

Please cite as: EUAA, ' 2.1.1. Overview ' in *COI Report - Somalia: Country Focus*, May 2025.

2.1.1. Overview

Mogadishu is the most populous city in Somalia.880 In early 2025, ca. 2 846 000 people are living in the city.881 It consists of 20 districts. The old ones are: Wadajir, Dharkenley, Daynile, Wardigley, Hawl Wadaag, Waberi, Hamar Jajab, Hamar Weyne, Bondere, Karaan, Yaqshid, Huriwaa, Kahda, Hodan, Shibis, Abdulaziz, Shangani.882 Recently, in May 2024, three new districts were added: Gubadley, Darussalam, Garasbaaley.883 Mohamed Ahmed Amiir is the current mayor of Mogadishu and Governor of the Benadir Regional Administration.884 As of February 2022, Benadir Region was the only region in Somalia completely controlled by the Federal Government of Somalia (FGS). Mogadishu hosts the FGS. Its international airport and port are the country's largest two revenue sources. Mogadishu is the only city where the FGS collects taxes.885

In Mogadishu, the government depends heavily on thousands of African Union (AU) forces stationed there, protecting the airport and other strategically important locations. The SNA and the Somali police are sometimes acting as clan militia, not as a national force.886 Al-Shabaab has officially withdrawn from Mogadishu in mid-2011. Yet, the militant extremists have a sizable clandestine presence in the city. Al-Shabaab's 'secret police' called Amniyat has repeatedly infiltrated government and security agencies (see also EUAA COI Report Somalia: Security Situation, 2023, Chapter 2.3.2).887 The group's presence in Mogadishu allows it to penetrate even the best-secured targets in the city.888 Al-Shabaab operates in Mogadishu, collecting taxes on large and small businesses on the big markets of the city, and also from individuals building houses or shops. Those who refuse to pay have to fear reprisals by the group, including attacks on their lives.889 Al-Shabaab can even summon people in Mogadishu it wishes to interrogate, if, for instance, a case is pending before an Al-Shabaab court outside of Mogadishu and a witness residing in the city is required. Al-Shabaab still has the capacity to call upon people (literally, using their phones) in Mogadishu to follow their orders and many people comply, also out of fear of reprisals.890 In many places, CCTV cameras have been installed.891 Prof. Roland Marchal reported in March 2025 that there is more surveillance in the capital city.892 However, there are still bombings and assassinations happening for which Al-Shabaab is responsible. Many people also do not know who to trust.893 For more information on Mogadishu overall security situation see EUAA COI Report Somalia: Security Situation, May 2025.

Security conditions in the city differ from one neighbourhood to another. Peripheral and semi-peripheral neighbourhoods are considered more insecure than highly protected zones near the international airport and in the centre.894 However, it is also true that areas in which

government offices or African Union infrastructure is located, or where officials spend time, are prime targets for Al-Shabaab attacks.[895]

○ (a) Demographics and clan composition/distribution

Mogadishu is inhabited largely by Hawiye from the clans Abgaal, Habar Gedir and Murosade. Besides, certain minority groups such as Reer Hamar are traditional inhabitants of the city.[896] Moreover, members from many other Somali clans reside in Mogadishu as students, professionals, business people or government workers.[897] Mogadishu is 'not as segregated by clan as other areas of Somalia'. Still, clan membership is important. Hawiye clan holds the most powerful positions.[898]Minority group members and members of other clans face exclusion and discrimination.[899] Particularly in the oldest quarters Shangani and Hamar Weyne, Reer Hamar- which consist of many small groups, see section 1.4 Minorities - have their ancestral homes.[900]

Mogadishu is also hosting a considerable IDP population. Based on UNOCHA data, at the end of 2024, out of 3 812 registered IDP sites across the country, Mogadishu hosted 2 057 sites, with an overall population of more than 1 160 million people.[901] Most IDPs come from neighbouring regions such as Lower Shabelle and Middle Shabelle, while some come also from Bay region.[902] Most IDPs in Mogadishu reside in the districts Daynile, Hodan and Kahda.[903] Some live in camps while many live in informal sites. Most of these sites are found in Daynile (1 091), and in Kahda (966).[904] Many IDPs do not belong to dominant clans in Mogadishu and thus cannot rely on effective clan support when needed. They do not have a power base in the city.[905]

○ (b) Humanitarian situation overview

Somalia, and notably Mogadishu, depends almost entirely on foreign aid to assist IDPs,[906] the most vulnerable group in the capital. They usually lack social capital to find support, jobs, housing, and get access to health care. There is no effective public

support network. Many IDPs sustain themselves by daily labour, or they are dependent on support by relatives (e.g., from abroad) or humanitarian assistance.907IDPs are in a subordinate and marginalised position throughout Mogadishu. Many choose to stay close to their informal settlements. They typically cannot claim urban land rights or protection from encroachment or forced eviction.908 For the year 2024, some 197 000 eviction cases affecting IDPs were documented in Somalia, primarily in Mogadishu and surroundings.909 IDPs in Mogadishu are in many camps dependent on informal camp or settlement managers. They act as gatekeepers providing land, basic services (e.g. water and sanitation) and some protections 'in exchange for either cash – typically between $15 and $20 each month – or a proportion of humanitarian assistance – up to 60% in some cases.'910

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