

6.4. Travel and admittance

COMMON ANALYSIS

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In case the criterion of 'safety' is satisfied, as a next step, it has to be established whether an applicant can safely and legally travel and gain admittance to Mogadishu, Garowe and Hargeisa.

The general situation and the individual circumstances of the applicant should be taken into account in this assessment.

- **Safely travel:** there should be a safe route, through which the applicant can practically travel without undue difficulty, so that he or she can access the area of IPA without serious risks. In this regard, the assessment of the travel route from the airport to the city is part of the 'safe travel' criterion and has to be assessed carefully based on relevant COI.

Mogadishu has an international airport, Aden Adde International Airport, from which both international and domestic flights are taking place. The airport is located about 1.6 kilometres west of the town. Mortar attacks launched by Al-Shabaab against the airport complex have been recorded. [[Actors](#), 4.2.3., p. 61] In March 2022, the group was able to infiltrate the airport zone to carry out an attack inside [[Security 2023](#), 2.2.3., p. 113].

Several hundred checkpoints in Mogadishu manned by security forces were meant to ensure safety in the city. People reported fear going through checkpoints because of corrupt police officers or the risk of terrorist bomb attacks. Violent incidents at checkpoints causing deaths and harassments by NISA or other security agents have also been reported [[KSEI 2021](#), 1.2.2., p. 23]. Roadblocks continued to present a 'recurrent security challenge' in 2021- 2022 [[Security 2023](#), 2.3.4., p. 118].

Garowe International Airport is the third largest airport in Somalia, located about 12 kilometres from Garowe's city centre. It is operated by the Puntland Ministry for Civil Aviation and Airport and it serves both international and domestic destinations. [[KSEI 2021](#), 2.2.1., p. 55]

In terms of internal mobility and security, Somalis can in general freely move around Puntland without too many security concerns. Exceptions are the contested areas in Sool and Sanaag or areas where Al-Shabaab has presence such as around the Galgala Mountains and Golis. [[Security 2023](#), 2.6.2., p. 160; [Security 2021](#), 2.6.5., p. 142]

Hargeisa's airport is located 6 km from the city centre and it serves both international and domestic flights [[KSEI 2021](#), 3.2.1, pp. 74-75].

Free movement is generally uninhibited in Somaliland both for civilians as well as for goods and supplies. The route from Berbera to Hargeisa is generally described as safe. [[Security 2023](#), 2.8.4., p. 190].

- **Legally travel:** there should be no legal obstacles that prevent the applicant from travelling to the safe area.

Mogadishu: to access Somalia by air or land, Somali citizens, among them ethnic Somalis and members of minority groups, require a passport. One source noted that Somalis can access Somalia also with a public ID and, depending on an individual's network and connections, it could be possible to even 'circumvent the need for documents'. It is possible to apply for a passport at a Somali embassy. [[Security 2023](#), 1.5.1., pp. 55-56]

In principle, people can move freely within the capital city regardless of their clan background, and there are no clan-based restrictions on movement.

The main checkpoints in the city were controlled by FGS forces. In January 2019, a source indicated that security checkpoints in Mogadishu were commonly located every one to two kilometres, and that one should make sure to provide an ID card. However, in July 2021, another source stated that the majority of people in Mogadishu do not possess IDs or other identity documents. Official fees are not levied at checkpoints, but bribes may be requested and especially so if identity documents are missing. People without IDs are more likely to be body-checked. For members of marginalised groups, passage was not always possible even though they had the required identity certificates. [[KSEI 2021](#), 1.2.2., p. 23]

Garowe: the existence of checkpoints manned by security forces, district officials or police officers from the local municipality who collect fees as well as bribes has

been reported. Controls of people are regular, however, security forces do not necessarily check IDs but ask questions to determine the place of origin. [[KSEI 2021](#), 2.2.2.2., pp. 56-57]

For documents required to access Somalia, see the section 'Travel and admittance – Mogadishu' above.

Hargeisa: the Somaliland administration issues ID cards as well as passports and visas [[Security 2023](#), 1.5.2., p. 56]. The Somaliland authorities require anyone entering the territory through the airport to have a proper travel document and may require a fee. For individuals who are not in possession of identification documents issued by the Somaliland authorities, the Department of Somaliland Immigration (SIBC) lists travellers who, based on their type of passport or nationality, can apply for an 'on arrival' visa directly, while other applicants must apply for visas in advance. It is possible to request for a passport and visa from abroad from a Somaliland's Representative Mission (for example, from the Mission to the UK) or when the person reaches the border itself [[Security 2023](#), 1.5.2., p. 56]. 'On arrival' visas are awarded for stays of up to 30 days. As a rule, an invitation is required as proof of the purpose of stay, without which entry can be refused. Visa fees need to be paid on site. [[Security 2023](#), 1.5.2., p. 56]

Somali citizens not originating from Somaliland who reach Somaliland's land borders from Puntland or South and Central Somalia must present a Somaliland national ID to enter the territory. [[Security 2023](#), 1.5.2., p. 58]

The presence of entry and exit checkpoints at each district within Somaliland has been reported. There are also checkpoints on all the roads leading in and out of Hargeisa city. However, they do not significantly affect the accessibility or mobility of residents. Checkpoint authorities consistently verify travel documents, driver's licenses, destination and origin of the trip, record plate numbers of vehicles and contact numbers of travellers. [[KSEI 2021](#), 3.2.2.1., pp. 75-76]

- **Gain admittance:** the applicant should be allowed to access the safe area by the actor(s) who control it.

Mogadishu: even though there are no clan-based restrictions on movement and settlement, the clan background still determines where people would feel it is safest to live. The clan can also provide a safety net in case of hardship. [[KSEI 2021](#), 1.2.3, p. 25]

Garowe: although people can settle in all parts of Garowe city, they tend to settle according to clan affiliation [[KSEI 2021](#), 2.2.3.3., p. 58].

Hargeisa: Hargeisa's population has a history of settling in the city according to a clan-based segregation. Newcomers tended to settle where members of their clan lived, expecting that the clan network would facilitate their access to a range of institutions and services which the state failed to provide. However, this did not mean that people could not reside in a neighbourhood populated by a clan different than theirs. [[KSEI 2021](#), 3.2.3., pp. 77-78]

The individual circumstances of the applicant should also be taken into account when assessing whether they can safely and legally travel and gain admittance to a part of the country.

For those applicants who meet the 'safety' criterion, the assessment of the availability of IPA should proceed with an assessment of the requirements of safety and legality of travel and of gaining admittance.

Based on available COI, it is concluded that there are some security concerns with regard to the safety of travel to Mogadishu. With regard to Garowe and Hargeisa, it is concluded that, in general, a person can access these cities without serious risks.

The possession of appropriate identification and/or travel documents is required to access Somalia and Somaliland. When passing through checkpoints to travel to Mogadishu, Garowe, and Hargeisa, and to circulate in the three cities, the lack of identification documents may render the applicant vulnerable to ill-treatment at checkpoints.

The possession of a 30-day visa would not be sufficient to consider that the applicant can settle in Hargeisa.

Clan affiliation does not constitute a legal requirement to travel and gain admittance in Mogadishu, Garowe and Hargeisa, however it would be a crucial factor to take into account when examining the next requirements of reasonableness to settle in one of these cities.

See other topics concerning the Internal Protection Alternative:

- [6.1. Preliminary remarks](#)
- [6.2. Part of the country](#)

- [6.3. Safety](#)
 - [6.3.1. Absence of persecution or serious harm](#)
 - [6.3.2. Availability of protection against persecution or serious harm](#)
- *6.4. Travel and admittance*
- [6.5. Reasonableness to settle](#)
 - [6.5.1. General situation](#)
 - [6.5.2. Individual circumstances](#)
- [6.5.3. Conclusions on reasonableness](#)