

Federal Republic of Somalia

MAL FACT SHEET



SUMMARY

The Federal Republic of Somalia has currently suffered through two decades of conflict following the fall of the SIAD regime in 1991. Hundreds of thousands of Somali's have fled their homes, and today Somalia is the world's fourth highest source country for refugees. Insecurity, drought, floods, food shortages, and a lack of economic opportunities contribute to the above.

Chief of State: President Hassan Sheikh Mohamud (May 23, 2022)

Head of Government: Prime Minister Hamza Abdi Barre (June 25, 2022)

Capital: Mogadishu

Other notable cities: Marka, Kismaayo, Boosaaso, Berbera, and Beledweyne

Gov Type: Federal Parliamentary Republic

Population: 19,700,000

History: In the late 19th century, Britain, France, and Italy established colonies in the Somali Peninsula that lasted until 1960, when British Somaliland gained independence and joined with Italian Somaliland to form the Republic of Somalia.

GEOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION

Somalia is located in Eastern Africa, along the border of the Gulf of Aden and the Indian Ocean. It borders Djibouti, Ethiopia, and Kenya, with its total area consisting of 637,675 sq km, 627,337 of that being land and the remaining 10,320 being water. Somalia is mostly desert, with northeast monsoons from December to February and southwest monsoons from May to October. It has moderate temperatures in the north and hot temperatures in the south, with irregular rainfall. Somalia has hot and humid periods between monsoons. Somalia's natural resources consist of uranium, reserves of iron ore, tin, gypsum, bauxite, copper, salt, natural gas, and likely oil reserves. 70.3% of its land is used agricultural, with 10.6% being forest and 19.1% being classified as 'other'. Most of its population is around Mogadishu, Marka, Boorama, Hargeysa, and Baidoa.

DEMOGRAPHICS

Noun: Somali(s)

Adjective: Somali

Ethnic Groups: Predominantly Somali with a lesser number of Arabs, Bantus, and others.

Languages: Somali (official), Arabic (official), Italian, English

Religions: Muslim (99.9%, with Sunni Muslim at 98.1% and Shia Muslim at 1.2%, and Islamic Schismatic at 0.6%), and ethnic religionist (0.1%).

Somalia has low humanitarian indicators, suffering from poor governance, protracted internal conflict, underdevelopment, economic decline, poverty, social and gender inequality, and environmental degradation. Despite civil war and famine, it has a high fertility rate. More than 60% of its population is younger than 25 as of 2020. There is a lack of educational and job opportunities; it has one of the lowest primary school enrollment rates, and life expectancy is low. Somalia faces one of the world's worst refugee crises, with hundreds of thousands of Somalis displaced by civil war and extremist violence since the '90s. Roughly 4 million people are internally displaced in Somalia, with 6.7 million experiencing food insecurity.

ECONOMY AND GDP

The Federal Republic of Somalia is a low-income economy in the Horn of Africa. Due to 30 years of war and instability, the economy remains underdeveloped, and there are high remittances for basic survival. It is environmentally fragile and has digitally driven urbanization efforts.

Real GDP: \$30.45 billion (2024)

Real GDP Growth Rate: 4.1% (2024)

Real GDP Per Capita: \$1,600 (2024)

GDP (Official Exchange Rate): \$11.97 billion (2024)

GDP Composition: Agriculture 60.2% (2017), Industry 7.4% (2017), and Services 32.5% (2017).

Inflation Rate(CPI anual change): 7.8% (2024)

Industries: Light industries, including sugar refining, textiles, and wireless communication.

Labor Force: 3.555 million (2024).

Unemployment Rate: 18.9%; youth unemployment rate stands at 34% (2024).

Population Below Poverty Line: 54.4% (2025)

Public Debt: \$117 million (2026)

Exports: \$819 million (partners include United Arab Emirates, Oman, Bulgaria, India, and Kuwait) 2022 est.

Imports: \$94.43 billion (partners include United Arab Emirates, China, India, Turkey, and Ethiopia) 2022 est.

MAIN POLITICAL CONTENTIONS

Somalia is currently in political crisis due to a long-running conflict with al-Shabab, recent flash floods, and a predicted drought. Long overdue elections held in 2022 promised hope for the region. However, tensions between the states and the federal government remain, and talks with Somaliland have made little progress. For the better part of a decade, Somalia was in a constitutional crisis with intraclan tension over the creation of a new government. The Somali parliament recently approved highly contested amendments to the provisional constitution, paving the way for the parliamentary government to transition to a federal republic with direct universal suffrage. The new constitution permits the president to appoint his own cabinet and prime minister, with the power to dismiss them at will. The new constitution and government were set to be implemented in May 2026, despite three of the six Federal Member States boycotting parliament's decision to adopt it. There remains severe tension between states and the Somali federal government over autonomy concerns.

Economy and Politics

SOMALIA: A TIMELINE

Mohamed Farah Aideed is succeeded by his son, Hussein in 1996. By 1998, Puntland region declares autonomy and two years later clan leaders and senior figures meeting in Djibouti elect Abdulkassim Salat Hassan as president of Somalia. Later that year,

Hassan's Prime Minister, Ali Khalif Gelaydah announces his government, which is the first in the region since 1991. But by 2001, Somali warlords, backed by Ethiopia, decline to support transitional administration. In 2004, the 14th attempt since 1991 takes place to restore central government, with a new transitional parliament inaugurated in Kenya. In October, the body elected Abdullahi Yusuf as President. The following year, the Somali government begins returning home from exile in Kenya, but there are divisions in Somalia over where the Parliament should sit. The same year, Prime Minister Ali Mohammed Ghedi survived an assassination attempt in Mogadishu.

In 2011, the UN declares a famine in three regions of Somalia and Al-Shabab partially lifts its ban on foreign aid agencies in the south and the UN airlifts its first aid consignment in five years to Mogadishu. Al-Shabab pulls out of Mogadishu. In October, Kenyan troops enter Somalia to attack rebels they accuse of kidnapping foreigners on Kenyan soil.

Al-Shabab leader Sheikh Hassan Dahir Aweys is taken into custody by government troops after he is ousted by more extreme Al-Shabab figure Ahmed Abdi Godane. Violence ensues and later that year Al-Shabab seizes a shopping center and kills 60 people. In 2014, Al-Shabab carries out a bomb attack on a restaurant in Djibouti. By September, Al-Shabab leader Ahmed Abdi Godane is killed in a US drone strike and is succeeded by Ahmad Omar. In November, Al-Shabab carries out massive killings in north-east Kenya.

Muhammed Abdullahi Muhammed's presidential term ended in February 2021, and the government didn't hold elections until November 2021. This election delay sparked the Somali political crisis of 2021-2022 due to the unstable power transfer. The elections were supposed to conclude at the end of 2021; however, only a fraction of parliament was elected by the end of December 2021. The elections lasted until April 2022 and culminated with parliament electing a president in May 2022.

Somalia joins the League of Arab States in 1974. At the same time, severe drought causes widespread starvation. In 1977, Somalia invades the Somali-inhabited Ogaden region of Ethiopia, but by 1978 forces are pushed out. By 1981, opposition to Barre's regime begins to remerge as members of the Mijertyn and Isaq clans are excluded from government positions and filled with members of Barre's own clan. In 1988,, Somalia signs a peace accors with Ethiopia. In 1991, Mohamed Siad Barre is ousted and a power struggle begins between clan warlords. The same year, Somaliland declares unilateral independence.

In February of 2006, Transitional parliament meets in the central town of Baidoa for the first time since its formation in 2004. By March, many people are killed during fighting between rival militias in Mogadishu. In June, militias loyal to the Union of Islamic Courts take Mogadishu and other parts of the south and Ethiopian troops enter Somalia. By September transitional government and Islamic Courts begin peace talks in Khartoum and Somalia's first known suicide bombing targets President Yusuf outside of parliament in Baidoa. In December, Ethiopian and Transitional government puts Islamists to flight, capturing Mogadishu.

In 2012 Al-Shabab loses key towns of Baidoa and Afgoye to Kenyan, African Union, and Somali government forces. Later that year, Somalia's first formal parliament in more than 20 years at Mogadishu airport, ending ethe eight-year transitional period and pro-government forces capture the port of Merca. Later that year, the MPs in Mogadishu elect Hassan Sheikh Mohamud as president over incumbent Sharik Sheikh Ahmed, the first election since 1967. By October, the African union and government forces recapture Kismayo.

By 2015, Al-Shabab claims responsibility for killing 148 people at Garissa University College in northern Kenya. By 2016, the AU increases funding and support for military presence in Somalia. In November, Puntland and Galmudug agree to respect a ceasefire in Galkayo, where fighting displaced 90,000. By 2017, Parliament elects former prime minister Mohamed Abdullahi Mohamed as president and Al-Shabab threatens to target anyone associated with him. In May, President Mohamed calls for a lifting of arms embargo to help defeat Al-Shabab.

1992-2005

1974-1991

2006

2011

2012

2013-2014

2015-2017

2021-2022



2024-2026

In March 2024, the Somali government began the process of transitioning from the 2012 preliminary constitution to a finalized draft. The changes were meant to appease regional leaders and semi-autonomous zones and to transition the governing framework from a unitary parliamentary system with indirect elections to a federal framework with direct presidential and separate direct parliamentary elections. This framework also strengthened the executive capacity of the Somali government, which resulted in pushback from opposition groups. Despite these contentions, the parliament approved the final amendments after a lengthy negotiation process in March 2026.