

Somalia

MIGRATION PROFILE

*Study on Migration Routes
in the East and Horn of Africa*

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Maastricht Graduate School of Governance (MGSoG)



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1. Introduction

The Federal Republic of Somalia is a country located in the Horn of Africa. It borders the Gulf of Aden in the north, the Indian Ocean in the east, Kenya in the south-west, Ethiopia in the west and Djibouti in the north-west. The country has a population of close to 11 million (CIA, 2017) and has experienced excessive amounts of political instability during the past decades and especially since the collapse of the regime in 1991. Somaliland was declared independent that same year by local clans. While the independence is not recognized by any state, Somaliland has had a stable existence since and aims to establish itself as a constitutional democracy. In addition,



Source: CIA, 2017.

there is the semi-autonomous region of Puntland, which is a self-governing entity since 1998 and the strongest state in the federation, but does not strive for independence. Somalia has not had a stable government for years and many of the states of the country continue to be under self-rule with control held by local leaders, increasing its instability. In addition, the insurgent group al-Shabaab, which has been associated with Al-Qaeda, has been furthering the destabilization since it gained significant power in 2009. A Federal Government was established in 2012, but the nation remains fragile (CIA, 2017; DAI Europe & EuroTrends, 2015). Due to the instable situation, data on living conditions and labour markets are not readily available. It is, however, clear that in particular in South Central Somalia conditions are dire. UNDP estimates that overall 73 per cent of the population live below the poverty line (UNDP, 2016).

Table 1: Somalia’s Key Demographic and Development Indicators

Indicator	Somalia
Total area, in sq km ^a	637,657
Population (2015), in million ^b	10.79
Urban Population (2015), % of total ^c	39.6
Population Growth Rate, annual % ^d	2.5
Ethnic Groups ^a	Somali 85% Bantu and other non-Somali 15%
Human Development Index (2015), country rank out of 188 ^e	n.d.
GDP Based on PPP per Capita, current international dollars per capita ^f	n.d.
Life Expectancy at Birth (2015), years ^e	55.7
Unemployment (2015), % of labour force ^e	7.5
Youth Unemployment (2015), % ages 15-24 ^e	11.7

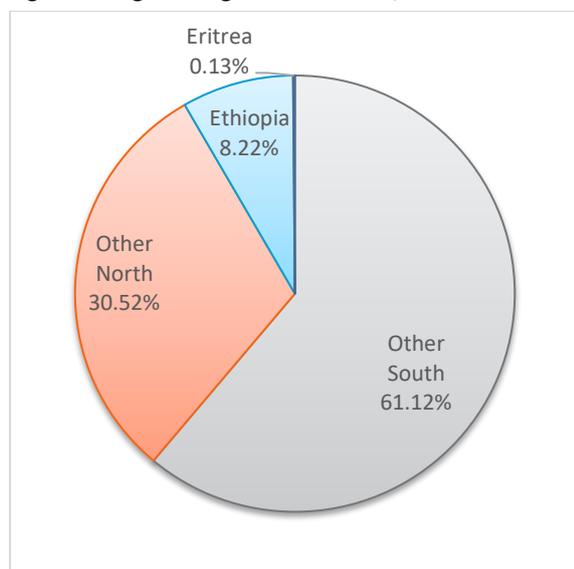
<i>Multidimensional Poverty Headcount (2006), %^e</i>	81.8
<i>Gini Coefficient (2010-2015)^e</i>	n.d.
<i>Foreign Direct Investment (net inflows, 2015), current USD millions^d</i>	516.00
<i>Net Official Development Assistance Received (13), current USD millions^d</i>	1253.55
<i>Personal Remittances Received (2015), current USD millions^d</i>	n.d.

^a CIA, 2017; ^b UN DESA, 2015b; ^c UN DESA, 2014; ^d World Bank, 2017; ^e UNDP, 2016; ^f IMF, 2017.

In terms of migration, Somalia is a country of origin, transit and destination for mixed migration flows in and out of the East and Horn of Africa region. Main factors that push migrants to leave the country are poverty, insecurity and natural disasters. Recent main events have been the terrorist attacks by al-Shabaab and the Kenyan military operations in South Central Somalia as well as the Horn of Africa famine of 2011. The majority of migrants come from South Central Somalia as can be seen, for example, when looking at the inflows in Yemen in November 2011, where 95 per cent of the registered Somalis came from this region. Migrants from Puntland and Somaliland are found rarely among Somali migrants encountered in Yemen. Young, unemployed youth from Puntland and Somaliland are found among migration flows in the Middle East and Europe, but still to a much lesser extent than South Central Somalis (Marchand, Roosen, Reinold & Siegel, 2016; RMMS, 2016).

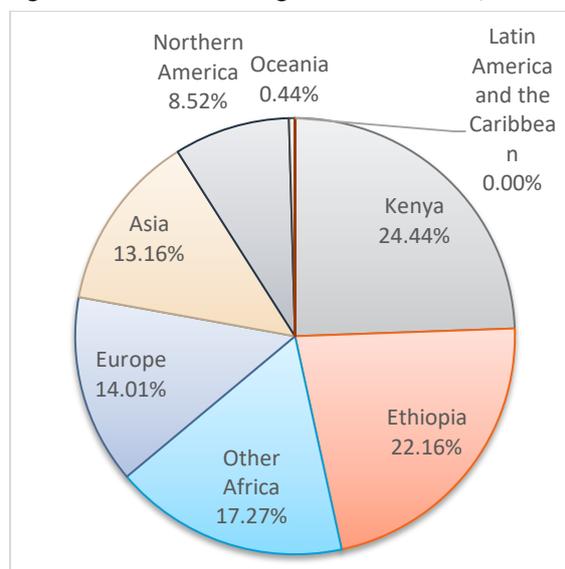
The United Nations Trends in International Migrant Stock indicates a stock of close to 2 million Somali migrants in 2015. Main countries of destination include neighbouring Kenya and Ethiopia, other African countries as well as European countries, particularly the United Kingdom, the United States and Yemen (see Table 2).

Figure 1: Origin of Migrants in Somalia, 2015



Source: UN DESA, 2015a.

Figure 2: Destination of Migrants from Somalia, 2015

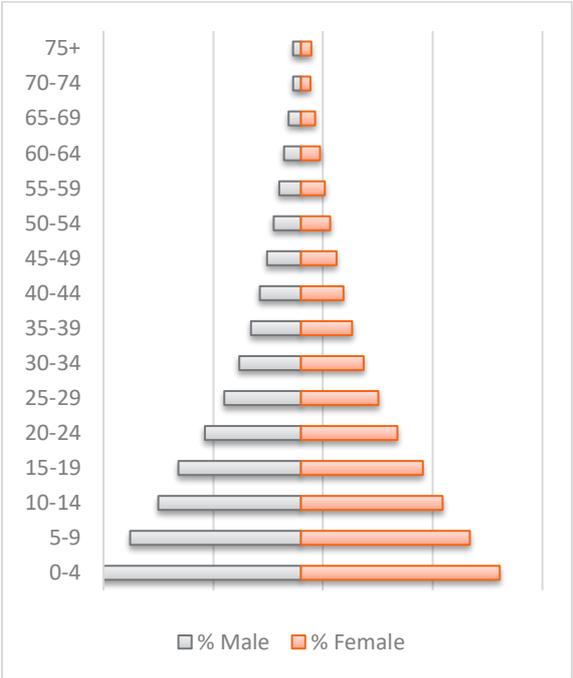


Source: UN DESA, 2015a.

Comparing the population pyramids of the total population of Somalia and of the migrant stock (Figure 3 and Figure 4 respectively), interesting differences appear. While the total population shows

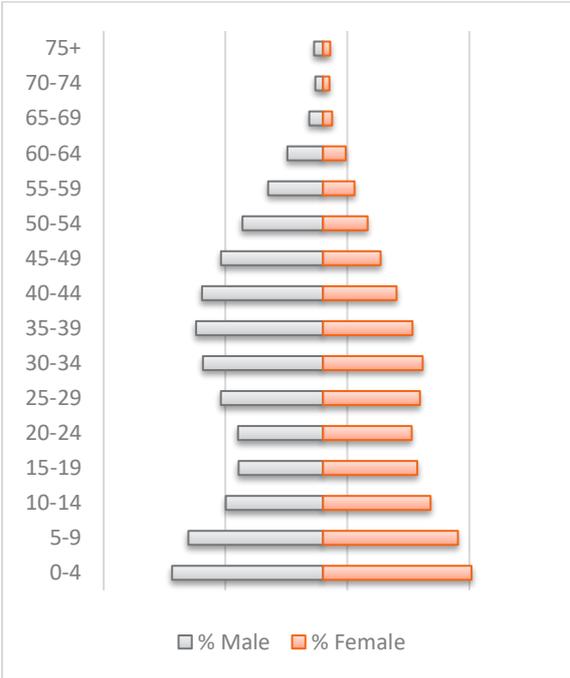
the usual pyramid form, the migrant stock is much more concentrated among the middle-aged groups and is relatively more male than female across all age groups.

Figure 3: Total Population in Somalia by Age Group, 2015



Source: UN DESA, 2015a.

Figure 4: Migrant Stock in Somalia by Age Group, 2015



Source: UN DESA, 2015a.

2. Forced Migration/ Displacement

2.1. Refugees in Somalia

Somalia was hosting 13,084 refugees and 13,969 asylum seekers registered by UNHCR as of July 2017. These numbers have increased significantly due to the conflict in Yemen. They make up the vast majority of the refugees. Ethiopians remain the majority of the asylum seekers in Somalia and living mainly in Somaliland and Puntland (UNHCR, 2017a), while there is no refugee population in South Central Somalia (RMMS, 2016).

2.2. Refugees from Somalia

There were 1.01 million refugees and 60,412 asylum seekers from Somalia registered by UNHCR globally as of December 2016 (UNHCR, 2017b). The majority of them remain in the Horn and East of Africa, primarily Ethiopia and Kenya.

Recently there has been an increase in return migration of Somalis to their home country, both from the East and Horn of Africa as well as Yemen and the Arabian Peninsula. In November 2013, Kenya, Somalia and UNHCR concluded the *Tripartite Agreement Governing the Voluntary Repatriation of Somali Refugees Living in Kenya*. Between December 2014 and the end of May 2017, 66,674 Somalis have been returned from Kenya under this agreement (UNHCR, 2017d). The original aim was to have a total of 135,000 returnees by the end of 2017 (UNHCR, 2015). It was also originally planned that

returns would be directed to three areas in South Central Somalia, but this has since expanded to include nine areas, including some in Somaliland and Puntland (RMMS, 2017).

The resulting returns of Somali refugees from Kenya are a main challenge that Somalia is facing in terms of reintegration. The pace of return increased significantly after Kenya's closure announcement and concerns were raised over the status of such voluntary return. Reports indicate that a majority of refugees are unwilling to return to Somalia, concerned over security and access to basic services. Issues concerning the lack of humanitarian support and reintegration support to communities have permeated these movements (RMMS, 2016). To ease this process, the UN has launched a voluntary repatriation program in 2014 in which nearly 50,000 Somalis have taken part. Still, the majority of returnees must face the journey and reintegration challenges alone (Kelley, 2017).

Numbers of Somali returnees have also been increasing from other destination countries, such as Djibouti and Yemen, where the war has propelled many Somalis to return. Expectations determine that returnees will concentrate in urban centres and are likely to consider repeat migration if they fail to reintegrate (Avis & Herbert, 2016). Overall, returns to Somalia are problematic as the Regional Durable Solutions Secretariat (ReDSS) finds that the infrastructure and livelihood opportunities in Somalia are not sufficient to lead to sustainable reintegration of returnees (ReDSS, 2015).

2.3. Internal Displacement in Somalia

Instability and environmental disasters have also caused internal displacement of 1.56 million Somalis as of end of 2016 (UNHCR, 2017c). The majority of IDPs are from the South Central region, where about 25 per cent of the total population are displaced (RMMS, 2016; Marchand et al., 2016).

3. Regular/ Labour Migration

3.1. Immigration

Regular migration to Somalia seems limited largely to Somali migrants returning to invest in their country of origin.

3.2. Emigration

Migration from Somalia has for decades largely been shaped by forced movements. Asylum seekers and refugees dominated movements both within the region as well as beyond.

4. Internal Migration

In the context of Somalia, internal migration is most often characterized by forced movements. As indicated in the section on internal displacement above, the number of internally displaced persons is substantial.

5. Irregular Migration

Economic migrants moving through irregular channels are also increasingly found among the mixed migration flows from Somalia. It has been observed that there is social pressure on young Somalis to migrate for the purpose of sending remittances home to support their family and in some cases even whole communities. There have been documented cases where migrants were chosen collectively and then funds were accumulated to enable their migration journey (DAI Europe & EuroTrends, 2015).

Common ways out of Somalia are to move south to Kenya, west with Europe as destination or east to Yemen and beyond. The western route is becoming increasingly popular and more Somalis have been seen in Libya since 2013 than prior. The southern route leads some only as far as Kenya, while others move on from there to South Africa. Smuggling is common on all of these routes, but not all can afford these services and therefore have to make the trip on foot, which can be dangerous (RMMS, 2016; Marchand et al., 2016).

Somalia is also a transit country, in particular on the eastern route to Yemen and beyond. While the migration flows on this route have significantly decreased since the onset of the crisis in Yemen, the port of Bossasso is a main departure point in the Horn of Africa region on that route that is mostly used by Ethiopians and Somalis (RMMS, 2016). The urban centres of Mogadishu, Beledweyne and Galkayo in South Somalia are the main departure and transit points for migrants on the way north to Puntland, Somaliland and Djibouti (RMMS, 2016; Marchand et al., 2016).

5.1. Human Smuggling

Somalia is a source and transit country for smuggling, which has flourished due to the instability and lack of governmental capacity to address it (DAI Europe & EuroTrends, 2015; UNODC, 2006). The harbour city of Bossasso in Puntland is a main smuggling hub on the eastern route, especially prior to the outbreak of the civil war in Yemen. It is mostly used by Somalis from the South Central states and Ethiopians, mainly from the Ogaden region. Smugglers often operate out of Mogadishu and move migrants north with mini-buses or private vehicles through Galkayo to Bossasso. A second route is that through Hiiraan, where bribes are commonly paid at the road checkpoints of Garowe and Las Anood. In order to avoid these road blocks and other risks on the way north, migrants from South Central Somalia have been found to fly north from Mogadishu to Berbera/ Hargeisa. The town of Hargeisa in Somaliland is also a hub for Ethiopian and South Central Somali migrants and smugglers on the eastern route (RMMS, 2016; Marchand et al., 2016).

An increase in Somalis using smugglers to get to Libya has been observed recently as this was not so much the case before 2013. Those traveling to Kenya also use smugglers, which will often take them either just to the border between Somalia and Kenya or drop them off close to the Dadaab refugee camp (RMMS, 2016; Marchand et al., 2016).

As is the case in most countries, smuggling in Somalia is also often associated with abuse and exploitation of migrants. In addition, it has been found that in Puntland business people that are involved in smuggling networks can operate with influential government officials knowing about it (RMMS, 2016; Marchand et al., 2016).

5.2. Trafficking in Human Beings

The US Department of State (2016) identifies Somalia as a special case, as Somalia's Federal Government only has limited influence to counter trafficking in the country due to capacity-constraints, a lack of understanding, parts of the country having declared independence, and confrontations with the terrorist group al-Shabaab, leading to the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM). Therefore, verified information about human trafficking in the country is difficult to obtain. Somalia is involved in all phases of human trafficking as country of source, transit and destination for children, women and men who are subjected to sex trafficking and forced labour (US Department of State, 2016).

In Somalia, individuals, including undocumented Ethiopians, are trafficked from southern and central regions to the north of the country (Puntland and Somaliland). In Somaliland, victims of trafficking might be recruited to work in the sex industry or as domestic servants in Djibouti, Ethiopia and Puntland. In many cases such recruiters are women. Furthermore, (former) pirate groups engage in trafficking of Somali girls and women as alternative source of income since piracy has been in decline since 2014 (US Department of State, 2016).

In many cases, Somali victims of trafficking are brought to the Middle East, Gulf countries or Kenya, where women in most cases are forced to work as domestic servants and prostitutes while men are forced to work as herders and workers and children are forced to work as beggars. Human trafficking is facilitated by employment agencies and federal government officials providing travel documents. There is an increase of children and university graduates being trafficked from Somaliland to Ethiopia, Sudan, Libya and the Middle East. In addition, members of the Somali diaspora, often relatives, offer Somalis to live with them in Europe or the US where they are forced to work as prostitutes or domestic servants (US Department of State, 2016).

Certain ethnic groups such as Bantus and Midgaan are particularly vulnerable to fall victims to human trafficking due to their marginalisation, poverty and inability to care for all family members. They might be forced to work in households, on farms and as herders for more powerful clan members. In addition they might "willingly surrender custody of their children" (US Department of State, 2016: 405), who are likely to be subjected to sex trafficking or forced to work in the agricultural, the construction and the khat industry, as domestic servants, herders and stone crushers.

Similarly, IDPs are particularly vulnerable to becoming victims of human trafficking. Under false pretences, smugglers particularly lure children and women to go work in Europe, the US or Canada. According to the US Department of State (2016) women and girls living in IDP camps are at times forced "to provide sex acts in exchange for food and services available within the camps" (p.370). In addition, IDPs are charged for services usually being free of charge to establish a cycle of debt, which further increases their vulnerability. This exploitation of IDPs arguable happens in cooperation with Somali officials (US Department of State, 2016).

Another issue is that children are forced to work as child soldiers, in particular for al-Shabaab, but also for the Somali National Army and the militia Ahlu Sunna Wal Jama'a. Children who manage to escape from the terrorist group are particularly vulnerable to become subjected to forced labour and sex trafficking (US Department of State, 2016).

Furthermore, there are some indications of AMISOM personnel from Burundi and Uganda sexually abusing Somali girls and women (US Department of State, 2016).

6. Vulnerabilities

The following main vulnerabilities have been identified for migrants from and in Somalia (RMMS, 2016):

- Somali migrants and asylum seekers encounter significant protection risks throughout their journeys along the different routes out of Somalia. Deaths, missing persons, kidnappings, extortion, physical and sexual abuse, as well as a lack of food and water are commonly reported.
- The journey through the desert in Sudan and Libya is particularly dangerous. Migrants face multiple of such risks including physical and sexual abuse, harsh weather conditions and dehydration as well as vehicle accidents. In particular, migrants are at risk of abduction and kidnapping. Migrants in such situation are held at ransom until they are able to secure a release fee from family or friends back in Somalia or abroad. Such fees range anywhere between hundreds and thousands of US Dollars.

7. Relevant National Policies and Stakeholders

There are very few laws directly related to migration in Somalia and the influence of the Somalian government outside the capital remains extremely limited (IOM, 2015b). Existing migration legislation is limited to matters of asylum, citizenship, entry, stay, exit and the fight against human trafficking (see Table 2).

Table 2: Somalia’s Key Migration Legislation and Policy Responses

Policy	Content
Presidential Decree No. 25 of 2 June 1984, on Determination of Refugee Status	Defines the requirements for recognition of refugee status, the asylum procedure and the admission of asylum seekers.
Pre-1991 Penal Code	Prohibits human trafficking, slavery and forced labour
SOMALILAND	
Somaliland Immigration Law (Law No. 72/1995)	Defines powers and duties of immigration officers, conditions for entry, stay and work in the territory of Somaliland.
Republic of Somaliland Citizenship Law (Law No. 22/2002)	Provides for matters related to citizenship.
Somaliland Refugee Law	n/a

Sources: ILO, 2017.

While border management remains a challenge, Somalia has made progress in expanding its Border Management Information Systems to process the entry of migrants into the country and to improve training of border management officials (IOM, 2015). In addition, the government supports awareness raising campaigns to inform the population about the risks of human trafficking and attempts to improve protection of VoTs in both Somaliland and Puntland (IOM, 2015; US Department of State, 2016). Besides this, the authorities of both Somaliland and Puntland “[sustain] minimal efforts to combat trafficking” (US Department of State, 2016, p.406).

Somalia and Kenya cooperate in the field of border management to facilitate human mobility after having re-opened the borders after two-and-a-half decades. Open borders are expected to boost trade and allow the flow of people between the two nations. The cooperation also encompasses opening two border posts, in Doble-Liboi and Mandera-Bula Hawa (Yusuf, 2017).

In 2017, the Government of Somalia, in partnership with the EU, IOM, UNHCR and UNOPS, launched the project “RE-INTEG: Enhancing Somalia’s responsiveness to the management and reintegration of mixed migration flows”. It is expected to close existing gaps regarding migration and refugee management, to improve policies and legal frameworks for forced migrants and to increase access to basic services in areas of return and departure (European Commission, 2017).

While Somalia’s diaspora is significant and has potential to contribute to the development of the country, independent government activities do not seem to use this potential sufficiently (Shandy & Das, 2016). There are a series of initiatives from international organisations and private individuals, however (Hoehne, Feyissa & Abdile, 2011; Bostrom, Brown & Cechvala, 2016).

Key stakeholders in the field of migration include, but are not limited to, the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs, the Somaliland Immigration Department and Puntland’s Ministry of Women’s Development and Family Affairs.

Gaps

Authorities in Somalia, including both Somaliland and Puntland, are faced with a lack of capacities and resources to develop, implement and enforce adequate migration policies (IOM, 2014; US Department of State, 2016; European Commission, 2017a). This is not only true for government officials and policy-makers, but also for the police, which are understaffed and undertrained. This is especially problematic in terms of fighting human trafficking and smuggling, which can be conflated. Accordingly, authorities do not seem able to cope with various forms of migration, including irregular and forced migration (US Department of State, 2016). Somali policies fail to address circular migration (Weiss, 2009), protect and integrate return migrants, refugees and IDPs adequately (European Commission, 2017). This is partly a result of fragmented responsibilities of different institutions. It is therefore recommended to strengthen government capacities, data collection and data management (IOM, 2014; European Commission, 2017). In addition, assistance to IDPs should be increased to prevent radicalisation and human trafficking. Moreover, the government is advised to expand diaspora engagement (IOM, 2014).

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