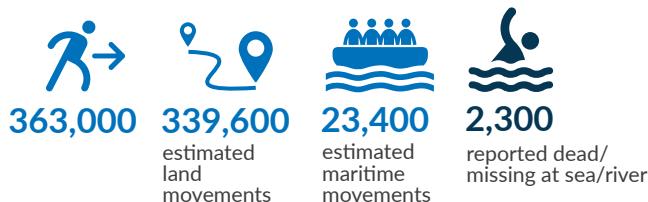
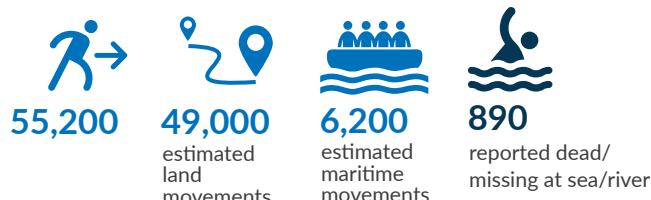
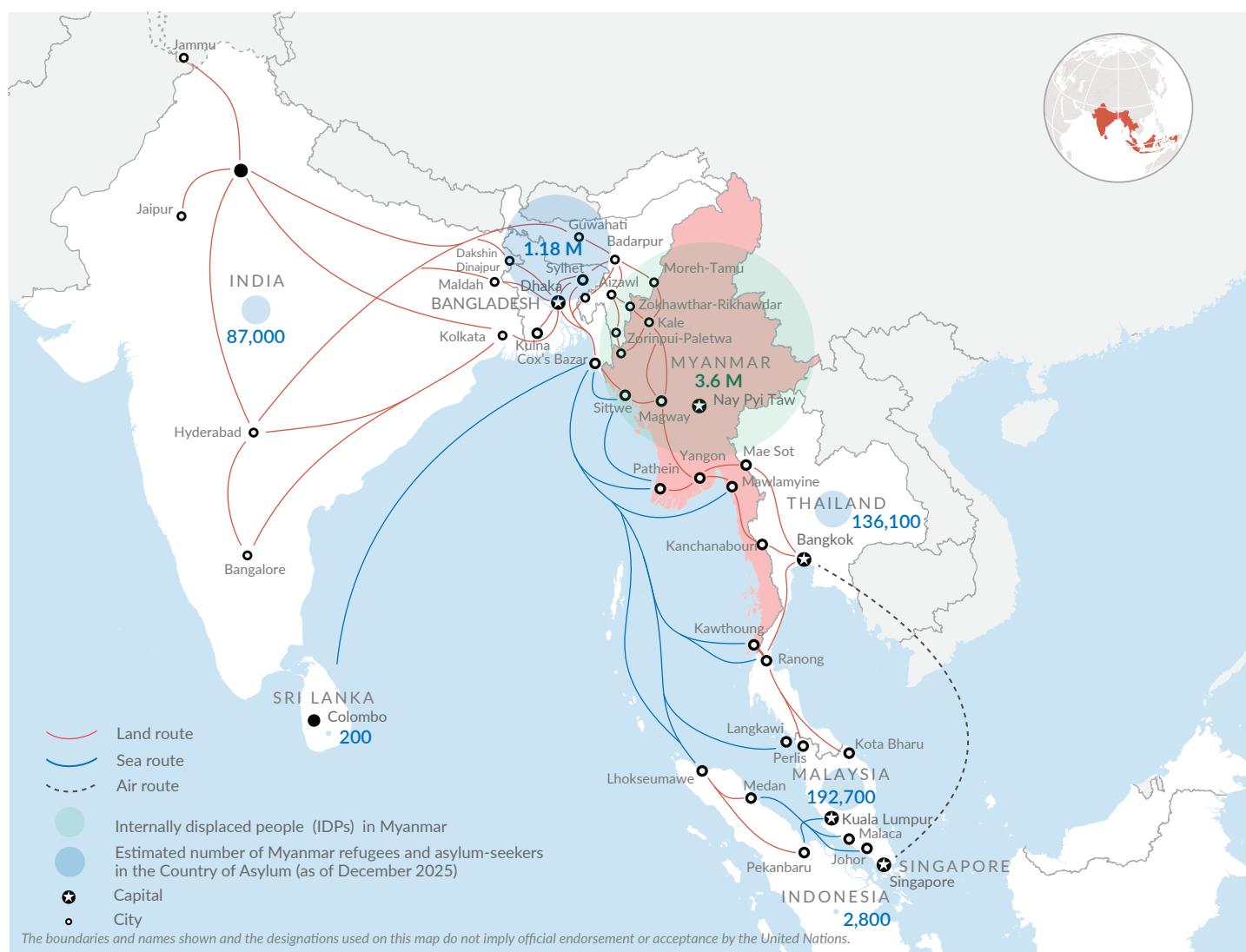


Refugees from Myanmar attempting to find safety and protection by land or maritime movements¹

1 January 2022 - 31 December 2025



In 2025, as of end-December 2025


Which routes do people fleeing Myanmar take?


¹ For the purposes of this document, the simplified term "movement" or "journey" refers to people from Myanmar fleeing by land and/or sea/river directly from Myanmar and/or travelling onwards from a country where they sought refuge and international protection. 'Attempted' movements include intercepted/stopped movements as well as those reaching their intended destinations. The information in this report is compiled and triangulated from various sources, including governments, partners, UNHCR, media reports and interviews with refugees. All data is provisional and subject to change.

How have the movements evolved over time?

From January 2022 to December 2025, an estimated 363,000 people fled Myanmar by land and sea—94% by land and 6% by sea or river. Land and maritime movements peaked in 2024, with a notable increase in the second half of the year. The movements trend continued in the first half of 2025.

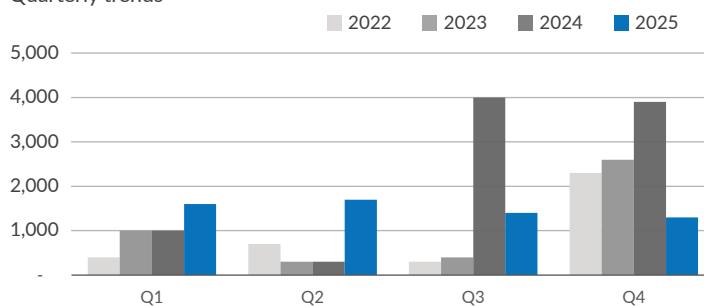
The first half³ of 2025 recorded 53% higher land movements than the same period in 2024. Many reported facing detention or other protection risks along the land routes. Due to limited access and the often clandestine nature of these movements, the actual numbers are likely higher. Maritime movements surged by 153% in the first half of 2025. However, in the last six months of 2025, trends aligned more closely with those observed in 2022–23, with around 35% as many maritime movements recorded compared to the same period in 2024. The total movements in 2025 fell by 56% when compared with 2024, with a 42% reduction in land movements and a 66%, in maritime movements. Inspite of the decreasing trends in the latter half of 2025, the significant number of movements highlight the urgent need for a coordinated and comprehensive response.

Maritime movements

In 2025, there were an estimated 6,200 people attempting the journey on 153 boats. Women and children accounted for the majority of those on the move (60%), continuing the pattern observed since 2022. Most of the movements (75%) took place between Myanmar and Bangladesh.

At least eight tragic boat incidents were recorded in 2025, resulting in some 892 people reported dead or missing.

Quarterly trends

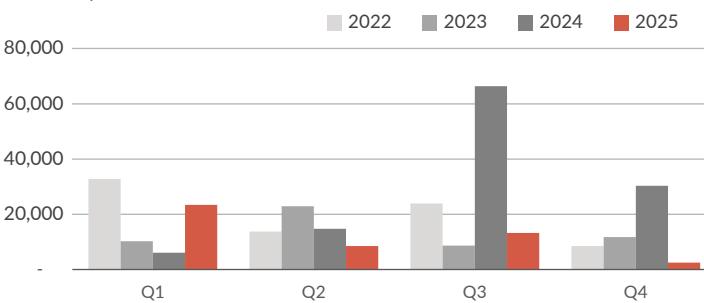


Land movements

In 2025, some estimated 49,000 people have undertaken desperate land journeys, with the majority (66%) fleeing to Bangladesh. The figures include stateless Rohingya refugees attempting to cross into Bangladesh by land but intercepted by Myanmar authorities.

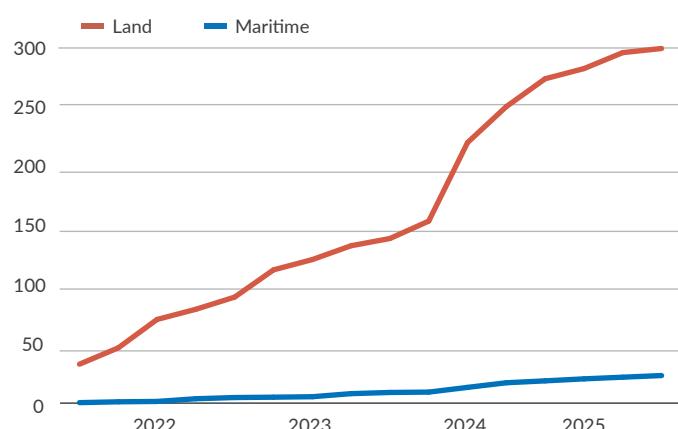
From January 2022 to December 2025, 79% of Myanmar refugees arriving by land were women and children. The trend continued in 2025.

Quarterly trends²

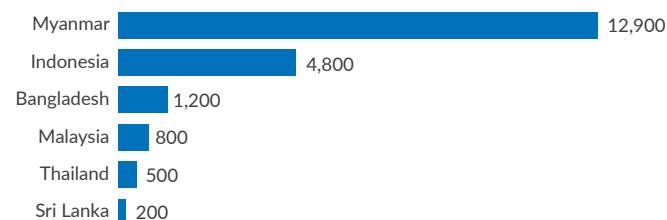


Estimated movements (cumulative since 2022)²

Number of people in thousands



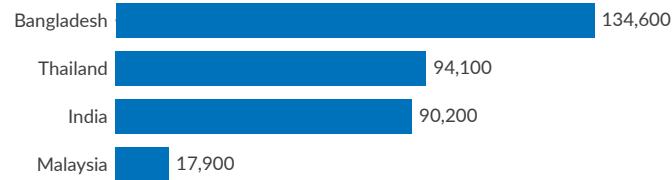
Known maritime arrivals per country⁴ | January 2022 - December 2025



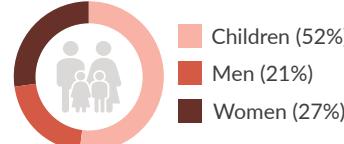
60% of those embarking on boats are women and children



Estimated arrivals by land | January 2022 - December 2025



79% of those arriving by land are women and children



² Quarterly trends exclude 39,100 who have moved by land to Thailand, for whom arrival year is not available.

³ Considering that the registration of refugees moving by land often take place with a few months delay, comparison has been limited to the first six months.

⁴ Maritime arrivals exclude dead and missing persons. It entails situations where a boat was intercepted in transit by authorities and the passengers arrested. These situations are the majority of arrivals in Myanmar and also applies to Bangladesh.

Why are people continuing to move along the SSEA Route?

The worsening situation in Myanmar—particularly the escalating conflict in Rakhine State—along with insecurity and hardship in countries of asylum, continues to push Rohingya and other refugees from Myanmar to seek safety, protection, and dignity elsewhere in the region.

While many express a willingness to return home, they stress this can only happen when conditions allow for a voluntary, safe, dignified, and sustainable return that addresses the root causes of displacement. In the meantime, most refugees from Myanmar hope to contribute to their host communities but face limited access to education, work, and skills training. Combined with legal uncertainty and economic hardship, this leaves many vulnerable to exploitation and compels some to take irregular and dangerous journeys in search of better opportunities.

In the absence of a comprehensive refugee protection framework in many first countries of asylum, refugees from Myanmar remain in limbo. UNHCR continues to advocate for access to asylum and protection-sensitive entry systems at borders. Refugees must be allowed to access territory and be protected against refoulement, in line with international human rights and refugee law—including the principle of non-refoulement—which applies regardless of whether a country is signatory to the 1951 Refugee Convention.

What are the protection issues along the SSEA Route?

Refugees from Myanmar travelling on the South and South East Asia Route face significant protection risks before, during and after arriving at their destination. This includes incidents of online and offline hate speech, disinformation and misinformation. The impact of this on access to territory and to asylum, physical protection, self-reliance, and social cohesion, is felt by refugee communities from Myanmar in the sub region.

Human trafficking networks frequently operate across borders and are connected to broader transnational criminal syndicates. Threats to physical integrity include abuse, torture and death and are often perpetrated by traffickers or smugglers. Refugees and migrants from Myanmar are often denied the use of telephones or other means of communication by smugglers and traffickers and may be separated from their family during the journey. Unaware of the risks, many undertake a people smuggling journey that later becomes a trafficking situation. Trafficking for the purpose of child marriage and forced labour continues to be of particular concern with reports emerging from several countries in the sub-region. Smugglers often take money without providing the promised service or demand a higher fee than initially agreed, threatening to stop the journey or harm refugees from Myanmar or their family members unless they pay more money.

Refugees from Myanmar are frequently held in prolonged or indefinite detention, with limited access to due process. Nearly 3,400 are currently known to be held in detention outside Myanmar. While in detention, refugee women, girls, men and boys are at risk of gender-based violence.

Unseaworthy vessels led to shipwrecks and death or distress situations. Cases of malnutrition, skin and communicable diseases contracted during the journey have been reported by refugees and migrants moving on the SSEA Route.

REASONS FOR MOVEMENT

- Root causes of displacement: Conflict and natural disaster
- Lack of effective protection
- Insecurity in refugee camps
- Difficult conditions in exile
- Limited opportunities for legal pathways to third country solutions
- Family reunification (including arranged marriages)
- Forced/arranged marriage perceived as mitigation of protection risks for women and girls

PROTECTION ISSUES

- Bonded labour
- Detention without due process
- Deprivation of food/water
- Forced marriages
- Gender-based Violence (harassment, rape, exploitation, violence and enslavement)
- Medical issues
- Theft, fraud and extortion
- Trafficking

Detention trends

Number of refugees from Myanmar known to be in detention

