-2024. In 2025, despite ceasefire breaches, widespread violence has not resumed and by the end of April 2025, the number of people remaining internally displaced had decreased to around 90,000 as more people returned.¹⁵⁶

In **Haiti**, gang violence and political instability resulted in widespread human rights abuses and aggravated the already dire humanitarian situation. The situation deteriorated further in 2024, with 723,600 people displaced within the country during the year. The number of IDPs tripled from 313,900 at the end of 2023 to more than one million a year later. The

¹⁵⁴ See [Two Years of Conflict in Sudan: Visualizing the World's Largest Displacement Crisis](#), IOM.

¹⁵⁵ See [DTM Sudan Focused Flash Alert: Al Fasher \(Zamzam IDP Camp\), North Darfur \(Update 008\)](#), IOM.

¹⁵⁶ See [Lebanon Mobility Snapshot, Round 86](#), IOM.

violence was particularly acute in Port-au-Prince, forcing many to flee within Port-au-Prince and to other provinces, where they were predominantly hosted by local families. By the end of 2024, most IDPs were hosted in the West and Great South regions (39 per cent in each), rather than in Port-au-Prince as in previous years.¹⁵⁷

In **Myanmar**, 1.4 million people were newly displaced during the year with the number remaining displaced reaching 3.5 million at end-year. See the [Spotlight on the Myanmar Situation](#) section above for more details.

Now in its fourth year, the international armed conflict in **Ukraine** continued to drive displacement. During 2024, nearly three-quarters of a million (740,000) Ukrainians were newly displaced within the country. A similar number of IDPs were estimated to have returned during the year (782,000), with 3.7 million IDPs remaining displaced at end-2024, a figure unchanged from end-2023. In 2024, the intensity of the fighting increased in the eastern and southern parts of Ukraine.

In **Yemen**, nearly 367,300 people were forced to flee sporadic clashes in several regions,¹⁵⁸ causing an increase of 6 per cent in the overall number of IDPs within the country, which at the end of 2024 stood at 4.8 million.

Demographics of IDPs

Reliable demographic and sub-national estimates of IDPs are vital for guiding UNHCR and its partners in their efforts to protect and assist displaced populations. In 2024, sub-national data on IDPs was reported for 31 countries and covered almost all (98 per cent) of the total IDP population protected/assisted by UNHCR. Based on the available data, at least 42 per cent of IDPs reside in urban areas,¹⁵⁹

and approximately one-quarter live in settlements, including camps,¹⁶⁰ both in urban and rural settings.

Age- and sex-disaggregated data for IDPs was available for 16 countries, 2 fewer than the previous year. This represents 58 per cent of the IDP population reported by UNHCR, while sex disaggregation was available for 60 per cent of the IDP population.

Women and girls made up 53 per cent of all IDPs, while children accounted for 46 per cent of IDPs worldwide. Countries with the highest proportion of internally displaced children included Somalia (66 per cent) and Burkina Faso (56 per cent), while the lowest proportion of children were reported in countries such as Mexico (19 per cent) and Ukraine (24 per cent).¹⁶¹

Displacement in the context of disasters

In addition to conflict and violence, people were displaced within their countries due to disasters, with record levels reported in 2024. Disasters include people displaced due to extreme weather events, such as floods and storms, and those displaced due to geophysical events, such as earthquakes. The global forced displacement does not include people displaced due to disasters.

During the year, 45.8 million internal displacements due to disasters were reported, with 9.8 million people remaining displaced within their own country at the end of 2024, according to the Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre.¹⁶² Disaster-related internal displacement accounted for 70 per cent of all new displacements in 2024. Slightly more than half of all disaster-related displacements (54 per cent) were triggered by cyclones.

¹⁵⁷ See [Report on the displacement situation in Haiti — Round 9 \(December 2024\)](#), IOM.

¹⁵⁸ See [UN warns of escalating conflict in Yemen amid humanitarian crisis, regional tensions](#), UN news.

¹⁵⁹ In the reported data, 61 per cent of locations are classified as “various”, i.e. they include both urban and rural locations. Based on the countries in which these are reported, it is likely that the actual proportion of IDPs in urban areas is higher than the reported 42 per cent. See the summary by urban and rural location in annex 14.

¹⁶⁰ See [Settlement Typologies in Emergencies](#) and the [definitions of settlement types](#) and the summary by accommodation type in annex 14. The proportion in camps or settlements includes formal settlements, informal settlements, collective centres and transit centres. The type of accommodation is reported as unknown for approximately 35 per cent of the global IDP population. UNHCR estimates that where the accommodation type is unknown, it is much less likely that the IDPs are in settlements, which typically have centralised, managed services.

¹⁶¹ The proportion of children among people displaced internally in Ukraine (24 per cent) is significantly higher than the proportion among the Ukrainian population as a whole (18 per cent).

¹⁶² See footnote 15.

Three-quarters of all new displacements due to disasters occurred in low- and middle-income countries in 2024. Storms and cyclones resulted in the displacement of just over 9 million people in the Philippines and floods resulted in the displacement of 5.4 million people in India.

Disasters in 2024 caused people that were already displaced due to conflict to flee again. In 45 of the 49 countries and territories (92 per cent) where new internal displacements due to conflict and violence were reported by IDMC, new displacements due to disasters were also reported. In Chad, for example, floods led to more than 1.3 million internal displacements, by far the highest disaster displacement figure on record

for the country and more than in the previous 15 years combined. Almost 1.2 million people remained displaced because of the floods at end-year, 12 per cent of the global total.¹⁶³ In the Democratic Republic of the Congo, the impacts of floods and storms triggered around 750,000 more displacements, with 680,000 people remaining displaced due to the disasters at end-year.¹⁶⁴ Meanwhile, in Myanmar, 525,000 new displacements were brought on by floods and storms, with 126,000 people remaining displaced at year end. And in Sudan, between June and August 2024, flooding and heavy rains across 15 states displaced nearly 200,000 people, including many conflict-affected IDPs.¹⁶⁵



AFGHANISTAN. In October 2023, the family home of Gul Aqa, a day labourer and his six children was damaged following a series of devastating earthquakes in Herat. The family took shelter in a small room, provided by a relative in 2024. They are looking forward to moving into a new permanent two-room solar powered home, supported by UNHCR. "We are excited and happy to be moving soon. Last winter was very hard. We didn't have enough to eat, nor enough blankets and clothes," says Gul Aqa.

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¹⁶³ See [Country profile of Chad](#), IDMC.

¹⁶⁴ See [Country profile of the Democratic Republic of the Congo](#), IDMC.

¹⁶⁵ See [Two Years of Conflict in Sudan: Visualizing the World's Largest Displacement Crisis](#), IOM.

PANAMA. *Maira, a Venezuelan asylum-seeker, crafts backpacks using recycled materials in a workshop. She is part of the "Made by Refugees" initiative which has brought together refugee and asylum-seeking women from countries including Colombia, El Salvador, Nicaragua and Nigeria. The project aims to promote their economic inclusion, thereby improving their quality of life. It also raises awareness in the society about challenges faced by refugees, fostering inclusion and solidarity within host communities.*

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CHAPTER 4

Asylum trends

4.8 MILLION

people sought international protection in 2024 (–13 per cent).

- 3.1 million new individual asylum applications were reported as registered.
- 835,600 people were recognized as refugees on a group basis (–6 per cent).
- 954,600 people received temporary protection (–13 per cent).

775,900

people were granted refugee status through individual status determination procedures (–6 per cent).

8.4 MILLION

asylum-seekers were pending a decision on their claims at end-2024.

55%

was the total protection rate in individual procedures in 2024.¹⁶⁶

HOW IS REFUGEE STATUS GRANTED?

Overview

In 2024, 4.8 million people were reported to have applied for asylum on an individual basis, were recognized through group procedures or were granted temporary protection, 13 per cent fewer than in the previous year. The number of individual asylum applications (3.1 million), recognitions from group procedures (835,600) and people receiving temporary protection (954,600) all decreased in 2024 compared with the previous year. This was mainly due to fewer people fleeing Ukraine and that only individual asylum applications lodged in the first six months of 2024 were reported by the United States

of America.¹⁶⁷ During the year, as shown in figure 18, over one-third of the 4.8 million people seeking international protection came from just two countries: Ukraine (879,100)¹⁶⁸ and Sudan (872,400).

In addition to the reported 3.1 million new individual asylum applications, 372,200 repeat or appeal applications were made for review by courts or other appellate bodies. Therefore, in total, 3.4 million individual asylum applications were registered in 163 countries by States or UNHCR worldwide.¹⁶⁹

Over half of all new individual asylum applications globally were known to have been received in just four countries: the United States of America (729,100),

¹⁶⁶ See [How are asylum indicators calculated?](#), UNHCR.

¹⁶⁷ See footnote 9.

¹⁶⁸ See footnote 19.

¹⁶⁹ In Bulgaria, Japan, Slovakia, South Africa and Yemen, the data on asylum applications is provided together without distinction between new, repeat and appeal applications.

Egypt (433,900), Germany (229,800) and Canada (174,000). Most new individual applications were made by nationals of Sudan (441,400), Venezuela (268,100), Syria (163,500), Colombia (149,000) and Afghanistan (108,500).

During 2024, 775,900 individuals were granted refugee status on an individual basis, 6 per cent fewer than in the previous year. One-third were granted in Germany (140,600), France (67,500) and Spain (51,300), with a similar proportion coming from Syria (142,800) and Afghanistan (109,800). Additionally, 835,600 people received refugee status on a group basis (-6 per cent compared to 2023), mostly in Chad (244,800), South Sudan (131,300) and Uganda (116,400) and most were from Sudan (431,000).

Also in 2024, 954,600 people were granted temporary protection, 13 per cent fewer than in the previous year, largely due to fewer decisions granting temporary protection reported for Ukrainians. Similar to the previous year, temporary protection was mostly granted to refugees from Ukraine (836,100),¹⁷⁰ mainly in European countries, but also to Syrians (110,900), most commonly in Türkiye.

Key asylum flows

People continued to flee Ukraine and Sudan and seek international protection. Most Ukrainians were granted temporary protection in Germany (226,000, +56 per cent), Poland (165,400, -28 per cent) and Czechia (77,100, -22 per cent). While fewer Ukrainians were granted temporary protection during 2024, 43,000 new individual asylum applications by Ukrainians were recorded, an increase of 26 per cent.¹⁷¹

From Sudan, at least 872,400 people sought international protection in 2024, 8 per cent more than during 2023. Neighbouring countries received most of them, primarily Egypt (404,100, a 2.5-fold increase), Chad (240,700, -51 per cent) and South Sudan (129,300, +98 per cent). Uganda also reported a 5-fold increase in the number of Sudanese granted refugee status (48,900). Nearly half of the Sudanese who fled their country received protection on a prima facie (group) basis (431,000, -30 per cent).

The United States of America received 729,100 new individual applications in the first half of the year,¹⁷² accounting for a quarter of all new individual applications reported in 2024 globally. Most new applications were from nationals of Latin America and the Caribbean countries, as in previous years, primarily Venezuelans (116,700), Colombians (79,300), Mexicans (54,000) and Haitians (46,600).

Some 290,600 Syrians sought international protection in other countries in 2024, an increase of 28 per cent compared to 2023. Out of 110,900 Syrians who received temporary protection during 2024, 98,800 were granted in Türkiye (up from zero in 2023). Syrians also lodged 163,000 new individual asylum applications in 2024 and 76,900 were recorded in Germany, 25 per cent fewer than during the previous year.

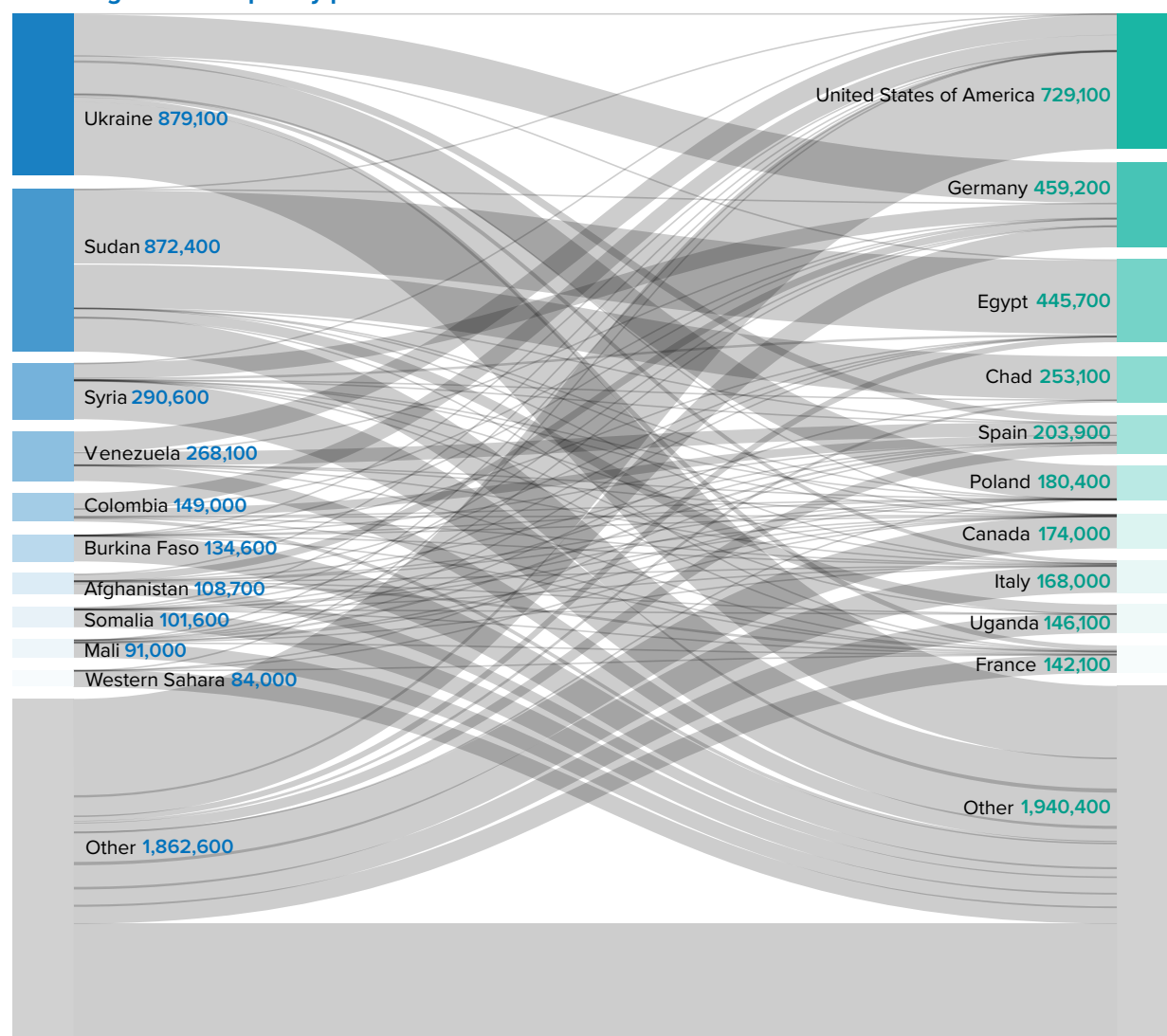
New individual asylum applications were also lodged by 72,000 Burkinabe, 108,450 Afghans and 97,900 Somalis, while 62,600 Burkinabe and 3,700 Somalis who fled their country received protection on a prima facie (group) basis.

¹⁷⁰ See footnote 19.

¹⁷¹ Ibid.

¹⁷² These are the latest statistics that are available for the United States of America. See footnote 9.

Figure 18 | **Key flows of people registering new individual asylum applications, recognised on a group basis or granted temporary protection | 2024**



Decisions on individual asylum applications

Slightly more than 1.4 million people received substantive decisions on their individual asylum applications in 2024, essentially unchanged from the previous year.¹⁷³ Additionally, 755,800 cases were closed without a decision for administrative reasons.

Of the 1.4 million substantive decisions, 97 per cent were made by governments, while 43,000 were made by UNHCR under its mandate. A further 2,500 substantive decisions were made jointly by UNHCR and governments, mostly in Ethiopia.

The global Total Protection Rate,¹⁷⁴ which measures the percentage of substantive decisions in individual procedures that resulted in some form of international protection, decreased slightly from 59 per cent in the previous year to 55 per cent in 2024. This statistic shows that the high number of applications reflect both the rise of forced displacement globally but also that in some situations, those moving for non-refugee related reasons use the asylum channel as a means to obtain temporary legal stay where other stay options are not available. The drop in the Total Protection Rate was largely a result of slightly fewer decisions made on Ukrainian asylum applications, who continue to have high recognition rates. The

¹⁷³ See [How is refugee status granted?](#), UNHCR.

¹⁷⁴ See [How are asylum indicators calculated?](#), UNHCR.

most substantive decisions were made in Germany (263,800), France (201,200), Spain (90,000) and the United Kingdom (87,400) during 2024. Syrians received the highest number of substantive decisions (151,100), followed by Afghans (132,900), nationals of Türkiye (82,700) and Venezuelans (64,500).

In 2024, almost 1.8 million people received temporary protection or were granted protection through group recognition procedures. Temporary protection and protection on a group basis are not reflected in the Total Protection Rate but are important mechanisms that help increase the efficiency of asylum systems to manage situations where large numbers of people with clear international protection needs are displaced.

Pending asylum claims

The total number of asylum-seekers waiting for a decision at the end of 2024 stood at 8.4 million, an increase of 22 per cent from end-2023. The number of pending asylum claims has risen for eight consecutive years since 2016 and the pace of these increases has risen in recent years as new individual

asylum applications have continued to outpace substantive decisions.

The United States of America reported 3.2 million at mid-2024, still the largest number of pending applications globally at end-2024 despite the partial reporting. Other countries with many pending asylum applications were Egypt (631,100, a nearly 3-fold increase), Peru (540,000, +6 per cent), Germany (348,900, -3 per cent) and Canada (292,100, +29 per cent).

Fair and efficient asylum procedures are essential to provide safety for those fleeing conflict, violence or persecution, ensuring inclusion in national systems and enabling durable solutions. They also help States meet their international obligations, reduce system costs and support the return of those not entitled to stay. However, it is evident from the high number of pending asylum applications that systems have not been strategically adapted to the current context. More must be done so that countries can address applications in a cost effective and fair manner, including by addressing weakness in legal and policy frameworks, institutional performance, procedural effectiveness, workforce capacity and asylum-seeker participation through information and legal aid.

KENYA. "Basketball is my favourite sport. I win my games through unity, confidence and working hard.", said Doris, who lives in Kakuma refugee camp. She adds, "There is so much talent in the camp. We just need more opportunities to showcase them."

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- + [Refugee returns](#)
- + [Resettlement arrivals](#)
- + [Naturalization](#)
- + [IDP returns](#)

CHAPTER 5

Solutions

9.8 MILLION

forcibly displaced people returned during 2024:

- 1.6 million refugees returned to their countries of origin (+563,800, 54 per cent more than in 2023).
- 8.2 million IDPs returned to their place of origin (+3.1 million, 61 per cent more than in 2023).

188,800

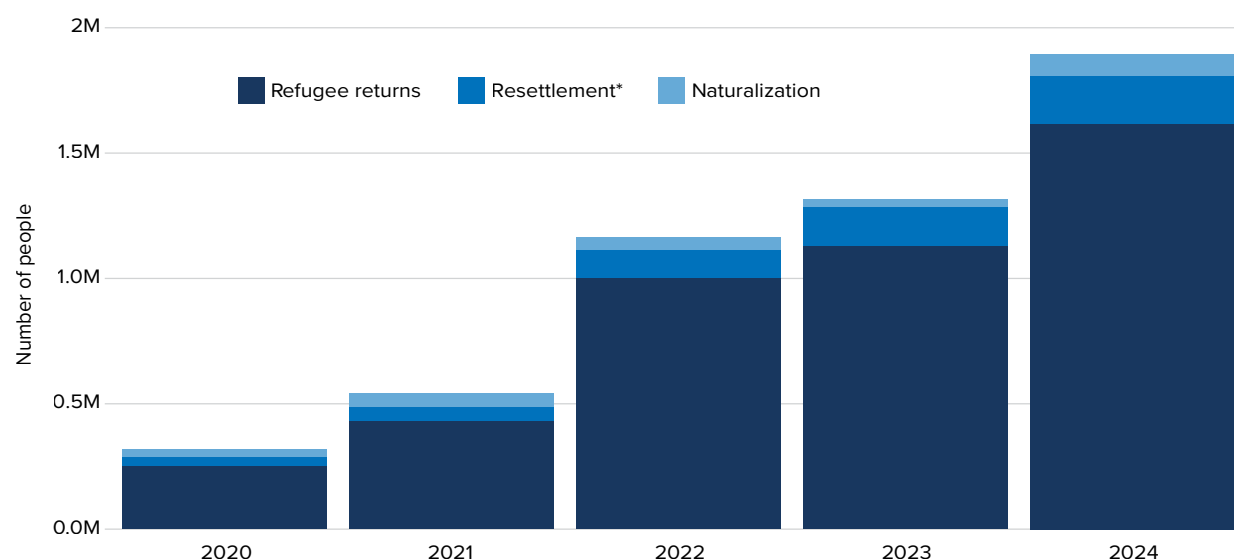
refugees were resettled (+30,200, 19 per cent more than in 2023).

88,900

refugees naturalized or were granted permanent residency during 2024 (+58,100, nearly three-times more than during 2023).

WHAT ARE DURABLE SOLUTIONS FOR REFUGEES AND IDPS?

Figure 19 | **Durable solutions for refugees** | 2020 - 2024



* Resettlement figures are according to government statistics.

MALAYSIA. Alyssa and her mother are refugees from Myanmar who fled to Malaysia in 2018 with the rest of their family. They now live in shared accommodation in Selangor. The family has found hope for the children's education in Malaysia, encouraging both Alyssa and her brother to stay in school and work towards a brighter future. Alyssa is determined to become a doctor to heal people who have suffered injuries like her mother.

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Refugee returns

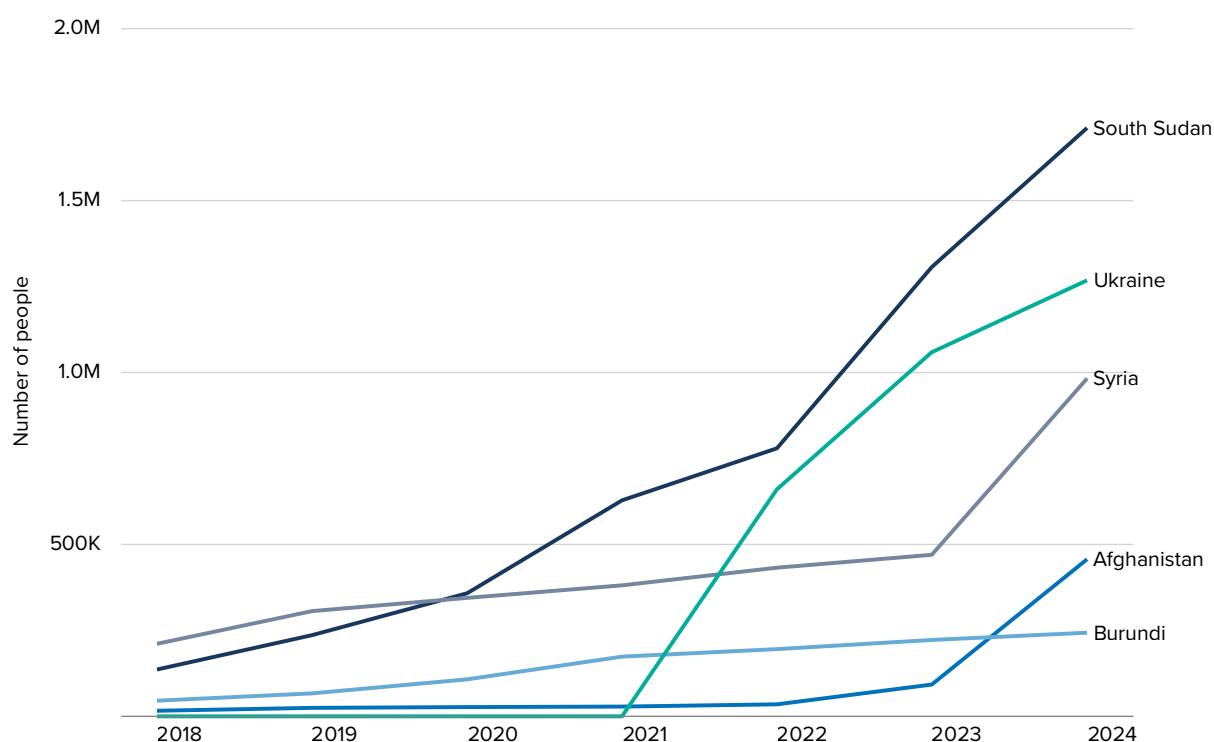
The context in which refugees return to their country of origin influences the sustainability of their return and their chances to rebuild their lives in safety and with dignity. If returns occur prematurely in the absence of conducive conditions in the country of origin or are induced primarily by factors including deteriorating conditions in the former country of asylum, reestablishment in the country of origin will be much harder to achieve.

In 2024, more than 1.6 million refugees from 117 countries of origin returned from a total of 78 countries of asylum. This is the highest annual number of refugee returns since 2002, when nearly two million Afghans returned. In 2024, 92 per cent of all returning refugees were Syrians (512,700),¹⁷⁵

South Sudanese (404,700),¹⁷⁶ Afghans (364,400),¹⁷⁷ and Ukrainians (209,100).¹⁷⁸ These returns have occurred either because of adverse circumstances in the former country of asylum, or to countries where security concerns persist, peace remains elusive or the infrastructure is significantly degraded.

Over the last decade, refugee returns to each of these countries has continued to increase. For example, 1.7 million South Sudanese returned to their country during the past decade and nearly a quarter of whom did so in 2024 alone (see figure 20).¹⁷⁹ Similarly, nearly half of Syrians that have returned in the same period (1.1 million in total) and over one-third of Afghans (962,700 in total) did so in 2024.

Figure 20 | Cumulative refugee returns by country of origin | 2018 - 2024



¹⁷⁵ For more information on Syria, see the [Spotlight on the Syria situation](#).

¹⁷⁶ With the onset of the Sudan crisis in 2023, many South Sudanese residing in Sudan were compelled to return to their country of origin due to escalating insecurity and economic challenges. See [South Sudan – Border Monitoring Report – February 2025](#), UNHCR.

¹⁷⁷ Almost all returns in 2024 were from the Islamic Republic of Iran (237,500) and Pakistan (126,800). A total of 813,300 Afghans have returned to their home country from Pakistan between September 2023 and December 2024 (see [Pakistan-Afghanistan - Returns Emergency Response #26](#), UNHCR). Total returns refer to all types of returns, including deportations, assisted voluntary repatriation and other returns of Afghans of all statuses in Pakistan, including undocumented Afghans (see the [Afghanistan situation overview](#), UNHCR).

¹⁷⁸ The number of refugee returns to Ukraine is estimated using IOM's "[Returns Report – General Population Survey](#)" and "[Internal Displacement Report – General Population Survey](#)", Round 19. The estimated number of refugees who returned from abroad to their place of origin since the start of the war (1,066,000) was added to the estimated number of refugees who returned from abroad but not to their area of origin (355,000). This total was multiplied by the estimated proportion who returned in 2024 according to the GPS Return Report, excluding returnees for less than 3 months (which is the timeframe established in UNHCR's Position Paper on Returns from Ukraine as indication of the intention of a stable return). This resulted in 14 per cent of total estimated returns from abroad (or 203,000 persons). The breakdown by former country of asylum is based on results from the latest UNHCR Intention Surveys with refugees returnees – see [Lives on Hold #6](#), UNHCR.

¹⁷⁹ Returns to South Sudan have been difficult to verify, as they tend to be self-organized, and it can be difficult to reach the areas to which many people return.

Elsewhere, refugee returns did take place in conditions much more conducive to their reintegration in their country, including in **Nigeria** (37,700), **Burundi** (21,100), the **Central African Republic** (19,900) and **Cameroon** (17,700). For example, returns of **Nigerian** refugees rose by 19 per cent in 2024, mostly from Niger (21,600) and Cameroon (15,500). Efforts are being made by the government and UNHCR to support Nigerian asylum-seekers and refugees living outside the country to return home voluntarily, in safety and dignity.¹⁸⁰

While there are no official statistics on returns of Venezuelan refugees and other people in need of international protection, the Venezuelan authorities have reported some 300,000 Venezuelans have been repatriated since 2018 through the government-sponsored *Plan Vuelta a la Patria* while others have spontaneously returned to Venezuela over the last few years.

Refugee resettlement and complementary pathways

According to official government data on resettlement arrivals and UNHCR statistics on resettlement departures, 22 countries reported 188,800 arrivals through resettlement and sponsorship pathways¹⁸¹ during 2024. This was 19 per cent more than during 2023 and was the highest number reported for more than 40 years.¹⁸² While the total number of resettlement arrivals still only accounted for 8 per cent of the estimated 2.4 million individuals globally identified by UNHCR in 2024 as in need of resettlement,¹⁸³ this is the highest proportion that has been achieved since 2017.

Over six in ten refugees resettled globally were supported through UNHCR's resettlement programme, with the remainder finding solutions through sponsorship pathways. Of all the cases submitted by UNHCR to States in 2024, 88 per cent of resettlement submissions concerned survivors of torture and/or violence, people with legal and physical protection needs and particularly vulnerable

women and girls. Submissions by children accounted for 47 per cent of all resettlement submissions facilitated by UNHCR in 2024.¹⁸⁴

Just four countries accounted for 94 per cent of all resettlement arrivals in 2024, including those arriving through sponsorship pathways. The United States of America received the largest number of resettled refugees (105,500), with the majority originating from the Democratic Republic of the Congo (18,800), Afghanistan (17,000), Venezuela (14,500), Syria (10,400) and Myanmar (8,900). Canada resettled 49,300 refugees, primarily from Eritrea (15,500), Afghanistan (8,900), Syria (6,600) and Somalia (4,900). Just over 17,200 resettled refugees arrived in Australia, 6,300 of whom were from Afghanistan and 2,100 from Syria. Germany welcomed 5,600 refugees, with most from Syria (2,900) and Afghanistan (1,000).

Refugee local integration

Accurate data on local integration remains limited, posing a significant challenge to effectively measuring progress in its assessment. Data on naturalization of refugees and the granting of permanent residence permits are commonly used as proxies to assess local integration outcomes. However, inconsistencies in data reporting across countries and time undermine comparability and trend analysis.

According to the data received from 26 refugee hosting countries in 2024, approximately 88,900 refugees, originating from 173 countries, acquired citizenship or were granted permanent residency.¹⁸⁵ The total number of refugees naturalizing was nearly three-times more than during 2023 (30,800). This rise is largely due to improved reporting of data on naturalization, rather than a substantive change in naturalization policies. Statistics were newly available for Norway and Sweden, a positive step forwards in improving the coverage of statistics about local integration. As only 1 in 7 countries worldwide provide these statistics, they remain only indicative.

Refugees who acquired citizenship or were granted permanent residence in their host countries in 2024

¹⁸⁰ See [Can we end forced displacement in Nigeria?](#), UNHCR.

¹⁸¹ See the [master glossary of terms](#), UNHCR.

¹⁸² See footnote 46.

¹⁸³ See [Projected global resettlement needs 2024](#), UNHCR.

¹⁸⁴ See [UNHCR official statistics on resettlement](#), UNHCR.

¹⁸⁵ See annex 12.

were primarily from Syria (17,600), Eritrea (8,600) and Afghanistan (8,000). Three-quarters of the refugees who acquired citizenship or were granted permanent residency did so in just three countries. Canada accounted for the largest share, with 27,400 individuals becoming permanent residents, predominantly Iranians (2,500) and Nigerians (1,800). Sweden and the Kingdom of the Netherlands were next, with 21,000 (23 per cent) and 19,000 (21 per cent) respectively.

In addition to refugees, other population groups also have specific opportunities to settle in countries of asylum. For example, in Belize, an amnesty programme offered an alternative pathway to permanent residency for asylum-seekers and other population groups arriving in the country. By December 2024, nearly 500 asylum-seekers had received residency cards, granting them access to rights, services and a path toward future naturalization.

Return of IDPs

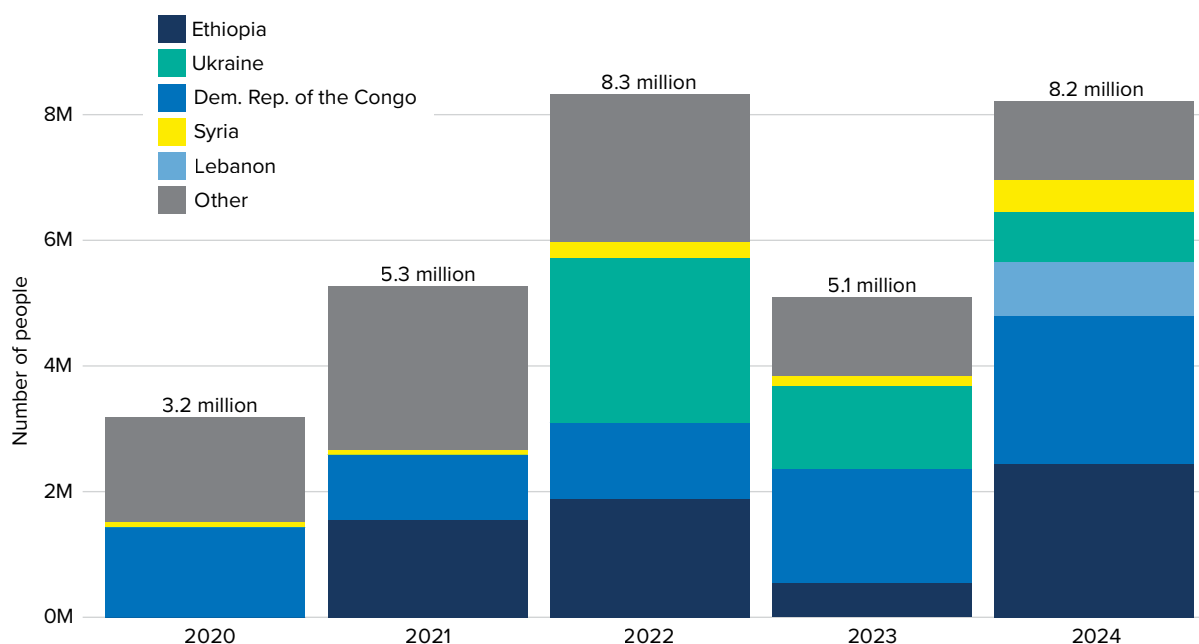
The process of returning to one's place of origin does not in itself reflect that a formerly displaced person

has been able to overcome their **displacement-related vulnerabilities**.¹⁸⁶ If returns occur in areas of origin where the situation remains unstable, or the prospects for reintegration are limited, the risk of renewed displacement remains high.

During 2024, over 8.2 million IDPs were estimated to have returned to their place of origin. This is 61 per cent higher from the previous year and is the second highest global yearly IDP returns ever reported (see figure 21).¹⁸⁷

Nearly 9 in 10 IDP returns in 2024 took place in **Ethiopia** (2.4 million), the **Democratic Republic of the Congo** (2.4 million), **Lebanon** (860,700), **Ukraine** (782,000), **Syria** (513,900) and **Myanmar** (377,600). As conflict intensity varies across different areas in countries and over time, waves of new internal displacement and return movements may follow each other. As such, in all of the countries noted above, large new internal displacements were also reported. However, positively, in Ethiopia and Lebanon returns have continued in early 2025 and in Syria, reported IDP returns between January and early May 2025 have already surpassed those during 2024.

Figure 21 | Returns of IDPs protected/assisted by UNHCR | 2020-2024



¹⁸⁶ See [What are durable solutions for refugees and IDPs?](#), UNHCR.

¹⁸⁷ UNHCR first started reporting returns of IDPs in 1997 in 4 countries. By 2006, reporting included estimates from 17 countries. The highest number of IDP returns was recorded in 2022, totalling 8.3 million.

TAJIKISTAN. Adolat was born in 1988, in Kulyab city of Tajikistan. It wasn't until Adolat sought employment at a local school as a cleaner that she realized she was undocumented and at risk of being stateless. Lacking any identity documents, her hope of securing a steady job seemed unreachable. With the support and counselling by a UNHCR partner, Adolat collected the necessary documents, received cash assistance and, after years of uncertainty, finally obtained her Tajik passport.

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CHAPTER 6

Stateless people

4.4 MILLION

Are estimated to be stateless at end-2024 and the true number is likely to be much higher.

47,200

Stateless people acquired citizenship in 2024, nearly 50 per cent more than during the previous two years.

Overview

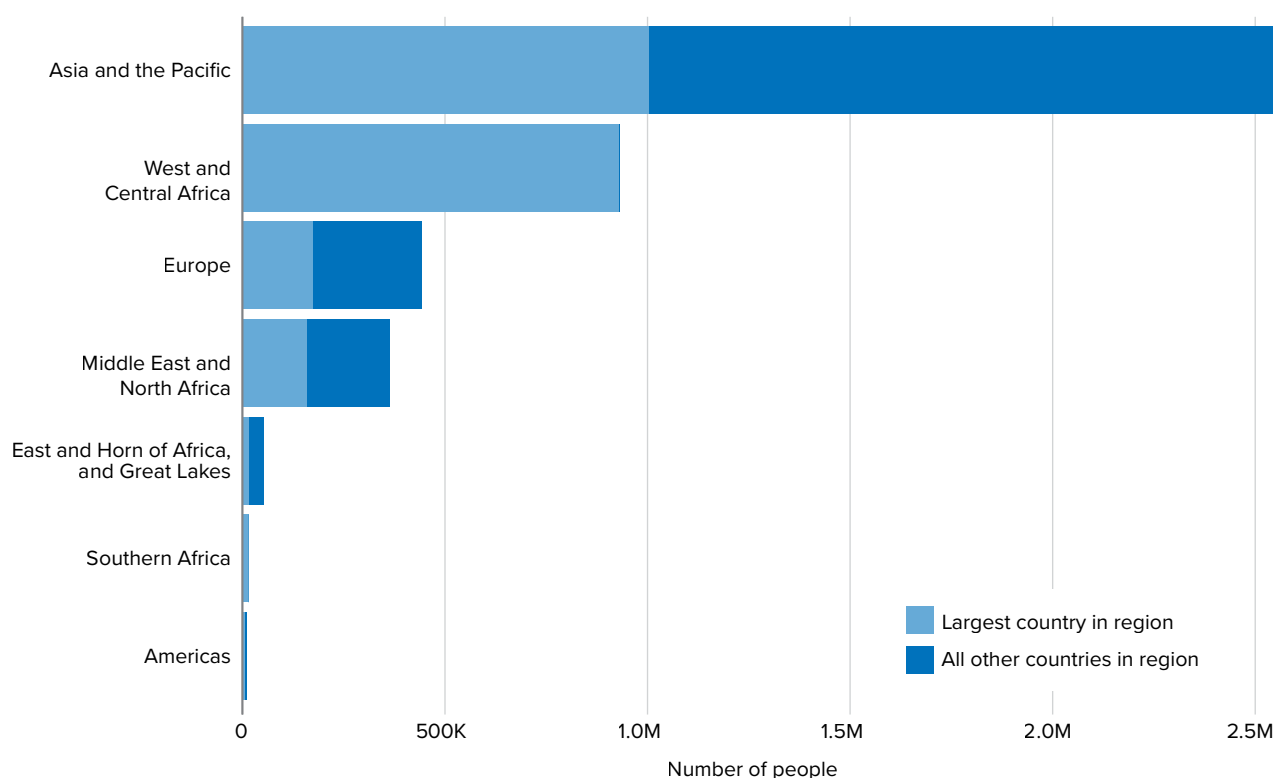
An estimated 4.4 million stateless people were reported globally at the end of 2024, a figure that is largely unchanged from the previous year's total. The estimated total encompasses stateless people—those not recognized as nationals by any country—and persons with undetermined nationality, who lack proof of nationality and have ties to multiple states or are treated by the country of residence as having potential claims to nationality elsewhere. This total reflects reductions due to stateless people acquiring citizenship and people of undetermined nationality having their nationality confirmed during the year as well as new or revised estimates for several countries.

Rohingya, originating from Myanmar's Rakhine State, represent the largest known stateless population globally, totalling nearly 1.8 million. Rohingya people have been subjected to institutionalized

discrimination and race-based legal, policy and practical barriers to citizenship for decades. They have been faced with intense persecution since the 1970s, which escalated during the brutal military crackdown in Myanmar's Rakhine State in August 2017. As of the end of 2024, more than 1.1 million Rohingya have been forced to flee abroad and of the reported 619,400 Rohingya in Myanmar, 41 per cent were internally displaced by the end of 2024.

Globally, 58 per cent of all reported stateless people are in the Asia and the Pacific region (2.5 million). Some 21 per cent are in West and Central Africa (931,100), 10 per cent are in Europe and 8 per cent are in the Middle East and North Africa. However, the vast majority of reported stateless people reside in just a few countries, with nearly 90 per cent of them in just ten countries (see figure 22).

Figure 22 | Number of reported stateless people by region | end-2024



Based on the available age- and sex-disaggregated demographic data for 76 per cent of the 4.4 million stateless people,¹⁸⁸ children account for 44 per cent of stateless people, women for 30 per cent and men for 26 per cent.

Where does data on stateless people come from?

The above figures were derived from data for 101 countries on known stateless populations reported to UNHCR in 2024, six more than the previous year.¹⁸⁹ Just under half of all countries do not report any data on statelessness to UNHCR, including several with significant known stateless populations. In addition, some countries provide data for only a portion of the stateless population within their borders. As a result, the true global number of stateless people is likely much higher.

For those countries that have reported stateless populations, in some cases, governments report

figures to UNHCR based on administrative population registers, while asylum processing systems may identify stateless individuals among asylum-seekers and refugees hosted in the country. However, in many countries, administrative data on statelessness is unavailable and information must instead be drawn from population censuses, surveys or estimates, provided by governments or UNHCR and its partners.

It is crucial that, when using quantitative and qualitative studies to estimate stateless populations, efforts are made to distinguish between those under UNHCR's statelessness mandate and individuals who lack valid nationality documentation but do not face structural barriers—such as discriminatory nationality laws or practices—to acquiring citizenship or documents proving it. In addition, people of unknown origin who do not cooperate in efforts to establish their identity or nationality do not fall under UNHCR's statelessness mandate and should also be distinguished and not included in statelessness estimates.

¹⁸⁸ Data disaggregated only by sex is available for 81 per cent of the known stateless population.

¹⁸⁹ The countries reporting stateless populations for the first time are Lebanon, Namibia and Panama. Colombia, Cuba and Malta have all reported stateless populations previously but did not in 2023.

The limitations in the quality of statelessness data, particularly in terms of completeness and reliability, continue to limit accurate reporting of stateless populations. In some contexts, anecdotal evidence may suggest the presence of stateless individuals or populations at risk of statelessness; however, without verifiable data on their presence, number and composition, formal reporting is not possible.

During 2024, several refinements to both existing and new estimates were published as more and improved data on stateless people becomes available. These reflect the identification of new sources, revisions to existing approaches or the extrapolation of previous estimates (see table 3 and the detailed footnotes in annex 4).

Table 3 | **Source and methodology changes for stateless population estimates | 2024**

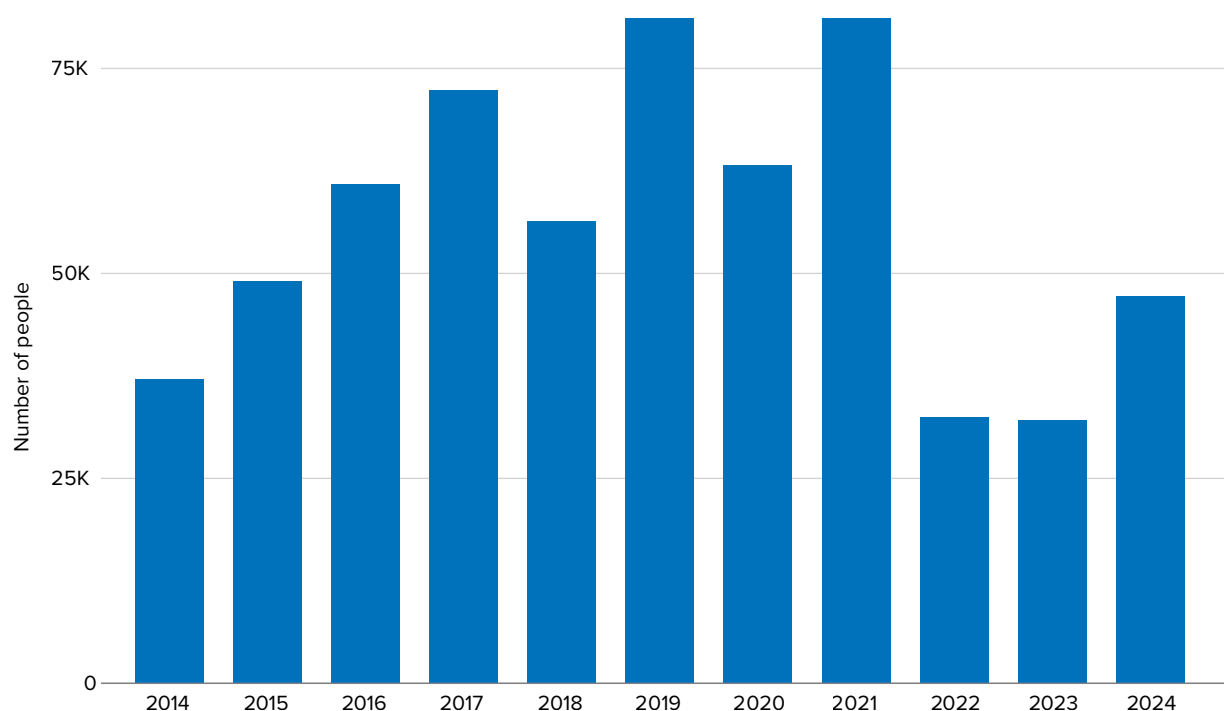
Country	Previous estimate	New estimate	Source (See annex 4 for details)
Lebanon		40,000	Estimated number of stateless people based on recent studies, which does not include displaced stateless people.
Namibia		14,800	A registration exercise enabled an estimate of the population that identified as stateless or who are at risk of statelessness due to documents proving nationality for the first time.
Panama		940	Using census data, the stateless population has been estimated for the first time.
Rwanda	9,500	14,500	A mapping exercise led to the identification of additional populations of undetermined nationality or at risk of statelessness.
South Sudan	10,500	18,000	The estimate of the population with undetermined nationality in the country has been updated.
Sweden	18,700	6,835	Government reported updated figures for stateless people, including refugees, asylum-seekers and those with other types of residence permits, thus avoiding the need to use previous estimates calculated by UNHCR.
Uganda	67,000	10,300	Census data supported a downwards revision of the previous estimate.
Ukraine	37,800	10,900	The reduction relates to a review of the methodology and the use of available up-to-date data sources. The actual scale of statelessness is, however, undetermined and is likely to be higher owing to the ongoing war, temporary occupation and large-scale forced displacement.

Citizenship acquisitions and policy improvements during 2024

In 2024, 47,200 stateless people or people of undetermined nationality acquired citizenship or had their nationality confirmed, respectively, in 32 countries. This represents a 47 per cent increase compared to 2023. Notably, during the past year,

19,900 people of undetermined nationality were issued nationality certificates in **South Sudan**, while formerly stateless people in **Viet Nam** (6,200) and **Thailand** (5,700) received citizenship in these countries.

Figure 23 | **Number of stateless people acquiring citizenship | 2014 - 2024**



In 2024, several countries took important steps to resolve and prevent statelessness. In **Thailand**, the Government approved a resolution to accelerate pathways to permanent residency and nationality for nearly half a million registered stateless people. Once the resolution is implemented, it will bring relief to longtime residents and members of officially recognized minority ethnic groups and their children who were born in Thailand, who account for the vast majority of the more than 612,500 stateless people in Thailand.¹⁹⁰ During the year, **Sao Tome and Principe** and **South Sudan** acceded to the 1954 Convention relating to the Status of Stateless Persons and the 1961 Convention on the Reduction of Statelessness.¹⁹¹ Acceding to both UN Statelessness Conventions is a

key step towards improving national legal and policy frameworks on statelessness. In addition, following the naturalization of a final group of 1,100 stateless people in September 2024, **Turkmenistan** announced that all known statelessness cases within its territory have been resolved.¹⁹²

In **Kenya**, UNHCR worked with the parliamentary counsel on proposed amendments to the Kenya Citizenship and Immigration Act to address statelessness, while over 2,400 stateless Rundi and individuals of Rwandan descent were registered to support evidence-based data for advocacy and planning for solutions for these groups. In **Iraq**, the Government issued a directive simplifying the nationality confirmation for Faili Kurds, removing

¹⁹⁰ The total statelessness figure includes 589,800 stateless persons reported by the Royal Thai Government and registered with the national civil registration system by the end of 2024.

¹⁹¹ See [UNHCR welcomes South Sudan's accession](#) to two statelessness conventions, UNHCR.

¹⁹² See [UNHCR applauds Turkmenistan in resolving statelessness](#), UNHCR.

key legal and administrative barriers. **Mauritania** completed a large-scale civil registration campaign, registering over 600,000 people through simplified procedures, including people at risk of statelessness. **Mali** updated its National Action Plan with a new four-year strategy to combat statelessness.

Beyond individual countries, three important regional initiatives were launched in 2024 to resolve and prevent statelessness. **Latin American and Caribbean** states adopted as part of the Cartagena+40 process, The Chile Declaration and Plan of Action,¹⁹³ reaffirming their commitment to protecting and finding solutions for displaced and stateless people. The **League of Arab States** launched the Arab Declaration on Belonging and Legal Identity, a regional initiative focused on enhancing birth registration and legal identity frameworks to address statelessness, displacement and conflict, with particular attention to advancing women's legal rights. The **African Union** Assembly of States adopted the Protocol to the African Charter on Human and People's Rights Relating to the Specific Aspects of the Right to a Nationality and the Eradication of Statelessness in Africa.¹⁹⁴ The protocol aims to remove legal barriers that are preventing stateless people and those at risk of statelessness in Africa from accessing nationality. The Protocol introduces important advances, including measures to prevent generational statelessness, provisions for nomadic and cross-border populations and enhanced legal safeguards. It will come into force once it has been ratified by 15 African Union Member States.¹⁹⁵

In October 2024, UNHCR launched the **Global Alliance to End Statelessness**.¹⁹⁶ As of May 2025, the Alliance encompasses 141 States and organizations as members and reflects a whole-of-society approach, bringing together governments, regional intergovernmental organisations, UN agencies, civil society, stateless-led and faith-based organizations, academia and other stakeholders in coordinated action. It builds on the success of UNHCR's 10-year #IBelong campaign, during which more than 600,000 stateless people acquired citizenship, 14 States acceded to the 1954 Convention and 18 States to the 1961 Convention. In addition, many

countries reformed their laws and policies to prevent and resolve statelessness and to better protect stateless people. The mission of the Global Alliance to End Statelessness is to accelerate solutions that can bring an end to statelessness. Its approach includes strategic workstreams that will seek to address key aspects of statelessness and promote effective solutions. Regional Network Labs aim to foster knowledge exchange and development of context-sensitive solutions, while Thematic Working Groups bring together expert groups on priority issues, such as addressing childhood statelessness, discrimination in nationality laws and policies and protecting the rights of stateless people. The Solution Seekers Programme of the Alliance aims to engage and support States and regional organizations that have pledged to resolve statelessness by providing implementation support, such as Alliance tools and, expertise on best practises. The Alliance also has an Online Marketplace that connects member-led statelessness projects with potential donors.

In 2024, many initiatives towards ending statelessness were launched. In all cases, the political will to reduce the number of stateless people through passing new or revised legislation, to improve procedures or taking other measures enabling them to acquire citizenship or have their nationality confirmed, are underpinned by good quality data on statelessness.

¹⁹³ See Cartagena+40 [Chile Declaration and Plan of Action](#), 2024-2034.

¹⁹⁴ See the [Protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights Relating to the Specific Aspects of the Right to a Nationality and the Eradication of Statelessness in Africa](#).

¹⁹⁵ See [UNHCR lauds African Union move to address statelessness across the continent](#), UNHCR.

¹⁹⁶ See the [Global Alliance to End Statelessness](#) which includes 23 governments, 11 regional/intergovernmental bodies, 4 UN agencies, 16 stateless-led groups, 66 civil society NGOs, 7 academic institutions, 5 faith-based organizations and others.



SYRIA, Zahraa sleeps on a suitcase at the Masnaa crossing point between Syria and Lebanon in December 2024. Her family fled Idlib in Syria earlier after the overthrow of the government in Syria, because of violence and looting, and fear about the unfolding events.

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Who is included in UNHCR statistics?

UNHCR collates population data relating to people who are forcibly displaced or stateless. The data is sourced primarily from governments and also from UNHCR operations. See <https://www.unhcr.org/refugee-statistics/methodology/> for the detailed description and definitions of who is included in these statistics.

Annex tables

Annex tables can be downloaded from the UNHCR website at: <https://www.unhcr.org/refugee-statistics/insights/annexes/trends-annexes.html>.

All data are provisional and subject to change.

Data is available at: <https://www.unhcr.org/refugee-statistics>.



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GLOBAL TRENDS

FORCED DISPLACEMENT IN 2024

PRODUCED BY UNHCR
(12 JUNE 2025)

FRONT COVER

JORDAN. Batool and her brother Abdulaziz, Syrian refugees, huddle close to stay warm. For many refugee children in Za'atari camp, winter becomes unbearable. Staying in warm shelters without worrying about water leaking and playing outside without falling in the mud are their only wishes. Despite the challenges, many of them still spread hope with their smiles and small wishes. "I love seeing every drop of rain; winter is my favourite season," Batool said.

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This document along with further information on global displacement is available on UNHCR's statistics website:

<https://www.unhcr.org/refugee-statistics>

