

Displacement is not one number

Refugees, internal-displacement stocks, and displacement movements measure different things

Six measures - three different questions

Refugee categories, year-end stocks, and annual movements are not interchangeable.



Sources: UNHCR Global Trends 2025; IDMC GRID 2026. The 1.5m refugee-like population is included within the UNHCR-mandate refugee total.

News angle: Global displacement figures are often presented side by side as if they describe the same population. Some count people outside their country, some count people remaining displaced inside their country, and some count how many times people moved during a year.

Key facts

41.6 million: refugees globally at the end of 2025 under UNHCR's broad headline.

1.5 million: people in refugee-like situations - included within the refugees under UNHCR mandate, not an additional total.

82.2 million: people living in internal displacement at the end of 2025 - 68.6 million linked to conflict and violence and 13.6 million linked to disasters.

62.2 million: internal displacement movements recorded during 2025 - 32.3 million linked to conflict and violence and 29.9 million linked to disasters.

The central distinction

Refugees have crossed an international border. IDPs remain within their country. An end-year stock counts people still displaced; an annual flow counts movement events. The same person can appear in more than one movement.

Available assets

Seven-page Visual Brief, six wide and six mobile charts, PNG/SVG downloads, chart-data CSVs, and a source-and-methods note. Research and media inquiries: research@worldsufferingindex.org