

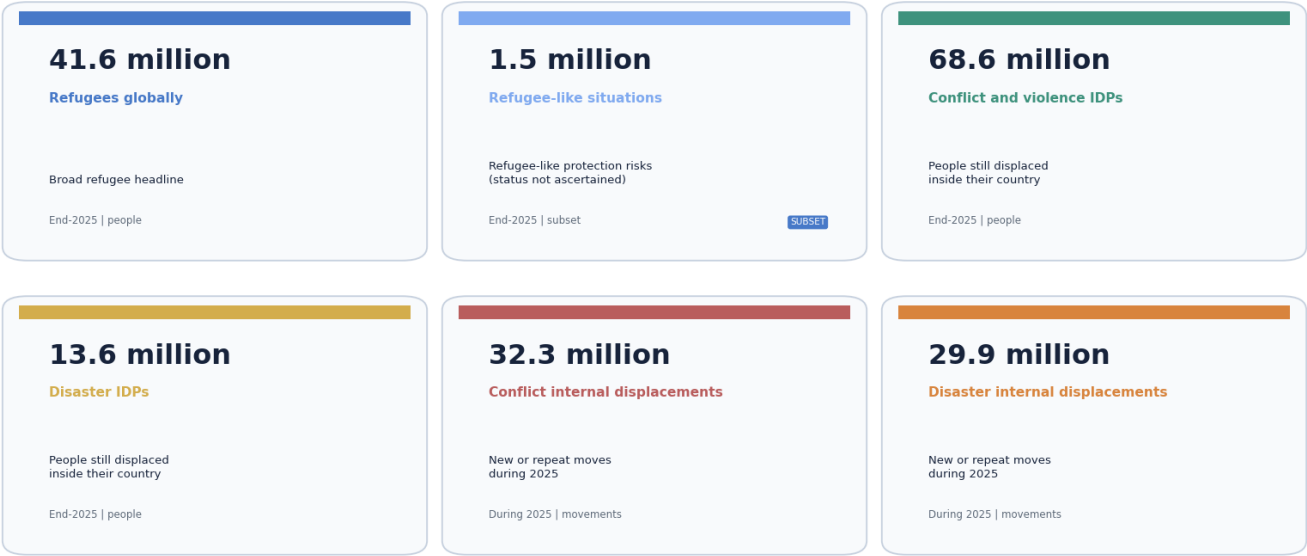
Displacement is not one number

Refugees, internal displacement, and displacement movements answer different questions

Main takeaway. Refugees have crossed an international border. Internally displaced people remain within their country. A year-end stock counts people still displaced; an annual flow counts movements, including repeat displacement. These figures should not be added into one total.

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.

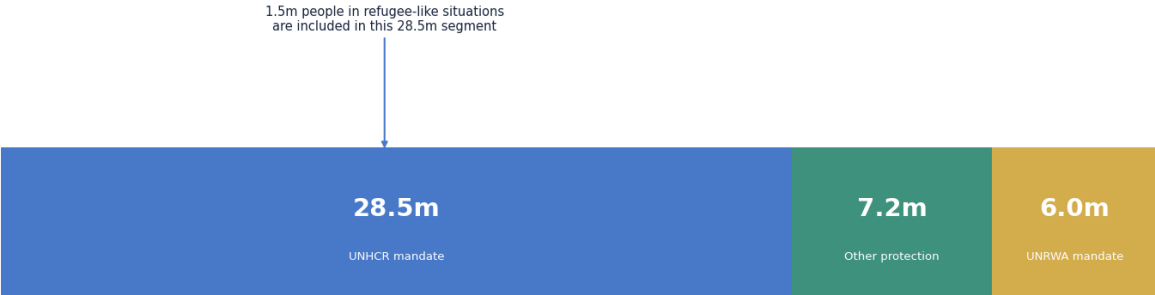
Sources: UNHCR Global Trends 2025; IDMC Global Report on Internal Displacement 2026.

1. Refugees and refugee-like situations are related categories

UNHCR reported 41.6 million refugees globally at the end of 2025. That broad headline includes refugees under UNHCR mandate, other people in need of international protection, and Palestine refugees under UNRWA mandate. People in refugee-like situations are included within the UNHCR-mandate refugee population; they are not an additional population to add again.

What the 41.6 million refugee headline includes

Three rounded groupings. The refugee-like population is a subset inside the first group.



Asylum-seekers are a separate category. Component values may not sum exactly because of rounding.

Source: UNHCR Global Trends 2025 and Refugee Data Finder methodology

UNHCR defines people in refugee-like situations as groups outside their country of origin who face protection risks similar to refugees but whose refugee status has not been ascertained for practical or other reasons.

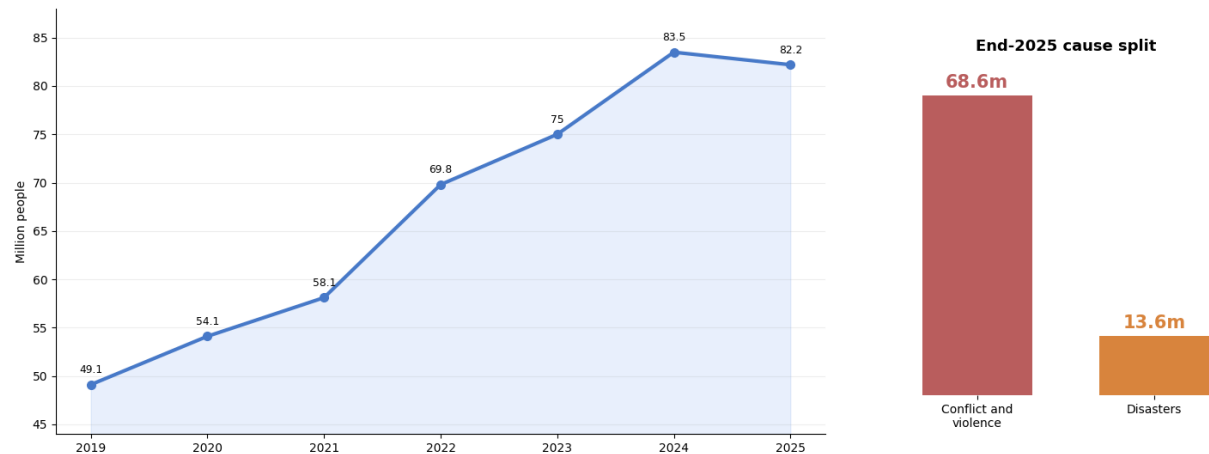
Source: UNHCR Global Trends 2025 and Refugee Data Finder methodology.

2. Internal displacement stocks count people remaining displaced

IDMC estimated that 82.2 million people were living in internal displacement across 104 countries and territories at the end of 2025. More than 68.6 million were displaced by conflict and violence, and almost 13.6 million by disasters.

82.2 million people were living in internal displacement at end-2025

The global stock fell slightly in 2025, but remained near a record high.



Source: IDMC GRID 2026. The published trend includes disaster stock data from 2019 onward.

The total fell for the first time in a decade, but remained close to the record level reported in 2024. IDMC also cautions that changing or outdated source coverage can affect the apparent trend.

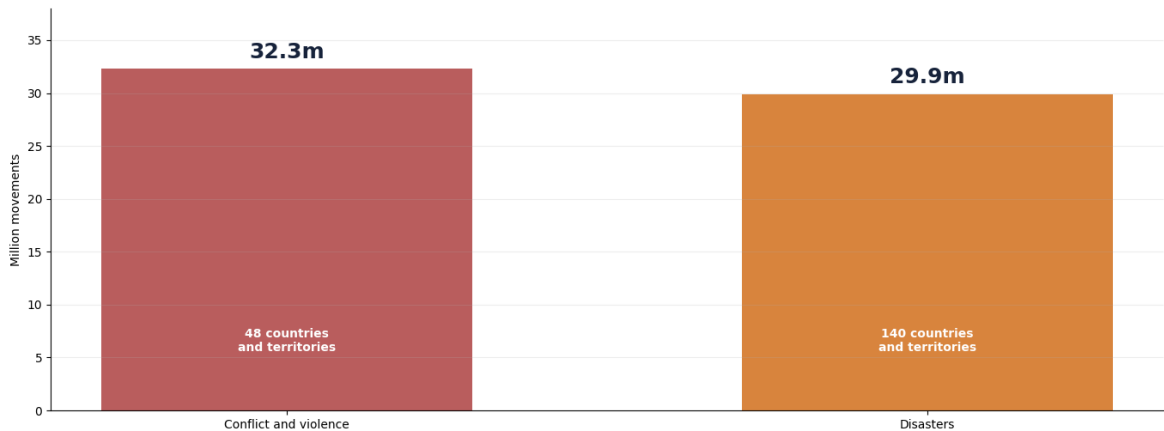
Source: IDMC GRID 2026 summary.

3. Movement counts describe what happened during the year

IDMC recorded 62.2 million internal displacement movements during 2025. Conflict and violence triggered 32.3 million movements, the highest figure on record, while disasters triggered 29.9 million.

62.2 million internal displacement movements were recorded during 2025

For the first time, conflict movements exceeded disaster movements.



A movement is not necessarily a unique person. The same person may be displaced more than once.

Source: IDMC GRID 2026. Conflict movements rose nearly 60%; disaster movements fell 35% from 2024.

Movements are not unique people. The same person can be forced to move several times, and some disaster movements are short-term or pre-emptive evacuations.

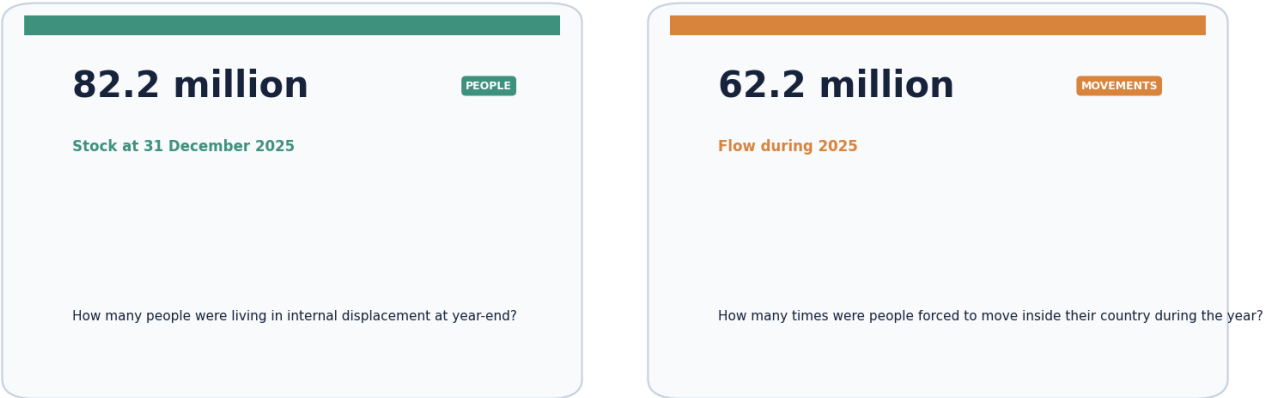
Source: IDMC GRID 2026 summary.

4. Stock and flow should not be compared as one total

A stock is a point-in-time snapshot. A flow counts events over a period. Some people in the end-year stock were displaced years earlier and did not move in 2025. Some people counted in the 2025 movement total moved repeatedly and may not have remained displaced at year-end.

Stock and movements answer different questions

The numbers are not two versions of the same total.



One person can generate several movements. Some movements are temporary or pre-emptive.

Source: IDMC GRID 2026 definitions and global totals.

The two global figures therefore answer different questions. Adding them would double-count some experiences and combine people with movement events.

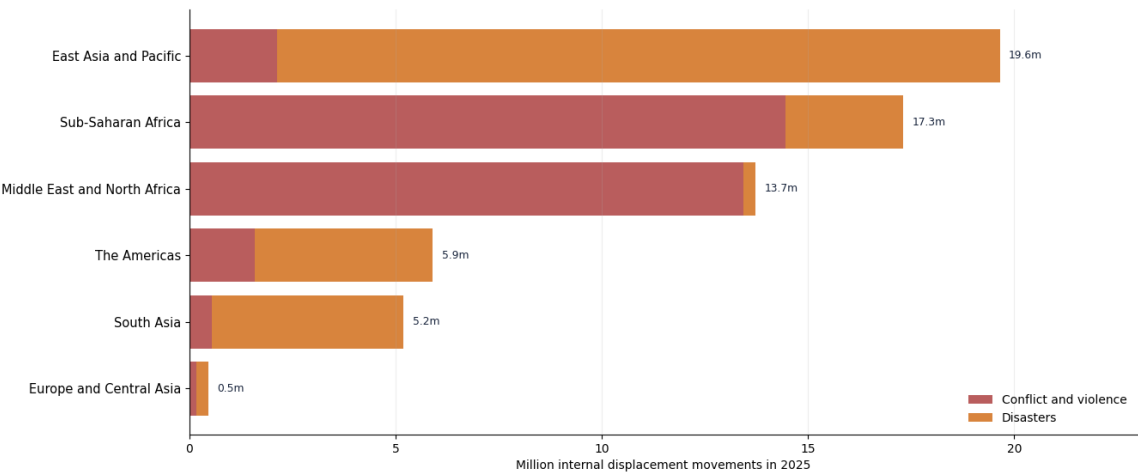
Source: IDMC GRID 2026 definitions.

5. The cause mix differs across regions

In East Asia and the Pacific, disasters accounted for most internal displacement movements in 2025. Conflict and violence dominated in sub-Saharan Africa and the Middle East and North Africa. Regional totals are movement counts, not unique people.

Conflict and disaster movements follow different regional patterns

Regional totals show movement events, not unique people.



Source: IDMC GRID 2026 summary. Regional figures may differ slightly from global totals because of rounding.

Source: IDMC GRID 2026 summary. Values may differ slightly from the global totals because of rounding.

Which measure answers which question?

Measure	Question answered	Unit and time
Refugees	How many people are outside their country and counted in refugee-related categories?	People; end-year stock
People in refugee-like situations	How many people face refugee-like risks without formally ascertained refugee status?	People; subset of end-year stock
Conflict IDP stock	How many people remain displaced inside their country by conflict or violence?	People; end-year stock
Disaster IDP stock	How many people remain displaced inside their country by disasters?	People; end-year stock
Internal displacements	How many times were people forced to move inside their country during the year?	Movements; annual flow

Do not add incompatible figures. Refugee-like situations are already included within the UNHCR-mandate refugee group. Refugee and IDP stocks can overlap in special cases. Movement counts may count the same person several times.

What this brief adds

The brief places official UNHCR and IDMC figures in one visual framework while preserving each source definition, period, unit, and universe. It does not create a total-displacement ranking or new composite measure.

The release includes six wide charts, six mobile charts, SVG files with text converted to paths, chart-data CSVs, a two-page media summary, and a source-and-methods note.