

ASIA & THE PACIFIC REGIONAL TRENDS

FORCED DISPLACEMENT
AND STATELESSNESS 2022



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Front cover image: © UNHCR/Oxygen Film Studio (Afghanistan)

Fatima, an internally displaced widow, carries her son inside her temporary home in Kabul, Afghanistan.

Figures at a glance

14.3 MILLION¹

PEOPLE WHO ARE FORCIBLY DISPLACED, STATELESS,
RETURNEES OR OTHERS OF CONCERN TO UNHCR
in the region of Asia and the Pacific² at the end of 2022

The total figure relates to the people UNHCR protects and assists.³ It includes those who have been forcibly displaced (refugees, people in refugee-like situations, 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; and other groups of concern to whom UNHCR has extended its protection or provided assistance on a humanitarian basis.

7 MILLION
registered refugees, people in
refugee-like situations and
asylum-seekers

5 MILLION
conflict-affected internally
displaced people (IDPs)⁴

0.8 MILLION
IDP returnees

2.5 MILLION
stateless people, including
displaced stateless people

99%
refugees and people in refugee-
like situations are hosted in low-
and middle-income countries⁵

95%
refugees and people in refugee-
like situations are hosted in
neighbouring countries

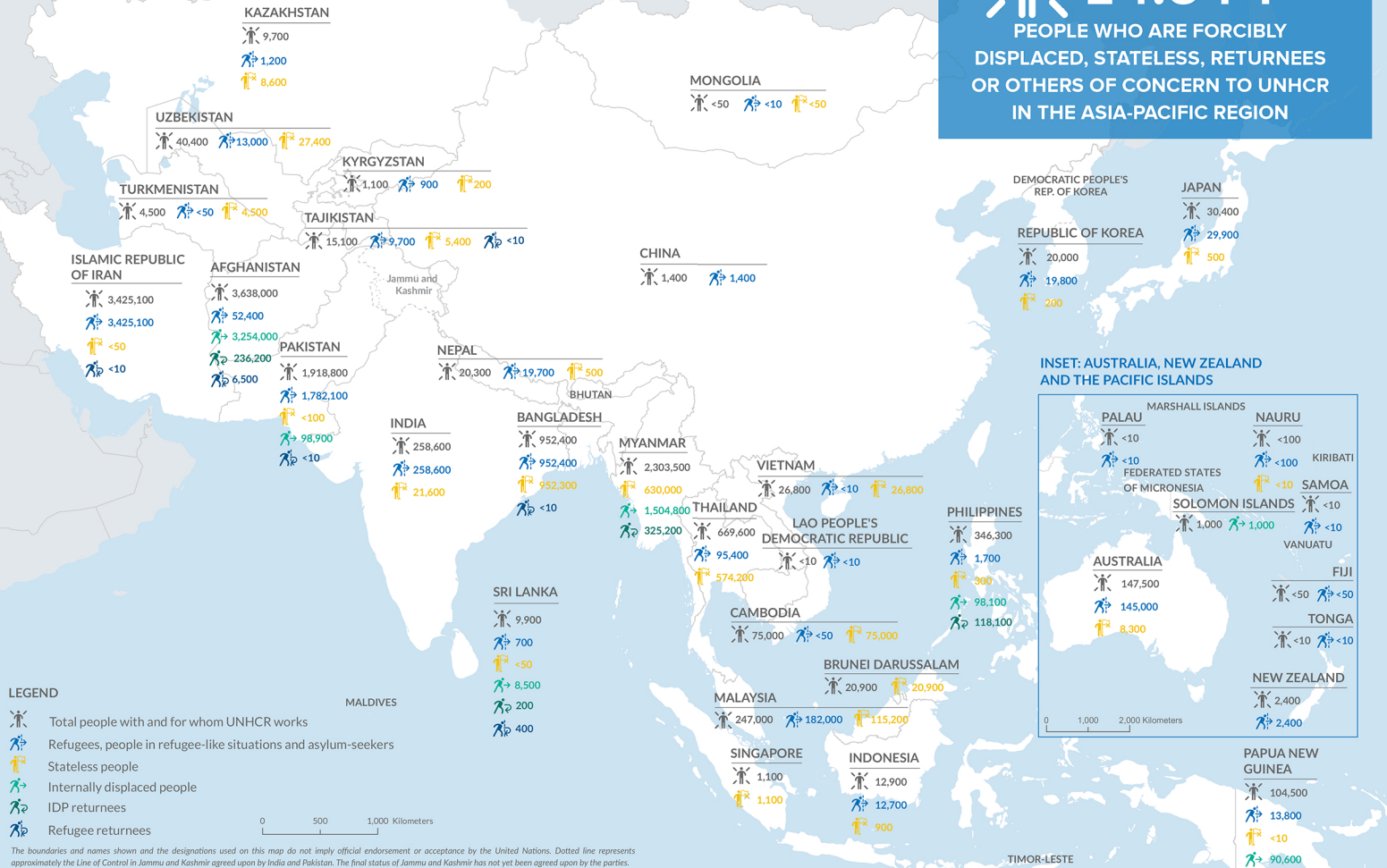
50%
are children⁶

Children are disproportionately represented: they account for 27 per cent⁷ of the estimated inhabitants within the region, but make up 50 per cent of people who are forcibly displaced, stateless, returnees or others of concern to UNHCR in the region.

- ¹ Total does not add up because of the double status of displaced stateless people, who will be included in both stateless and other corresponding categories, like refugees, IDPs or asylum-seekers.
- ² See <https://www.unhcr.org/statistics/2022GTannex.zip> for UNHCR regional classification.
- ³ See UNHCR - Refugee Statistics for population included in UNHCR statistics.
- ⁴ For the purpose of UNHCR's statistics, this population includes only conflict-affected IDPs to whom the UNHCR extends protection and/or assistance. The figures are different from the Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre (IDMC).
- ⁵ See World Bank Country and Lending Groups.
- ⁶ The proportion of children is based on the availability of disaggregated data by age and sex for all people who are forcibly displaced, stateless, returnees or others of concern to UNHCR (77 per cent of 14.3 million).
- ⁷ Data Source: World Population Prospects 2022 (<https://population.un.org/wpp/>).

REFUGEES, ASYLUM-SEEKERS, IDPs, RETURNEES AND STATELESS PEOPLE IN THE ASIA AND THE PACIFIC REGION AS END OF 2022

14.3 M
 PEOPLE WHO ARE FORCIBLY
 DISPLACED, STATELESS, RETURNEES
 OR OTHERS OF CONCERN TO UNHCR
 IN THE ASIA-PACIFIC REGION

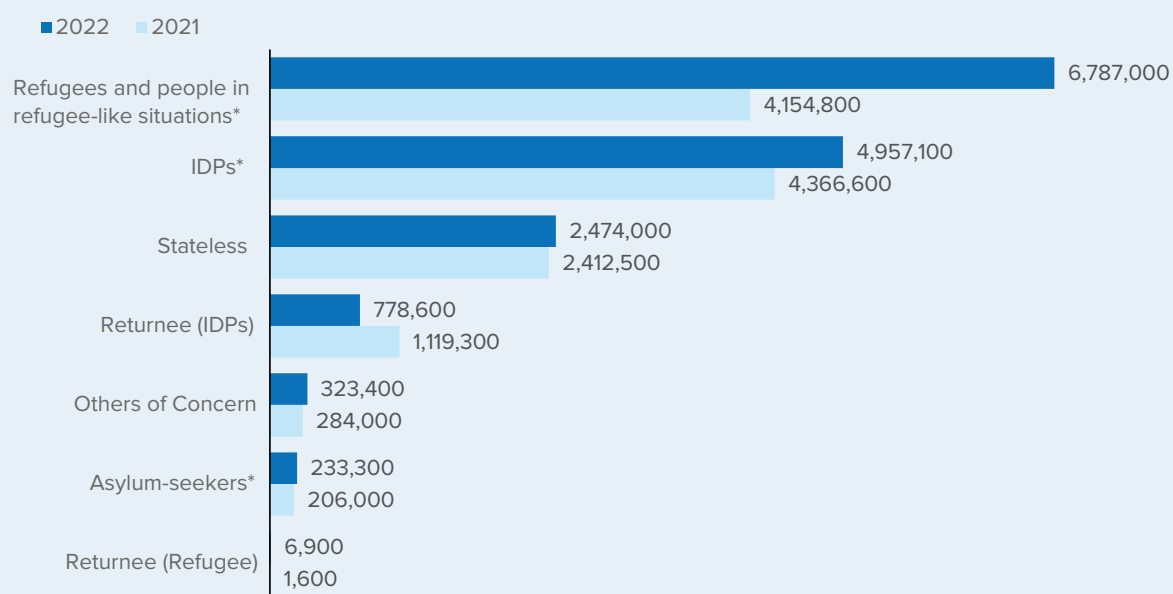


The boundaries and names shown and the designations used on this map do not imply official endorsement or acceptance by the United Nations. Dotted line represents approximately the Line of Control in Jammu and Kashmir agreed upon by India and Pakistan. The final status of Jammu and Kashmir has not yet been agreed upon by the parties.

REGIONAL OVERVIEW

The total number of refugees,⁸ asylum-seekers, internally displaced people, stateless people, returnees and other persons of concern to UNHCR in the Asia and the Pacific region by end of 2022 stood at 14.3 million, a 26 per cent increase from 2021. The region hosts 13 per cent of the global total population UNHCR protects and/or assists (14.3 million out of 112.6 million). This includes 18 per cent of the world's refugees, people in refugee-like situations, and asylum-seekers (7 million out of 40 million) within UNHCR's mandate and 56 per cent of the world's recorded stateless population (2.5 million out of 4.4 million).

Figure 1 | Population groups in Asia Pacific | 2021 - 2022



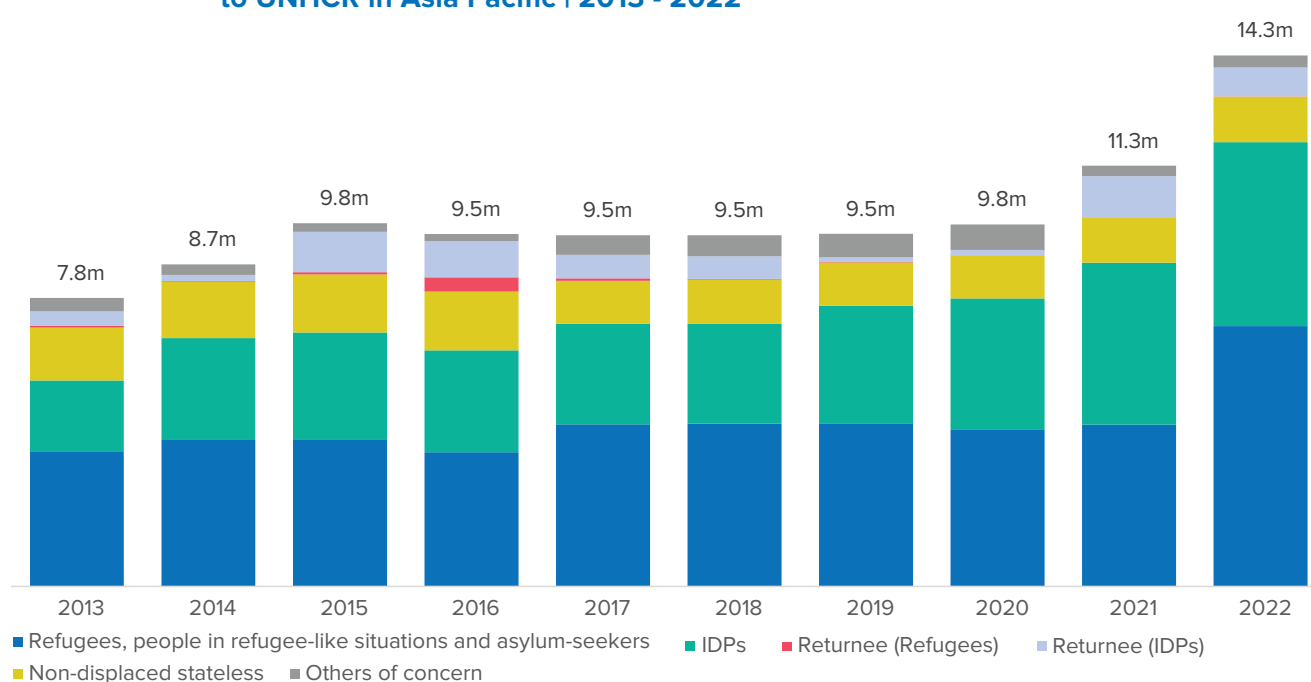
* Stateless people that have also been forcibly displaced are reported as stateless and within their respective displacement categories



⁸ Includes people in refugee-like situations.

As of end-2022, there were 6.8 million refugees and people in refugee-like situations, 5 million IDPs, 2.5 million recorded stateless people (including displaced stateless people), 778,600 IDP returnees, 233,300 asylum-seekers, and some 6,900 refugee returnees in Asia and the Pacific. Compared to the previous year, the main increases were refugees, including people in refugee-like situations (+63 per cent), followed by IDPs (+14 per cent). There were slight increases in stateless (+3 per cent) and asylum-seekers (+13 per cent).

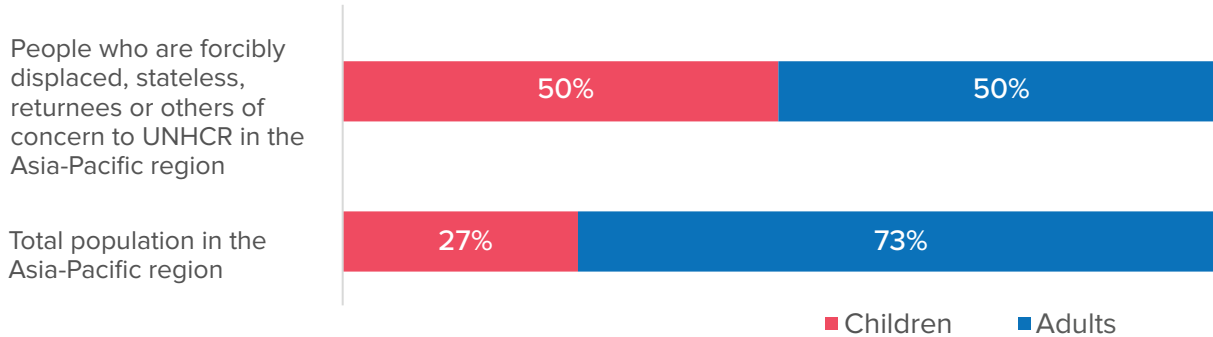
Figure 2 | **People who are forcibly displaced, stateless, returnees or others of concern to UNHCR in Asia Pacific | 2013 - 2022**



Over the last decade, the overall trends in the region show a steady increase since 2013 with a surge in 2022. The number of refugees, people in refugee-like situations and asylum-seekers increased by 93 per cent from 3.6 million in 2013 to 7 million in 2022. There was also a significant increase in the number of IDPs in the region. The IDP population more than doubled in 2022 compared to 2013, increasing from 1.9 million to 5 million (+159 per cent).

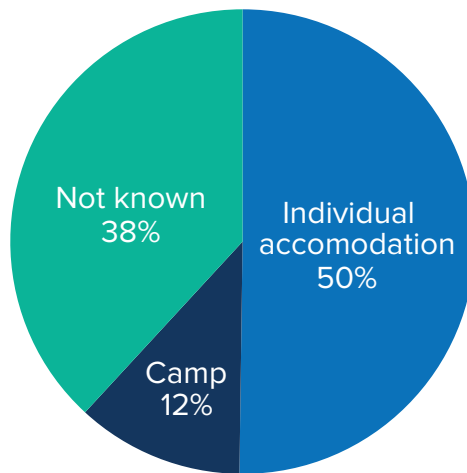
The availability of disaggregated data by age and sex of the people UNHCR protects and/or assists varies widely between countries and population groups with demographics data available for 77 per cent of the people UNHCR protects and/or assists in the Asia and the Pacific region. Looking at the available demographic data, 74 per cent were women (18+ female) and children (under 18), and 5 per cent were elderly people above 60.

Figure 3 | **Adult-children proportions: general population of the Asia-Pacific region and people who are forcibly displaced, stateless, returnees or others of concern to UNHCR | 2022**



Up to 50 per cent were children, almost double compared to the proportion of children in the region, where children make up 27 per cent of the region’s general population. Many forcibly displaced children will spend their entire childhoods away from home, sometimes separated from their families. They may have witnessed or experienced violent acts and, in exile, are at risk of abuse, neglect, violence, exploitation, trafficking or military recruitment. UNHCR works with national authorities, other international and local organizations to assist, protect and find solutions for displaced children to make sure they are not left behind.

Figure 4 | **Accommodation type of people who are forcibly displaced, stateless, returnees or others of concern to UNHCR | 2022**



Of the total number of people who are forcibly displaced, stateless, returnees or others of concern to UNHCR, 12 per cent resided in managed camp or camp-like settings, while 50 per cent resided out of camps in individual accommodation. For 38 per cent the accommodation type is unknown. Of those residing in camps, 57 per cent were in Bangladesh, 25 per cent in Pakistan,⁹ 11 per cent in India, 5 per cent in Thailand and 2 per cent in the Islamic Republic of Iran.¹⁰

⁹ In Pakistan, 31 per cent of registered refugees reside in refugee villages.

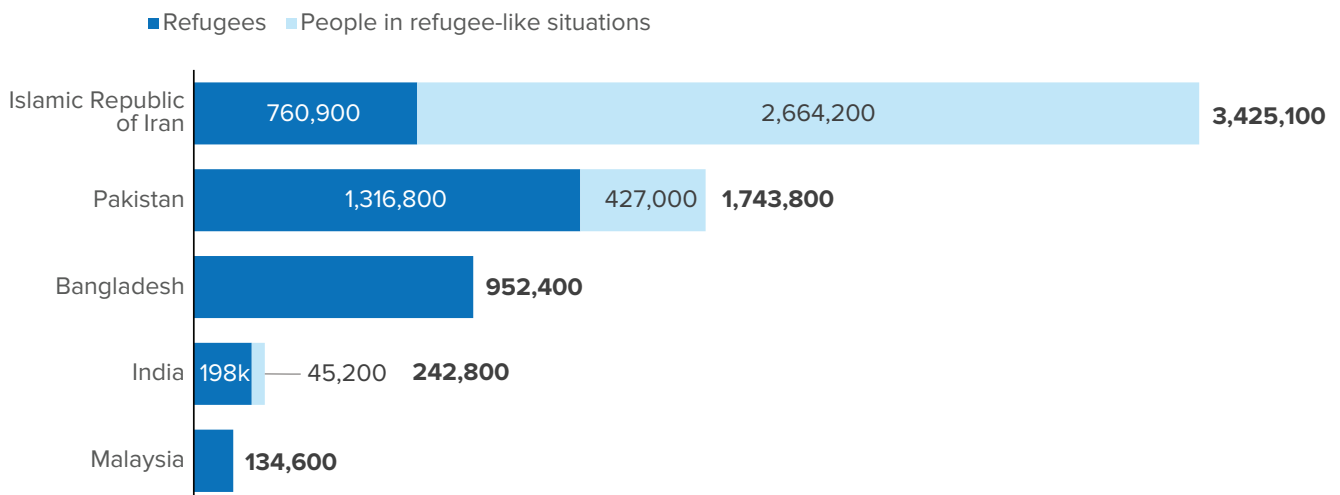
¹⁰ In the Islamic Republic of Iran, most registered refugees reside in permanent refugee resettlements.

REFUGEES AND PEOPLE IN REFUGEE-LIKE SITUATIONS

By country of asylum

The number of refugees and people in refugee-like situations in the Asia and the Pacific region grew by 2.6 million people in 2022, reaching 6.8 million, or 20 per cent of the global refugee population under UNHCR's mandate. This represents a 63 per cent increase compared to 2021. Most people fleeing conflict and persecution prefer to remain near their country of origin. In 2022, 95 per cent of refugees and asylum-seekers in Asia and the Pacific resided in neighbouring countries.

Figure 5 | **Refugees and people in refugee-like situations by host country in Asia Pacific | 2022**



As of end-2022, the Islamic Republic of Iran was the largest refugee-hosting country¹¹ in Asia and the Pacific with 3.4 million hosted refugees and people in refugee-like situations. In the Islamic Republic of Iran, a further 2.6 million Afghans¹² were recorded in a Government-conducted exercise.¹³ Previously undocumented Afghans who voluntarily participated in this exercise included new arrivals and those who were already in the country often for many years. Both Afghans who were recorded through the 2022 Government-conducted exercise and an additional 41,100 Afghan individuals who were newly arrived in the Islamic Republic of Iran and approached UNHCR but did not enrol in the exercise were reported as people in a refugee-like situation. By end-2022, 749,100 Afghan *Amayesh* cardholders and 11,800 Iraqi *Hoviat* cardholders were reported as refugees, resulting in some 3.4 million refugees and people in a refugee-like situation in the Islamic Republic of Iran.

¹¹ Second largest globally behind Türkiye.

¹² According to the Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran, 2,623,083 individuals participated in the exercise.

¹³ In 2022, the Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran conducted a recount of the previously "head counted" population and extended the scope of this scheme to all undocumented Afghans residing in Iran, including those who had newly arrived due to the Taliban takeover in 2021 in Afghanistan. It is reported that 2.6 million Afghans enrolled in this exercise which provides them with a headcount slip and temporary protection from deportation.

Pakistan was the second-largest hosting country¹⁴ in Asia and the Pacific. The refugee and refugee-like populations in Pakistan, almost all of whom are Afghans, stood at 1.7 million. The Documentation Renewal and Information Verification Exercise (DRIVE) in Pakistan was conducted between March 2021 and February 2022. As of end-2022, 1,306,700 registered Afghan Proof of Registration (PoR) cardholders were recorded, and 9,600 Afghans were registered with UNHCR Pakistan. A further 140,900 Unregistered Members of Registered Families were pending verification at the time of reporting. In 2022, some 286,100 who fled to Pakistan were pre-screened by UNHCR and reported as people in a refugee-like situation.

Bangladesh was the third-largest hosting country in the region with 952,400 refugees, the vast majority of whom are Rohingya from Myanmar. India was the fourth-largest hosting country, with 242,800 refugees and people in a refugee-like situation followed by Malaysia with 134,600 refugees.

Figure 6 | Number of refugees per 1,000 inhabitants | 2022



Comparing the size of the refugee population, including people in refugee-like situations with that of the host country, provides an important perspective to appreciate the full magnitude of the pressure felt by host countries. The number of refugees per 1,000 estimated inhabitants – a Global Compact on Refugees (GCR) complementary indicator¹⁵ – gives a relative perspective of the scale of the burden in host countries. Independent United Nations member states with a population size of at least 1,000 are included in the calculation of this indicator. The countries in the Asia and the Pacific region hosting the largest number of refugees relative to their host population are the Islamic Republic of Iran (39 refugees per 1,000 inhabitants), Pakistan (7 refugees per 1,000 inhabitants), Bangladesh (6 per 1,000), Malaysia (4 per 1,000), and Nauru¹⁶ (4 per 1,000). Even though India was the fourth largest refugee-hosting country in the region by end-2022, it does not rank amongst the top 5 countries on the GCR complementary indicator due to its large population size. Conversely, Nauru was ranked fifth on the GCR complementary indicator in the region due to its small population size, even though there were less than 50 refugees in the country as of end-2022.

¹⁴ Fifth largest globally behind Türkiye, the Islamic Republic of Iran, Colombia and Germany.

¹⁵ See [Global Compact on Refugees Indicator Report 2021 \(unhcr.org\)](#). GCR complementary indicator is computed as follows: [Number of refugees by country of asylum at end-year / (End-year estimated inhabitants in country of asylum / 1,000)]. For this report, refugees and people in refugee-like situations have been included.

¹⁶ The Republic of Nauru is an independent UN member state covered by the UNHCR Australia Multi-Country Representation. Despite the limited number of refugees hosted (47), it ranks at the fifth position in the Asia and the Pacific GCR complementary indicator because of its small population (12,727). Most refugees have been evacuated to Processing Centre in Australia for medical reasons.

In Asia and the Pacific, refugees are hosted in one low-income country, 16 low-middle income countries, six upper-middle income countries and five high-income countries.¹⁷ 99 per cent of refugees and people in refugee-like situations in the region reside in low- and middle-income countries, while high-income countries hosted only 1 per cent. About 1 million refugees and people in refugee-like situations are hosted by countries in the region that are currently in the Least Developed Countries (LDCs)¹⁸ list. This accounts for 15 per cent of the total number of refugees and people in refugee-like situations in the region.



Bahadur, an Afghan refugee, takes shelter after being displaced by floods in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Province, Pakistan.

¹⁷ See World Bank Country and Lending Groups.

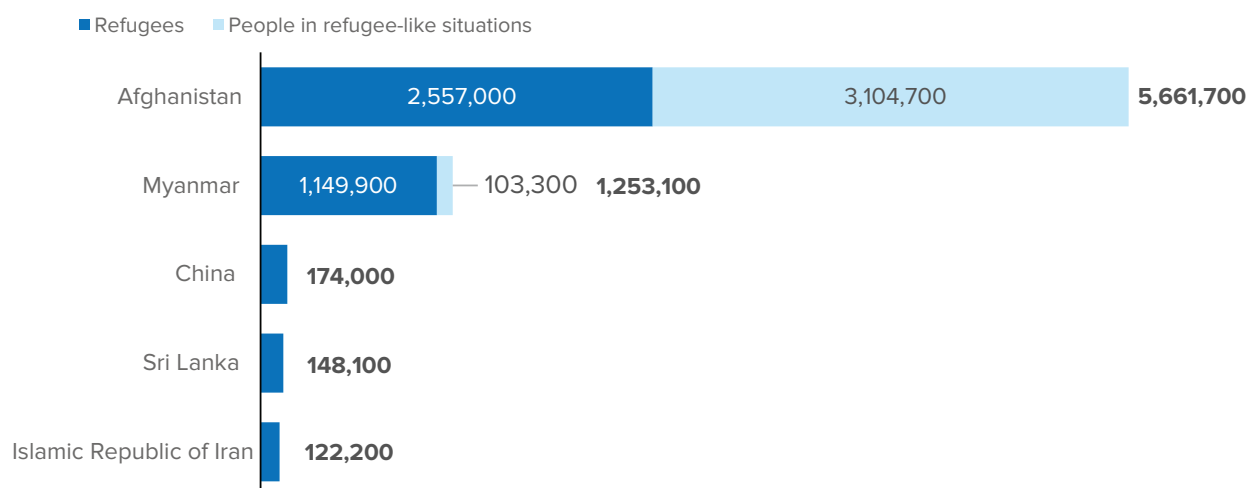
¹⁸ There are 11 Least Developed Countries in Asia-Pacific. These are typically low- or lower-middle-income countries confronting severe structural impediments to sustainable development. The list of countries is revised every three years.

By country of origin

The Afghan refugee population continues to be the largest in the region and the third largest¹⁹ refugee population globally, with 5.7 million refugees and people in refugee-like situations hosted by 102 countries. Compared to 2.7 million by end-2021, the number more than doubled due to continuing arrivals as well as due to the upwards revision of Government reported population figures in the Islamic Republic of Iran in 2022 following the Government-conducted headcount exercise²⁰ which led to the recording of at least 2.6 million additional Afghans present in the country. Of these, it was estimated that 1.6 million arrived prior to the Taliban takeover in August 2021, with a further 610,000 arriving later in 2021 and another 390,000 in 2022.

Myanmar was the second-largest country of origin of refugees in Asia and the Pacific, and the sixth largest in the world.²¹ In 2022, the number of refugees under UNHCR's mandate increased by 6 per cent (75,800) to reach 1.3 million, with more than three-quarters hosted in Bangladesh. The increase in 2022 was largely a result of the registration of new births in Bangladesh. India and Thailand also received an estimated 30,200 and 6,500 new arrivals respectively from Myanmar in 2022.

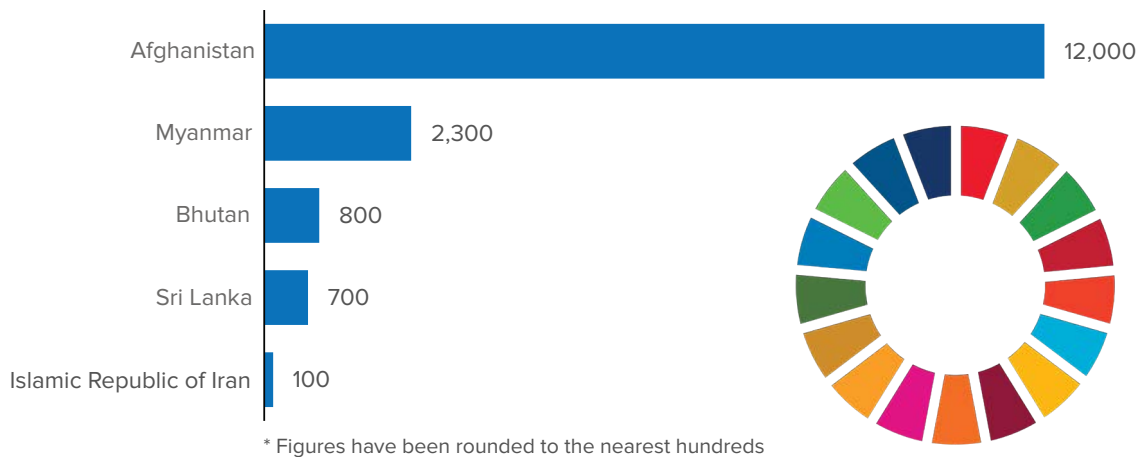
Figure 7 | **Refugees and people in refugee-like situation by country of origin in Asia Pacific | 2022**



¹⁹ Following the Syrian Arab Republic (6.5 million) and Ukraine (5.7 million).

²⁰ In 2022, the Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran conducted a recount of the previously "head counted" population, and extended the scope of this scheme to all undocumented Afghans residing in Iran, including those who had newly arrived due to the Taliban takeover in 2021 in Afghanistan. It is reported that 2.6 million Afghans enrolled in this exercise which provides them with a headcount slip and temporary protection from deportation.

²¹ Following Venezuela (5.5 million), including other people in need of international protection, and South Sudan (2.3 million).

Figure 8 | **SDG Indicator 10.7.4 | 2022**

The proportion of a country's population who become refugees – SDG indicator 10.7.4²² – is a useful way to identify the countries of origin with the most refugees relative to their number of inhabitants. Countries with the greatest proportion of their national population becoming refugees within the region were Afghanistan (12,000 per 100,000 inhabitants), Myanmar (2,300 per 100,000), Bhutan (800 per 100,000), Sri Lanka (700 per 100,000) and the Islamic Republic of Iran (100 per 100,000).

New registration trends of refugees in proGres²³

The 27 countries in Asia-Pacific that use UNHCR proGres showed that registration numbers more than doubled (+122 per cent) between 2020 and 2021. In 2022, UNHCR registration trends continued to increase, compared to the same period in 2021, marking a return to business as usual since the introduction of remote working modalities due to COVID-19. The increase in registration trends was also due to an increase in the registration of Afghans in the region and the resumption of new birth registration of Rohingya in Bangladesh since COVID-19.

Figure 9 | **Estimated new registration trends by quarter in UNHCR operations using proGres | Q1-2019 - Q4-2022**

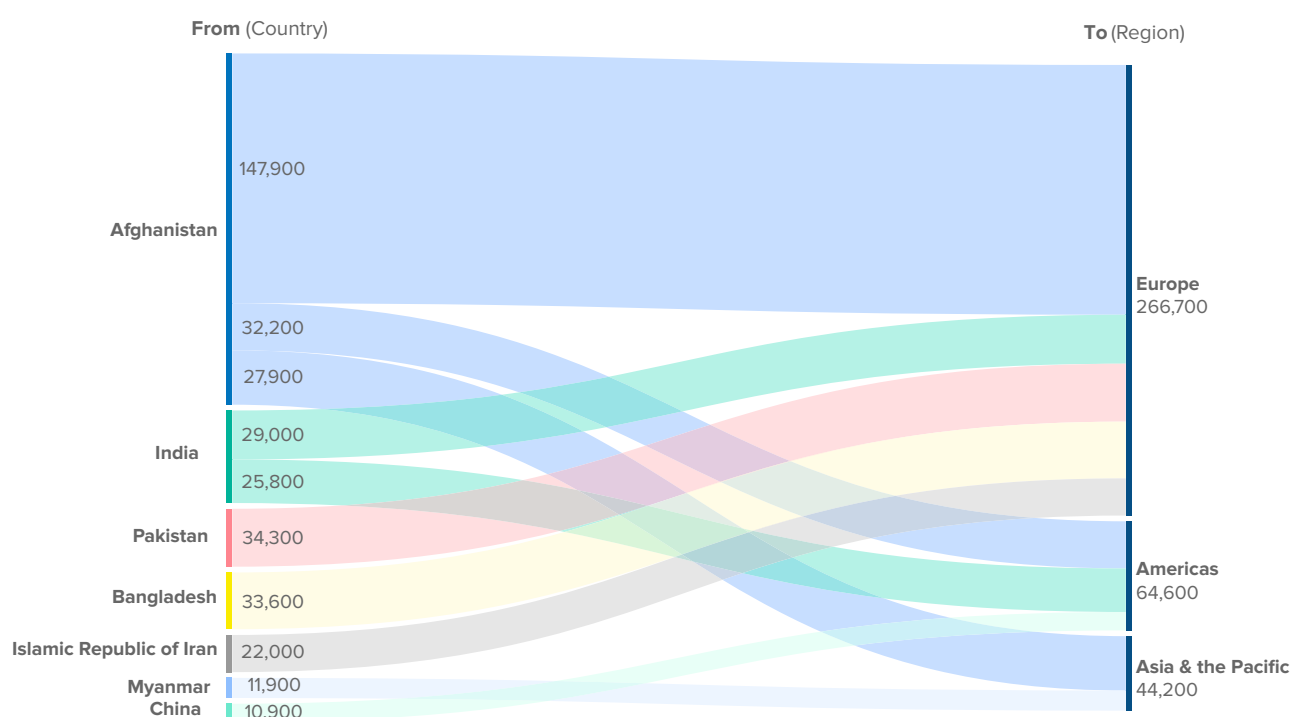
²² See UN Statistical Commission 51st session (2020) documents. Indicator 10.7.4 is computed as follows: [Number of refugees by country of origin at end-year / (End-year population in country of origin + number of refugees by country of origin at end-year)] * 100,000. For this indicator, refugees and people in refugee-like situations have been included.

²³ In 2022, UNHCR developed an IT case management tool called proGres (Profile Global Registration System).

ASYLUM-SEEKERS

Refugee Status Determination (RSD)²⁴ is the process by which governments or UNHCR determine whether a person seeking international protection is a refugee and assess asylum claims against the legal criteria in international, regional and national law.

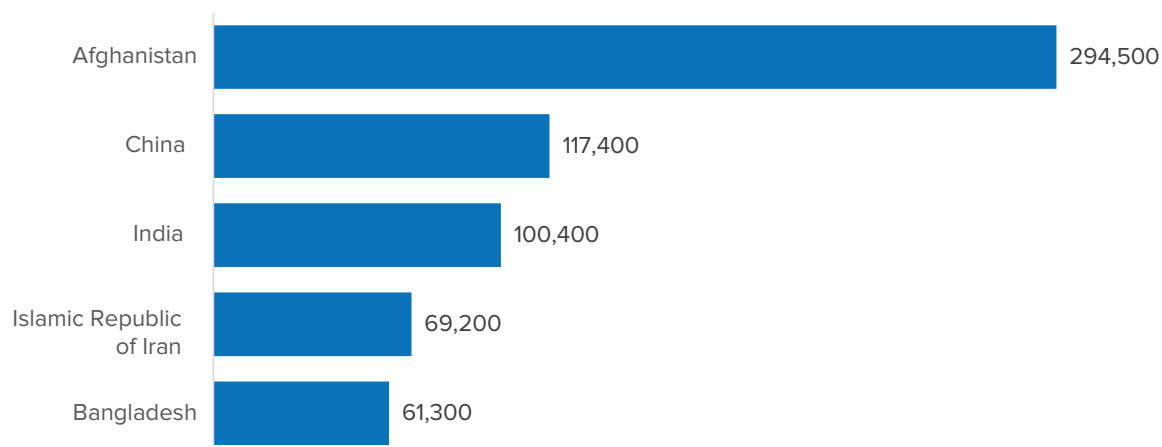
Figure 10 | **Flow of asylum-seekers | 2022**²⁵



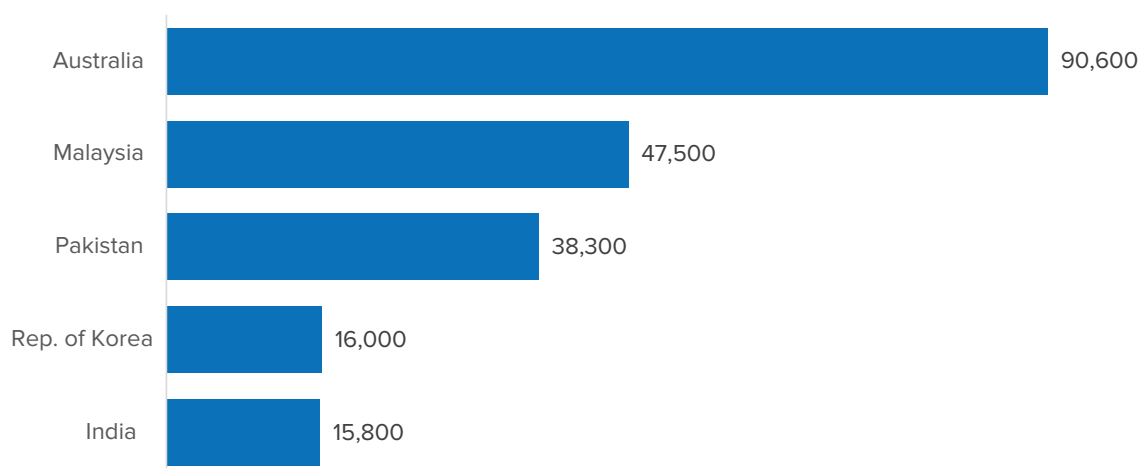
The number of new individual asylum applications by nationals of countries in the Asia and the Pacific region in 2022 was 454,000, an increase of 78 per cent compared to 2021. Afghans submitted 208,500 new applications in 2022, the second largest number of applications globally, after Venezuela. Up to 147,900 of the new individual applications by Afghans were lodged in Europe. 32,200 new applications were received by countries in Asia Pacific, partially because there is no RSD system in many countries of the region. Some other notable increases in new applications were from Indians (a three-fold increase to 58,200 applications heading to Europe and the Americas), followed by Pakistanis (+69 per cent to 41,000), Bangladeshis (+88 per cent to 38,900) and Iranians (+44 per cent to 29,600), with most of the claims lodged in Europe. Conversely, new individual applications by Myanmar nationals decreased by 37 per cent to 13,500, out of which 88 per cent stayed in the Asia-Pacific region.

²⁴ Refugee status can be granted individually or on a group basis. Group recognition most commonly takes place when there are readily apparent, objective circumstances in a country of origin which suggest that most individuals fleeing from that country are likely to be refugees. In most cases, those being granted refugee status on a group basis will be directly registered as refugees, as opposed to those recognized on an individual basis who will first be registered as an asylum-seeker. This is why individuals undergoing group determination will normally not be counted in the “asylum application” total.

²⁵ Only refers to individual asylum application to countries with existing Refugee Status Determination process.

Figure 11 | **Asylum-seekers globally by country of origin from Asia Pacific | 2022**

Some 294,500 Afghans asylum applicants awaited a decision on their cases at the end of 2022 based on global statistics, the largest number from countries within the region. This was followed by China (117,400), India (100,400), the Islamic Republic of Iran (69,200) and Bangladesh (61,300). According to the 2022 European Union Agency for Asylum (EUAA) annual overview, Afghans were the second largest group of asylum applicants in European Union Member States and Associated Countries (EU+), only behind the Syrian Arab Republic. Afghans accounted for nearly half of all self-claimed unaccompanied minors that applied in the EU+.²⁶ The Afghan recognition rate²⁷ in EU+ was 54 per cent in 2022.

Figure 12 | **Asylum-seekers by host country in Asia Pacific | 2022**

Australia hosts the highest number of asylum-seekers (90,600) in the region by end-2022, followed by Malaysia (47,500), Pakistan (38,300), the Republic of Korea (16,000) and India (15,800). In Pakistan, the number of asylum-seekers increased by 185 per cent compared to the previous year.

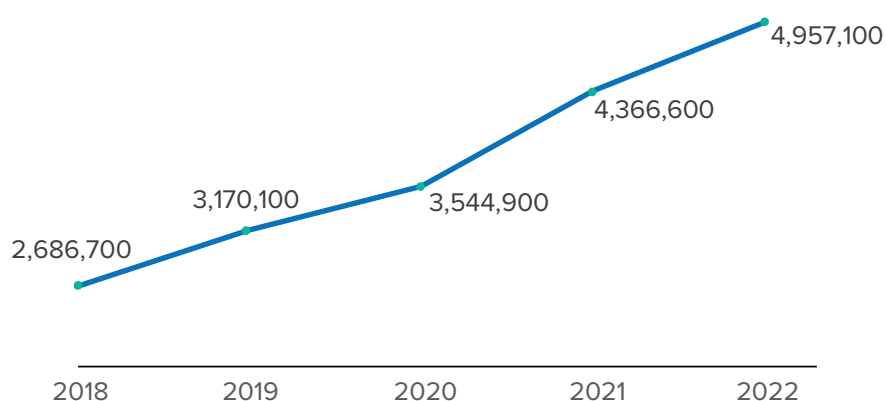
²⁶ See [Latest Asylum Trends - Annual Overview 2022 | European Union Agency for Asylum \(europa.eu\)](#).

²⁷ Recognition rate includes refugee status and subsidiary protection but excludes national protection forms. It is calculated using only first instance decisions.

INTERNALLY DISPLACED PEOPLE

In the region, the number of people displaced inside their own countries due to armed conflict, generalized violence or human rights violation continued to grow over the last five years. By the end of 2022, there were 5 million IDPs in the region, nearly double the figure five years ago.

Figure 13 | IDP trends in Asia Pacific | 2018-2022

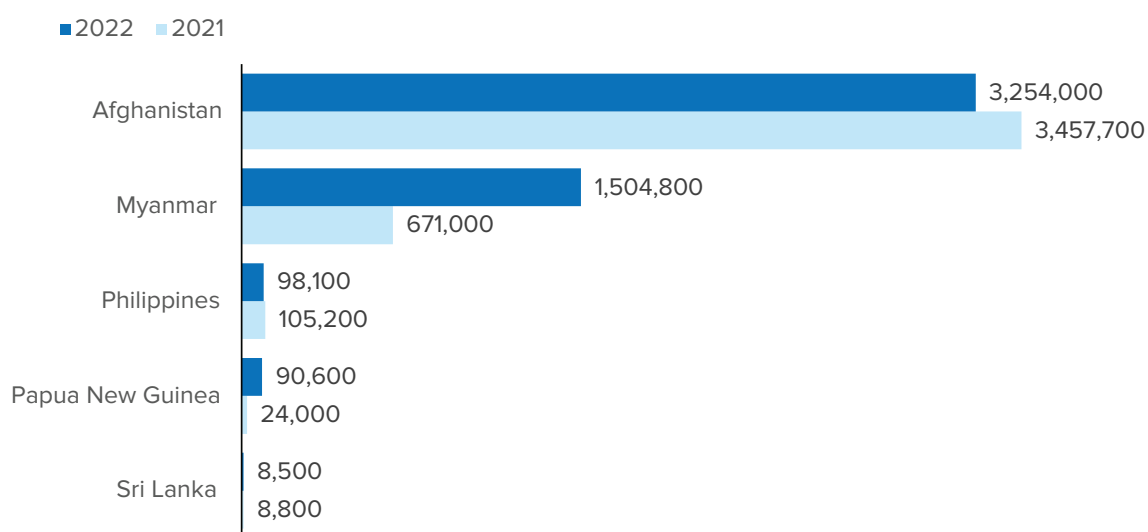


© UNHCR/Hkun Ring

Daily life in a camp for internally displaced people in Waingmaw Township, Kachin State, Myanmar.

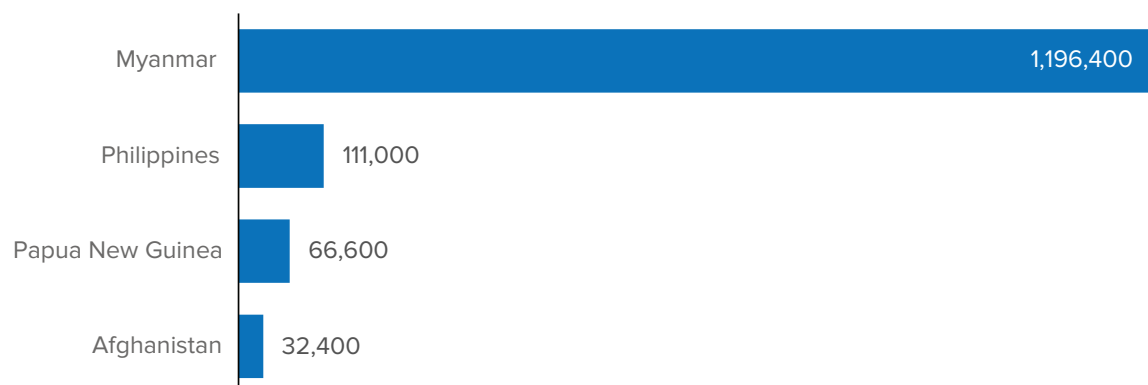
Six countries in the region reported IDPs due to conflict and violence. Countries with the most conflict-induced IDPs by the end of 2022 in the region were Afghanistan (3.25 million), Myanmar (1.5 million), and the Philippines (98,100). For over four decades, Afghanistan experienced successive conflicts which forced millions to flee their homes.

Figure 14 | Countries with the most conflict-induced IDPs | 2021-2022



In Myanmar, following the military takeover in February 2021,²⁸ violence led to 1,196,400 newly displaced IDPs in existing and new displacement areas in 2022. In the Philippines, some 111,000 new IDPs were reported, most commonly in Maguindanao province due to government forces clashing with non-state armed groups and clan feuds. In Papua New Guinea, escalating conflict- and election-related violence led to 64,000 new internal displacements in the country.²⁹

Figure 15 | Newly displaced IDPs in Asia Pacific | 2022

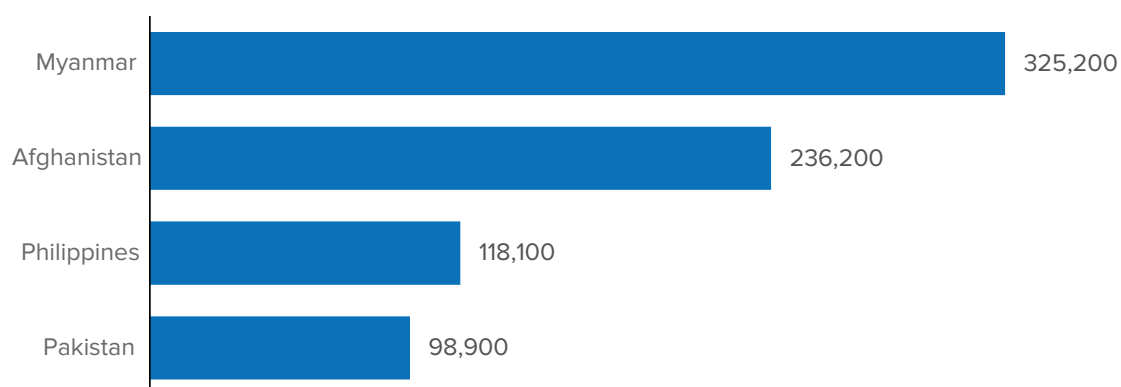


²⁸ See Myanmar Humanitarian Response Plan 2023 (January 2023) - Myanmar | ReliefWeb.

²⁹ See Papua New Guinea: Conflict and election-related violence trigger wave of displacement, UN News.

IDP returns decreased to 778,600 in 2022 from 1,119,300 in 2021, with Myanmar (325,200), Afghanistan (236,200) and the Philippines (118,100) continuing to be the main countries reporting IDP returnees in the region. In Myanmar, some IDPs returned when the security situation indicated signs of stabilization in certain locations – notwithstanding displacement which remained fluid, with many individuals displaced multiple times. UNHCR is working in support of the UN Resident Coordinators and with the UN Country Teams in the region to operationalize the UN Secretary-General’s commitments in his [Action Agenda on Internal Displacement](#).

Figure 16 | **Returned IDPs in Asia Pacific | 2022**



Displacement in the context of climate change and disasters

In addition to conflict and violence, people were displaced within their countries due to disasters and the impact of climate change, which is dramatically reshaping the regional disaster risk landscape, with many of the countries in the region having dealt with multiple crises in recent years, including droughts, floods, earthquakes, typhoons and cyclones, and locust infestation. During the year, there were 22.6 million new internal displacements due to disasters in the Asia and the Pacific region, with 4.1 million people remaining displaced at the end of 2022, according to the Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre (IDMC).³⁰ 70 per cent of disaster-induced internal displacements during 2022 occurred in Asia and the Pacific.

The four countries reporting the most new displacements in 2022 globally were all within the Asia and the Pacific Region. These were Pakistan (8.2 million), the Philippines (5.4 million), China (3.6 million) and India (2.5 million). About 25 per cent of global disaster displacements during the year were triggered by monsoon flooding in Pakistan — one of the countries most vulnerable to climate change. UNHCR launched emergency relief efforts in affected areas with a high concentration of refugees in July 2022 as well as a Supplementary Appeal³¹ in October 2022. Working with Pakistan’s disaster management authorities, UNHCR provided core relief items to assist 50,000 flood-affected families in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Balochistan provinces although the bulk of over 1.2 million relief items were provided for Sindh province, which was badly affected.

³⁰ See IDMC | GRID 2023 | 2023 Global Report on Internal Displacement ([internal-displacement.org](https://www.internal-displacement.org)).

³¹ See Pakistan Flood Response: UNHCR Supplementary Appeal, September 2022 – December 2023 - Pakistan | ReliefWeb.

Storms triggered 4.6 million disaster displacements in the Philippines, which represents up to 85 per cent displacement due to disasters in the country. In China, 72 per cent of all disaster displacements were pre-emptive evacuations. Disaster displacement in India, where disasters were largely caused by rainfall and flooding, was significantly less than 4.9 million in 2021. Most people displaced due to disasters during the year were able to return home, and as of end-2022 there were 1 million IDPs due to disasters in Pakistan, 533,000 in the Philippines, 146,000 in China and 32,000 in India.

Climate change, particularly in this region, is a risk multiplier. It erodes the coping capacities of communities, exacerbates underlying fragilities, increases the risks of new tensions, highlights unequal access to systems and services, and creates new challenges to solutions. In this context, UNHCR has developed a Regional Climate Action Plan for Asia and the Pacific (2023-25),³² which builds on the Strategic Framework on Climate Action³³ with a focus on demonstrating operational leadership on green and clean initiatives, advocating for refugees and internally displaced people to be included in disaster risk reduction and climate adaptation plans, as well as building the resilience of those displaced and the communities that host them. In the context of disaster displacement, UNHCR is particularly focused on working with partners and authorities on protection sensitive and solutions-oriented approaches, especially where long-term climate change adaptation efforts can help mitigate the risks of displacement in the near-term.³⁴



© UNHCR/Qaiser Khan Afridi

An Afghan refugee whose home was destroyed by the 2022 torrential rains and flooding stares at the remaining debris. Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Pakistan.

³² See Asia and the Pacific: Climate action plan | Global Focus (unhcr.org).

³³ See Practical Guidance for UNHCR Staff on IDP Protection in the Context of Disasters and the Adverse Effects of Climate Change | UNHCR.

³⁴ See Strategic Framework for Climate Action | UNHCR.

AFGHANISTAN SITUATION

Global

9.2
MILLION

forcibly displaced
Afghans globally

5.7
MILLION

Afghan refugees and
people in refugee-like
situations

295
THOUSAND

Afghan asylum-seekers
around the world

3.25
MILLION

Afghan internally
displaced people

Asia-Pacific

8.5
MILLION
(92.4%)

forcibly displaced
Afghans in Asia and
the Pacific

5.2
MILLION
(91.8%)

Afghan refugees and
people in refugee-like
situations in Asia and
the Pacific

51
THOUSAND
(17.4%)

Afghan asylum-seekers
in Asia and the Pacific

3.25
MILLION

Afghan internally
displaced people

South-West Asia

(Afghanistan, the Islamic Republic of Iran and Pakistan)

8.45
MILLION

(91.7%)

forcibly displaced
Afghans in
South-West Asia

5.16
MILLION

(91%)

Afghan refugees and
people in refugee-like
situations in
South-West Asia

38
THOUSAND

(12.9%)

Afghan asylum-seekers
in South-West Asia

3.25
MILLION

Afghan internally
displaced people

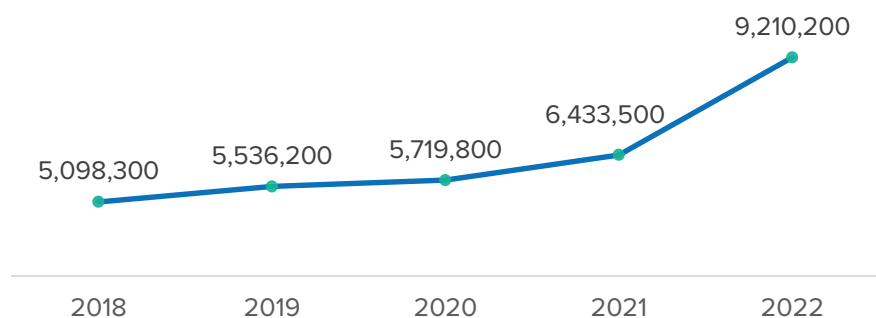
Globally, at the end of 2022, there were 9.2 million forcibly displaced Afghans, a 43 per cent increase from end-2021 as a further 2.6 million Afghans³⁵ were recorded in the Islamic Republic of Iran. Up to 92 per cent (8.5 million) of forcibly displaced Afghans resided in Asia and the Pacific, with the vast majority in South-West Asia.

There were 5.7 million Afghan refugees and people in refugee-like situations globally, and more than 90 per cent (5.16 million) were hosted in the Islamic Republic of Iran and Pakistan. For the past 5 years, Afghanistan's situation has been the largest situation in the region with a steady increase of forcibly displaced every year.

Neighbouring countries have been receiving Afghans fleeing the country. UNHCR in Pakistan, the Islamic Republic of Iran and Tajikistan were approached by and pre-screened/recorded/pre-registered Afghans who may be in need of international protection. By the end of 2022, a total of 327,400 new arrivals approached UNHCR and partners: 41,100 in the Islamic Republic of Iran, 286,100 in Pakistan, and 150 in Tajikistan.

The Islamic Republic of Iran became the largest country of asylum for Afghans, with 3.4 million refugees and people in a refugee-like situation by end-2022. This includes 749,100 *Amayesh* cardholders, 2.6 million Afghans recorded in a Government-conducted headcount exercise in 2022, and some 41,100 new arrivals who approached UNHCR but did not report enrolment in the 2022 Government-conducted exercise.

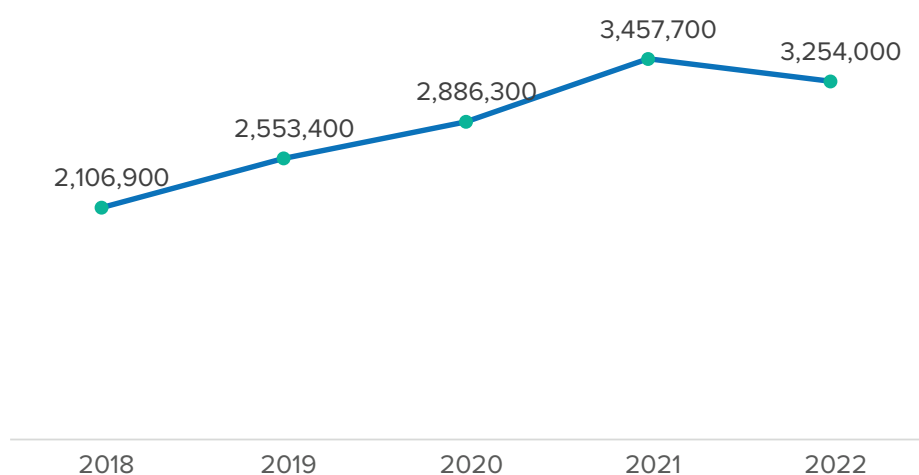
³⁵ It is estimated that out of these 2.6 million Afghans around 1 million newly arrived to the Islamic Republic of Iran following the August 2021 Taliban takeover in Afghanistan.

Figure 17 | **Forcibly displaced Afghans | 2018 - 2022**

Pakistan was the second-largest country of asylum for Afghans, with 1.8 million Afghans residing in Pakistan. This includes PoR card holders, unregistered nuclear family members of PoR card holders, asylum-seekers, and newly arrived Afghans in 2022. Afghan refugees and people in refugee-like situations figures increased in various countries compared to 2021, notably in the Islamic Republic of Iran (+2.6 million³⁶ or +339 per cent) and Pakistan (+252,700 or +17 per cent).

Conflict induced internally displaced people in Afghanistan

Prior to 2022, IDP figures in Afghanistan were rapidly increasing. Conversely, the end-2022 Afghan IDP figure was 6 per cent lower compared to the previous year, standing at 3,254,000. Globally, Afghanistan was the sixth largest IDP country and the largest IDP population in the Asia and the Pacific region. In 2022, there were 32,424 newly displaced Afghans³⁷ during the year. Around 58 per cent of the IDP population in Afghanistan were children under 18 and 21 per cent were women (18+).

Figure 18 | **IDP trends in Afghanistan | 2018 - 2022**

³⁶ See Footnote 20.

³⁷ See [Conflict Induced Displacements Dashboard | ReliefWeb Response](#). 32,424 is the figure at the reporting time and can be changed as the data is updated retroactively.



In 2023, solutions will be pursued in line with the Solutions Strategy for Afghan Refugees (SSAR). Inside Afghanistan, UNHCR has recorded over 1 million internally displaced Afghans who voluntarily returned since August 2021, but some 3.25 million people remain internally displaced by conflict. According to UNHCR planning figures, 300,000 IDPs could potentially return home inside Afghanistan in 2023 as well as another 60,000 refugees from neighbouring countries. However, over 8 million Afghans reside in neighbouring countries, mostly in the Islamic Republic of Iran and Pakistan, including 2.1 million registered Afghan refugees and over 1.6 million Afghans who have arrived since January 2021, adding a significant additional burden on host countries. In addition to possible refugee arrivals, the region is highly vulnerable to climate-related and other natural hazards and to the adverse impact of climate change, as witnessed by the devastating floods in Pakistan in 2022. Support for emergency preparedness in host countries is needed to respond to those newly displaced by conflict, climate-related disasters, and other crises.

An Afghan refugee child using UNHCR-provided solar lanterns to study. Khyber Pakhrunkhwa, Pakistan.

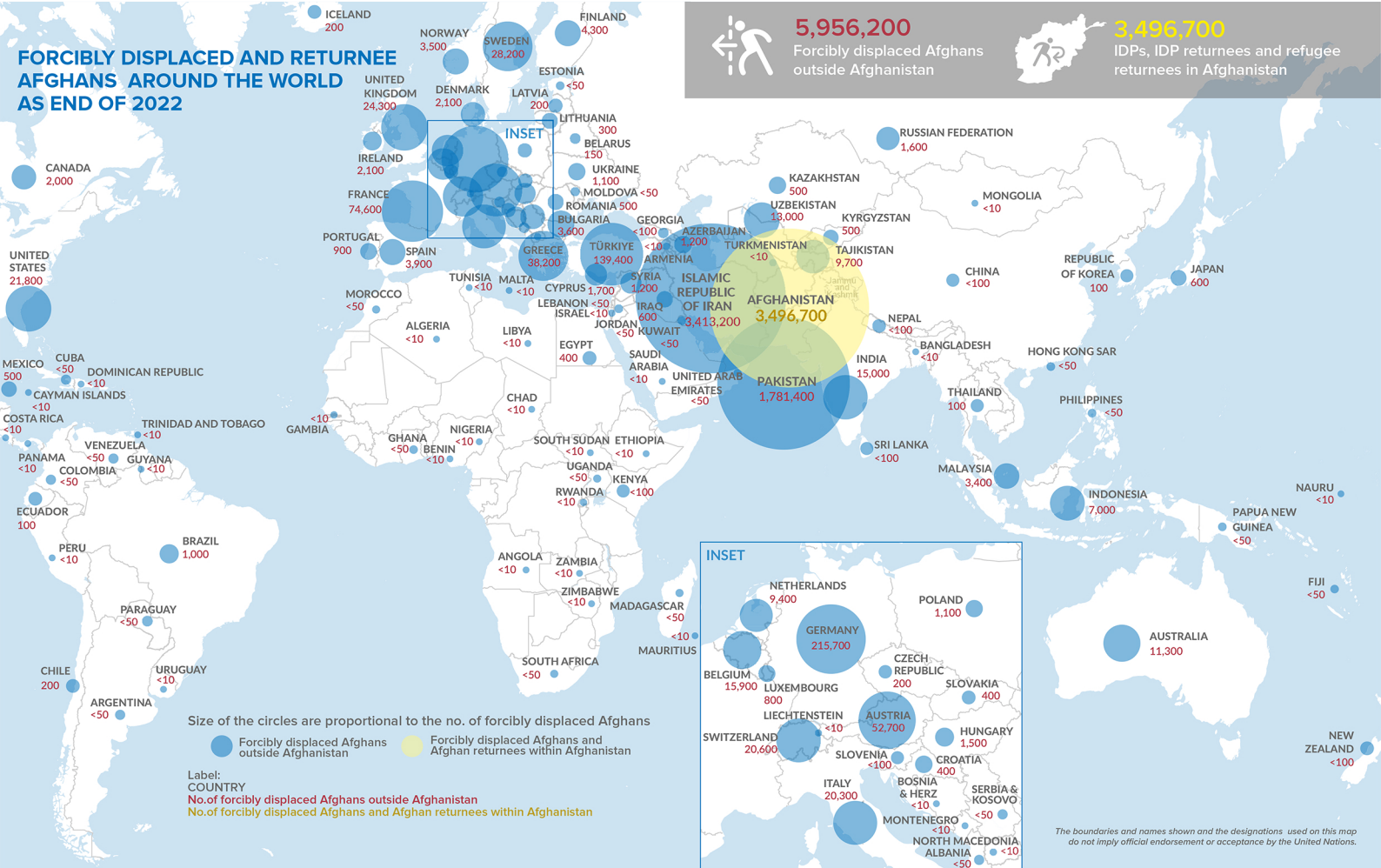


5,956,200
Forcibly displaced Afghans
outside Afghanistan



3,496,700
IDPs, IDP returnees and refugee
returnees in Afghanistan

FORCIBLY DISPLACED AND RETURNEE AFGHANS AROUND THE WORLD AS END OF 2022



Size of the circles are proportional to the no. of forcibly displaced Afghans
 ● Forcibly displaced Afghans outside Afghanistan
 ● Forcibly displaced Afghans and Afghan returnees within Afghanistan
 Label: COUNTRY
 No. of forcibly displaced Afghans outside Afghanistan
 No. of forcibly displaced Afghans and Afghan returnees within Afghanistan

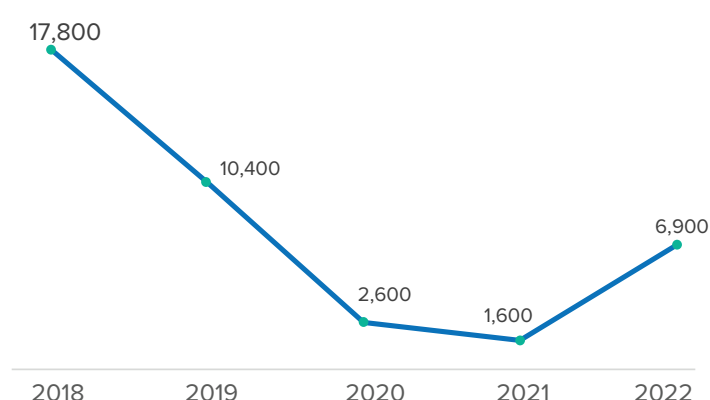
The boundaries and names shown and the designations used on this map do not imply official endorsement or acceptance by the United Nations.

SOLUTIONS

Durable solutions include voluntary repatriation, resettlement or complementary pathways to a third country, and local integration. Due to ongoing instability in the countries of origin of most displaced people in Asia, limited opportunities for local integration in host countries in the region, and a relatively small number of third country solutions compared to the needs, a growing number of people remain in increasingly protracted displacement contexts without access to a durable solution.

Voluntary Repatriation

Figure 19 | **Voluntary Repatriation Trends | 2018 - 2022**



In 2022, 6,900 refugees returned in the region, including 6,500 Afghans, 370 Sri Lankans, and some other nationalities returning to their country of origin. The number of people voluntarily repatriating to their country of origin increased considerably compared to 2020 and 2021 as a result of travel restrictions being lifted following the COVID-19 pandemic.

Resettlement and Complementary Pathways

UNHCR-assisted resettlement submissions and departures from countries in the region in 2022 were considerably higher than in 2021. Major countries of refugee resettlement from countries in the region included Canada, the United States of America, and Australia. Resettlement submissions from the region grew from 4,900 in 2021 to 21,300 in 2022, largely due to renewed efforts and attention on third country solutions for refugees from Afghanistan and Myanmar. There was over a 250 per cent increase in resettlement departures from countries in the region in 2022 compared to 2021.

Departures from Asia-Pacific on sponsorship, education, and labour complementary pathways, primarily to Canada and Australia, also increased 9-fold in 2022, with approximately 9,000 recorded departures from Asia, compared to approximately 1,000 in 2021.

Local integration

Within the region, there was an increase in the reported naturalization of refugees, growing from 100 in 2021 to 2,300 in 2022. The main countries providing naturalization to refugees in the region in 2022 were Papua New Guinea (2,200),³⁸ India (78), and Kyrgyzstan (24).



³⁸ The naturalizations in Papua New Guinea were all for Indonesians but not all the naturalizations took place in 2022. These mainly occurred between 2016-2018.

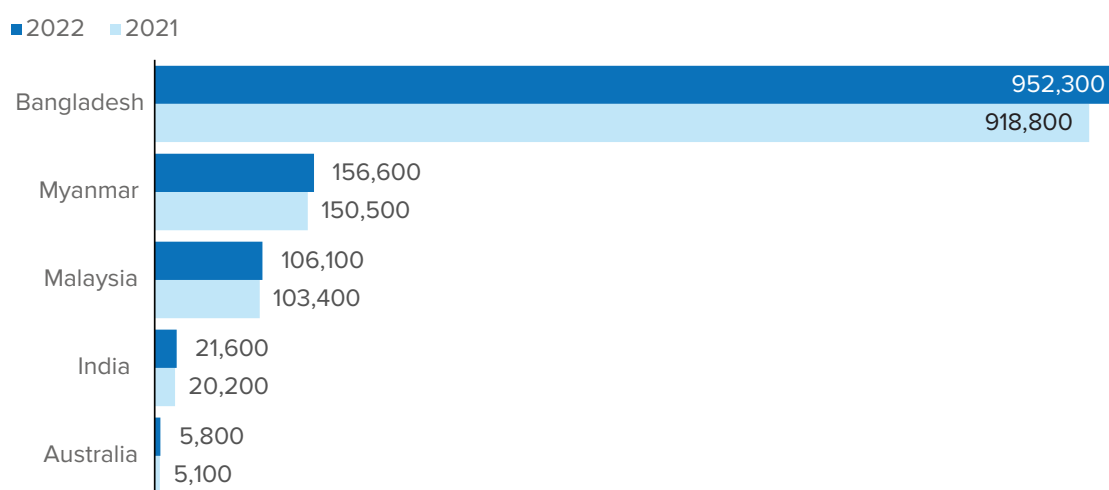
STATELESS POPULATION

The Asia-Pacific region hosts 56 per cent of the world's recorded stateless population. However, the number of stateless people remains an underestimate as many countries do not report data on statelessness. In the region, there were a total of 2.5 million stateless people, of whom 1.23 million were non-displaced stateless and 1.24 million displaced stateless people. Displaced stateless people in the region include those who are refugees, asylum-seekers or IDPs and are not considered nationals by any State. Compared to end-2021, by the end of 2022, there was a 3 per cent increase in the stateless population in the region. 69 per cent of the stateless population were Rohingya.³⁹

Displaced stateless people in Asia Pacific

The 1.24 million displaced stateless people consist of 1.07 million refugees, 156,600 IDPs, and some 19,000 asylum-seekers. This represents a 4 per cent increase in displaced stateless people compared to 1.20 million at the end of 2021. Of the 1.24 million displaced stateless people in the region, over 99 per cent were Rohingya from Myanmar. Bangladesh, Myanmar, Malaysia, and India host most of them.

Figure 20 | Countries with the most displaced stateless people in Asia-Pacific | 2022



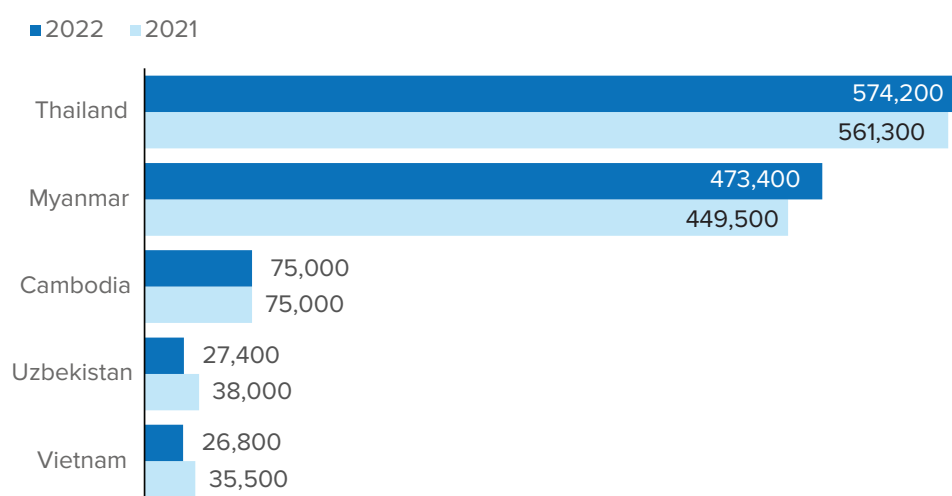
³⁹ See details in the Myanmar Situation Highlight.

Non-displaced stateless people in Asia Pacific

There were increases in the non-displaced stateless population in 2022 in several countries in the region compared to the end of 2021. In Myanmar, there was an estimated increase of some 28,000 non-displaced stateless people during the year. In Thailand, an increase of 19,300 persons resulted from new-born registration, registration of undocumented persons and the re-registration of previously de-registered cases.

In 2022, acquisition or confirmation of nationality continued in line with Action 1 (resolve existing major situations of statelessness) of the [Global Action Plan to End Statelessness by 2024](#). During the year, some 20,100 stateless people acquired nationality and permanent residency within the region. In Central Asia,⁴⁰ new registrations by governments and UNHCR partners indicated a decrease of some 11,000 stateless people. Notably, in Uzbekistan, the government continues to implement provisions that provide eligibility to citizenship for stateless people with some 9,400 acquiring nationality or citizenship in 2022. In Thailand, some 6,200 stateless people acquired permanent residency.

Figure 21 | **Countries with the most non-displaced stateless people in Asia-Pacific | 2022**



⁴⁰ Central Asia includes Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan.



To help effectively address statelessness and advocate for solutions, more comprehensive data collection and reporting mechanisms are needed to provide a more complete picture of statelessness worldwide. UNHCR's efforts to improve data on statelessness has included supporting the development of the International Recommendations on Statelessness Statistics (IROSS)⁴¹ developed by the Expert Group on Refugee, Internally Displaced Persons and Statelessness Statistics (EGRISS).⁴² The IROSS was submitted to the United Nations Statistical Commission (UNSC) in 2022 and was unanimously endorsed by the UNSC in March 2023.⁴³ The EGRISS and UNHCR will assist countries in implementing the recommendations in the IROSS, thereby improving the quality of data on statelessness.

Meepia, formerly stateless, received her Thai nationality in 2022 after a complex four-year-long process. Chiang Mai, Thailand

⁴¹ See International Recommendations on Statelessness Statistics.

⁴² See EGRISS.

⁴³ See United Nations Statistical Commission, 54th Session, decision 54/121.

MYANMAR SITUATION

Global

2.81
MILLION

forcibly displaced
people from
Myanmar globally

1.253
MILLION

Refugees and people
in refugee-like
situations from
Myanmar globally

49
THOUSAND

Asylum-seekers from
Myanmar around
the world

1.5
MILLION

Internally displaced
people in Myanmar

Asia-Pacific

2.80
MILLION

(99.7%)
forcibly displaced
people from Myanmar in
Asia and the Pacific

1.25
MILLION

(99.7%)
Refugees and people in
refugee-like situations
from Myanmar in Asia
and the Pacific

44
THOUSAND

(90%)
Asylum-seekers from
Myanmar in Asia and
the Pacific

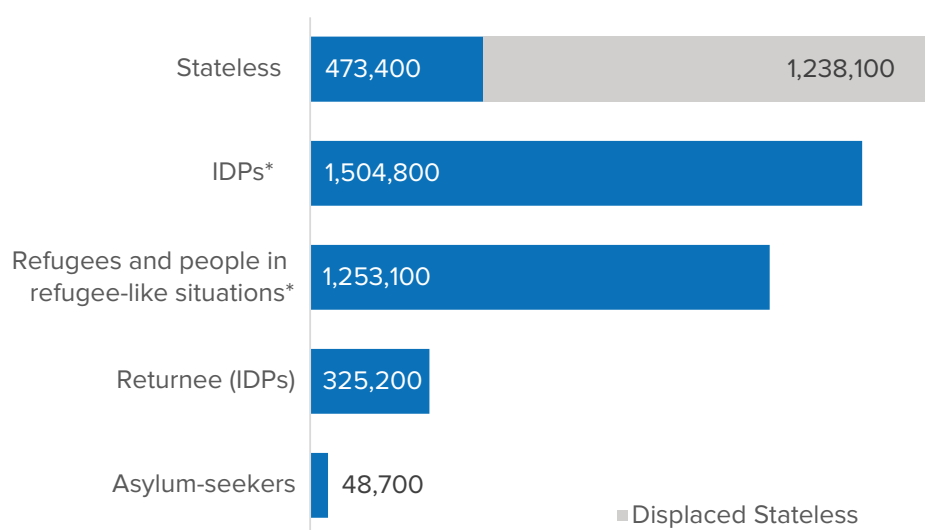
1.5
MILLION

Internally displaced
people in Myanmar

By the end of 2022, there were over 2.8 million forcibly displaced people from Myanmar globally. Almost all remained in the region.

Myanmar was the sixth largest country of origin for refugees globally. The Myanmar situation refers to forcibly displaced (refugees and people in refugee-like situations, asylum-seekers, internally displaced people) and stateless people originating from Myanmar. The total reported figure for the Myanmar situation increased from 2.5 million in 2021 to 3.6 million in 2022 – a 46 per cent increase. The increases were largely related to conflict and political upheaval following the events of February 2021.

Figure 22 | Myanmar Situation | 2022

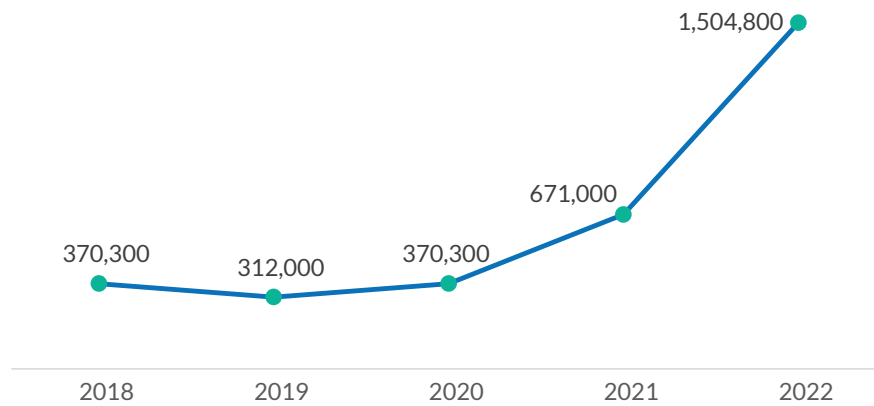


The resumption or intensification of armed conflict resulted in new displacement of around 1,175,300 people since 1 February 2021, bringing the total number of displaced people across the country to approximately 1,504,800 by the end of 2022. The number of IDPs in Myanmar continued to grow in 2023. By late May 2023, there were over 1.8 million IDPs in Myanmar, an increase of some 331,600 compared to end-2022.⁴⁴

In 2022, neighbouring countries reported refugee arrivals from Myanmar. Cumulatively, an estimated 36,700 people from Myanmar fled to India (30,200) and Thailand (6,500) in 2022. In India, approximately 30,200 arrived, mostly in the north-east of India, based on estimates made available from community-based organizations, media and UNHCR internal triangulation of data – not on a specific data source from the Government of India.

⁴⁴ See Myanmar situation, Operational Data Portal

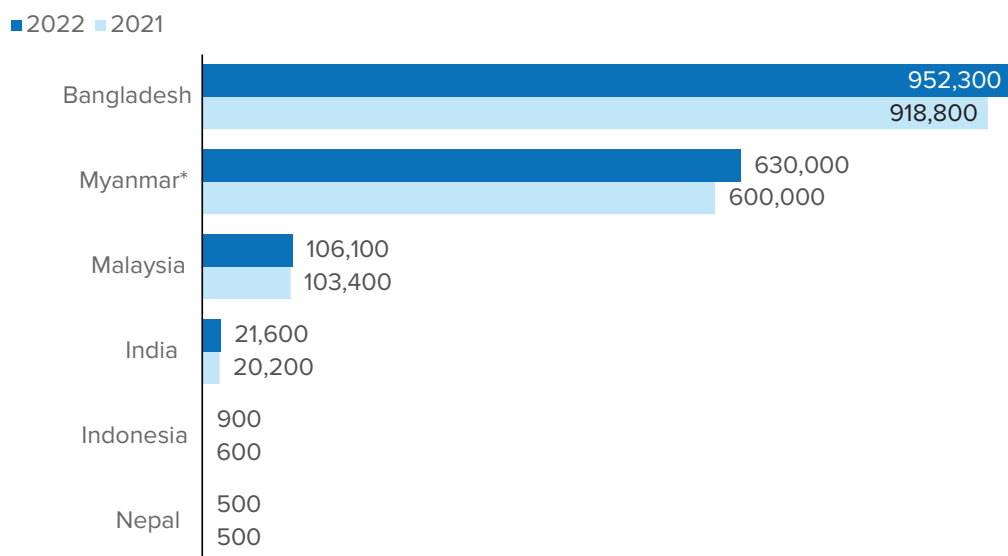
Figure 23 | Internally displaced people in Myanmar | 2018 - 2022



Rohingya

Among the 2.5 million stateless people in Asia-Pacific, almost 70 per cent were Rohingya from Myanmar. As of end-2022, there were 1.7 million Rohingya in the region, of which 72 per cent, or 1.2 million, were displaced as refugees, asylum-seekers and IDPs. The remaining 28 per cent of Rohingya were non-displaced stateless people in Myanmar. In the 13 countries in Asia-Pacific that recorded Rohingya, the population of Rohingya slightly increased by 4 per cent compared to end-2021. The largest increase was in Bangladesh (around 33,400), mainly due to birth registrations. More than half of the Rohingya population continue to reside in Bangladesh in camp settings.

Figure 24 | Countries with Rohingya | 2021 - 2022



* Includes both displaced and non-displaced Rohingya

Sumaya, 5, a Rohingya refugee girl living with disability in Kutupalong refugee camp, Cox's Bazar, Bangladesh. Sumaya needs special care in her everyday life and is being supported by UNHCR and health partners.



MULTI-SECTORAL MONITORING

AS OF DECEMBER 2022

UNHCR's response to support the forcibly displaced and stateless populations in the Asia-Pacific region can be summarized using the organization's Multi-Sectoral monitoring (MSM) Framework, as presented in the following infographic:

3.3 million forcibly displaced & stateless people accessed protection services

1.5 million forcibly displaced & stateless **children** accessed protection services



Protection

1.6 million forcibly displaced & stateless people received cash assistance



Basic needs

16,200 children 6-59 months admitted for treatment of moderate acute malnutrition

3,000 children 6-59 months admitted for treatment of severe acute malnutrition



Nutrition

73% of countries had a multi-channel feedback and response system that was designed based on consultations with forcibly displaced & stateless people

Accountability to affected populations



2.9 million forcibly displaced & stateless people received essential healthcare services

624,400 forcibly displaced & stateless people received mental health and psychosocial support services

189,300 women & girls received sexual and reproductive health services (ante- or post-natal care, delivery, contraceptive or gender-based violence clinical services)



Health

ASIA & THE PACIFIC REGIONAL TRENDS

FORCED DISPLACEMENT AND STATELESSNESS 2022



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