

EMN Ad-Hoc Query on Assessment of the security situation in Mogadishu, Somalia

Requested by NO EMN NCP on 4th May 2017

Protection

Responses from Austria, Belgium, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Netherlands, Poland, Slovak Republic, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, United Kingdom, Norway (25 in total)

Disclaimer:

The following responses have been provided primarily for the purpose of information exchange among EMN NCPs in the framework of the EMN. The contributing EMN NCPs have provided, to the best of their knowledge, information that is up-to-date, objective and reliable. Note, however, that the information provided does not necessarily represent the official policy of an EMN NCPs' Member State.



Background information:

In line with the Sufi and Elmi verdict the Norwegian Directorate of Immigration (UDI) has not so far referred Somalian asylum seekers to an existence in the IDP Camps located in and around Mogadishu. However, because of the improved security situation in these IDP camps UDI is now considering whether to change this practice.

Questions

- 1. How do you asses the current security situation in Mogadishu?
- 2. Do you considered that the security situation in Mogadishu differs significantly from the security situation in the rest of South and Central Somalia? Please indicate why (not).
- 3. Do you refer asylum seekers to seek internal relocation in Mogadishu? Yes:___ No: ___If yes: who (what type of person) do you consider to have a safe internal relocation alternative in Mogadishu?
- 4. How do you asses the security situation in the IDP camps in and around Mogadishu?
- 5. Do you return rejected asylum seekers to Mogadishu if it is most likely that they will end up in one of the IDP-camps? Yes: ____ No: ___If No: Are you considering changing this policy? Yes: ____ No: ___If No: Please explain why:
- 6. Do you have any recent information about the situations in the IDP camps in and around Mogadishu? Yes: ___ No:___If Yes: Please give the date and attach or give links to the relevant documents.

Responses

Country	Wider Dissemination	Response
Austria	Yes	1. The country of origin research made by the Country of Origin Information Unit is an important part of the asylum procedure. The core function of the state documentary is to collect information of the country of origin for the asylum procedure. According to § 5 BFA-Einrichtungsgesetz (BFA-G) the Federal Office for Immigration and Asylum shall maintain country records in which facts relevant to procedures pursuant to the present federal act and relating to the situation in the countries concerned shall be entered, together with their sources. In particular, the purpose of country records shall be to gather relevant facts for: 1. assessing whether facts exist which allow it to be concluded that in a certain country there is a danger of persecution as defined in the present federal act; 2. assessing the credibility of asylum seekers' statements and 3. deciding whether a certain country is safe within the meaning of the Austrian Asylum Act. The collected information are prepared

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		in a scientific manner in accordance with objective criteria (general analysis) and be recorded in a generic manner. Source: Federal Ministry of the Interior. 2. n.a. Source: Federal Ministry of the Interior. 3. n.a. Source: Federal Ministry of the Interior. 4. n.a. Source: Federal Ministry of the Interior. 5. n.a. Source: Federal Ministry of the Interior. 6. n.a. Source: Federal Ministry of the Interior.
Belgium	No	This EMN NCP has provided a response to the requesting EMN NCP. However, they have requested that it is not disseminated further.
Croatia	Yes	 1. 1. The city remains extremely dangerous. Armed warlord and Islamic militant factions still have a large presence in the city. Gunfire and random explosions are frequent. Al-Shabab regularly targets civilians and civilian structures, with an increase in attacks on schools, hotels, and restaurants in Mogadishu, resulting in numerous casualties. 2. 2. No. Although Mogadishu is under African Union/Government controlled, and the military operations are weakening al-Shabab, the group is still able to carry out suicide attacks in Mogadishu, as well as in the rest of South and Central Somalia. Therefore, we consider 3. 3. There was no such a case in Croatia. 4. 4. Not so good, the conditions in the IDP camps continue to get worse. The people are a very vulnerable population, and are often subject to a several human rights violation according to the Untied Nation Human Rights report. 5. 5. Croatia does not carry out forced returns to Somalia.

		6. 6. No
Cyprus	Yes	1. The current situation in Mogadishu although it is characterised by frequent incidents of violence, it does not represent a situation that rises the need to grant subsidiary protection according to article 15 (c) of QD. The situation in Mogadishu cannot be perceived as an international or internal armed conflict. The main perpetrator of violence is Al Shabaab but their attacks are mainly targeted ones, against government employees, NGOs, AMISOM personnel, targeted groups such defectors from Al Shabaab and/or perceived collaborates, governmental institutions/buildings, places where government and AMISOM personnel are concentrated (restaurants, coffee shops, hotels), external contractors cooperating with government and/or AMISOM. 2. Yes. The reason is because Al Shabaab as the main factor of destabilisation of the security situation, has no direct control over Mogadishu and does not impose strict Sharia law. Also in Mogadishu there are not interclan conflicts which indeed exist in areas outside of Mogadishu, like in Marka, Middle Shabelle, Galgaduud. 3. The answer is NO. The reason is because there are some very important factors that need to be taken into consideration when applying IR in Mogadishu. It should be first established that the applicants have family links in Mogadishu, clan connections and ability to offer protection and assistance. Furthermore, the general profile of the applicant needs to fulfil certain criteria so as possible relocation should not arise negative effects such as inhuman and degrading treatment and /or hardship of survival. 4. Cyprus does not have any cases of Somalis originated from IDP camps in Somalia. 5. Cyprus authorities do not exercise forcible returns. Returns are carried voluntarily via IOM.
Czech Republic	No	This EMN NCP has provided a response to the requesting EMN NCP. However, they have requested that it is not disseminated further.
Estonia	Yes	1. Estonia has received all together 4 applications for international protection from Somali nationals before the year 2012. Since there have been no such cases recent years and since each application is examined

			individually, there is no up to date analysis nor risk assessments regarding the security situation in Mogadishu. 2. N/A 3. N/A 4. N/A 5. N/A 6. N/A
+	Finland	No	This EMN NCP has provided a response to the requesting EMN NCP. However, they have requested that it is not disseminated further.
	France	No	This EMN NCP has provided a response to the requesting EMN NCP. However, they have requested that it is not disseminated further.
	Germany	Yes	 Mogadishu is embroiled in an internal armed conflict in the form of civil war. However, the armed clashes have not reached a level of intensity or sustainability there that puts civilians at major individual or arbitrary risk to life and limb resulting from heightened risks. The situation is slightly different if it involves civilians who face individual, risk-heightening conditions, These include, in particular, being a member of a certain group of persons (journalists, politicians, business people, persons belonging to the government, Army or security authorities, persons who have links to the government, Army, security authorities or AMISOM or extremists suspected of belonging to al-Shabaab). An armed conflict in the form of a civil war is also raging in the other parts of Central and South Somalia. However, the armed clashes there have indeed reached a level of intensity and sustainability for all persons, placing civilians at major individual and arbitrary risk to life and limb resulting from heightened risks. Only in Belet Weyne is the situation similar to the situation described in the foregoing in relation to Mogadishu.

		 3. Yes,but only persons who are capable of earning a living that is above the subsistence level can be returned to Mogadishu (or Belet Weyne). It is assumed that the only persons who meet this requirement are healthy young men who are fit to work, have handicraft or technical skills and have family ties in Mogadishu (or Belet Weyne). 4. The situation is precarious for IDPs in the camps. Owing to the influx of IDPs as a result of the prevailing draught, the supply of food, water and sanitation is not guaranteed. Violence above all against women is rampant. 5. No; No; -See the answer to Question 4 6. No.
Hungary	Yes	 The security situation in Mogadishu - and in fact in all of Somalia - is covered by article 15 point c) of the Qualification Directive (2011/95/EU). The Hungarian immigration authorities consider Somalia as a country where there is serious and individual threat to a civilian's life or person by reason of indiscriminate violence in situations of international or internal armed conflict. The security situation is considered serious in whole of Somalia. The Immigration and Asylum Office does not differentiate between Somalis originating from different areas of Somalia. No, Hungary does not consider internal relocation as possible protection in Somalia (see answer to question 2). Somalis are eligible for refugee status or subsidiary protection in Hungary. Protection offered in IDP camps is not sufficient. (see answer to question 3). Hungary does not carry out forced returns to Somalia. No.
Ireland	No	This EMN NCP has provided a response to the requesting EMN NCP. However, they have requested that it is not disseminated further.

Italy

people. 20 CCTV camera poles have been installed in the city center so far, and this system – financed by Japan – should comprise as many as 200 CCTV camera poles soon. The Somali Police Force (SPF) is present in every city quarter and supported by the AMISOM police. Their equipment and training has been improved as compared to 3-4 years ago. Along with the army, which has also police functions, the two police forces patrol the whole city continuously. Still, a comprehensive control of all city quarters is not ensured. Information is often leaked to AS by bribing police officers.

- 2. Yes. The area of Mogadishu, although terrorist attacks take place, is not considered a war zone as actually NGOs and international organizations are allowed. The capital is virtually under the control of the Somali Government and its allied forces. On the other hand, some areas of the central and south regions of the country remain inaccessible, whereas some areas are still considered war zones and are therefore dangerous. Excluding some urban centers where AMISOM military troops and Somali forces are found, entire areas of Lower Shabelle, Bay, Bakool, Gedo as well as Lower and Medium Juba are war zones or occupied jihadist areas. Within a radius of 5-15 Km as you leave some major towns Al Shabaab's presence is dominant. If AMISOM and/or Somali forces for some reason leave a village or town, AS can occupy it and fill the vacuum in no time, i.e. set up an administration and a tribunal according to strict Sharia laws, according to the above-mentioned Austrian-Swiss Fact Finding Mission (FFM). Only some places in South and Central Somalia are considered Al Shabaab-free, namely Dhusamareb, Guri Ceel and Garoowe. The FFM adds: "when AS takes over a town, the locals prefer the devil they know to the alternative chaos despite the strict measures [imposed] by AS".
- **3.** In general, asylum seekers do not seek internal relocation in Mogadishu, since this is a city, similarly to other areas in Somalia which is divided into clanic zones. So, unless we are speaking of a family of displaced which belongs to clans that occupy Mogadishu, seeking relocation in areas of the capital could be very dangerous. Areas in Mogadishu where IDPs are hosted are controlled by clan militias, which manage security as well as profit from these areas. The above-mentioned FFM reports that IDPs in Mogadishu offer a breeding ground for Al Shabaab as they very often need financial help to get by through their daily existence or simply need protection, thus becoming potential recruits for Al Shabaab, which can give financial aid in the first place and then radicalize them at a later time. This is true especially for young boys, but even the terminally ill can accept the idea of carrying out a suicide attack on behalf of AS in exchange for a prize like a compensation or even a lifelong pension for their family.
- **4.** More than IDP camps, it is proper to speak in terms of informal settlements dispersed and not homogenous in the territory. Many informal camps are in the historical center of the capital like "Hamarweyne" and "Hamar jabjab", and it is impossible to assess the degree of security within. Just to get a better idea of how many informal camps exist in just one city: http://www.reach-initiative.org/idp-assessment-in-mogadishu It must be noted that

		the humanitarian situation in Somalia continues to deteriorate due to the ongoing drought crisis that keeps displacing people throughout the Country. A mid-August UNICEF report on Somalia's humanitarian crisis mentions an FSNAU survey indicating that 'the prevalence of global acute malnutrition in the livelihood zones of Bay, Bakool, Sool, Sanaag, Bari, Nugaal, as well as in the Baidoa and Mogadishu internally displaced persons (IDP) camps, is critical (15-30 per cent). While food access was found to be relatively better than previously projected, levels of acute food insecurity remain severe and are expected to persist throughout 2017 given the likelihood of a third consecutive poor harvest in July'. 5. See point 3 6. See point 4
Latvia	Yes	1. Within the time period of last 10 years there were only 2 asylum seekers from Somalia, therefore we do not have information and in-depth analysis on present security situation in the IDP camps close to Mogadishu as well as general security situation in Mogadishu and possibility to return rejected asylum seekers. 2 3 4 5 6
Lithuania	Yes	1. There was no practice regarding Somalian asylum seekers (from 2012 to 2017 (May 25th) there were no cases). Since each application is examined individually, no conclusions can be made. 2. n/a 3. n/a

		4. n/a
		5. n/a
		6. n/a
Luxembourg	Yes	1. The security situation in Mogadishu is volatile since the recent rise in terrorist attacks. As such, Mogadishu has the highest number of security incidents per region in all of Somalia. Al Shabbab carries out indirect mortar attacks but also attacks aiming certain individuals with IEDs. This assessment is based on the information discussed during the EASO Somalia Expert Network meeting in March 2017. 2. The general assessment is that Somalia is an unsafe country; it is neither safe in Mogadishu, nor in the rest of South Central Somalia. This assessment is based on the information discussed during the EASO Somalia Expert Network meeting in March 2017 and is confirmed by the latest travel advice for Somalia issued by the German Ministry of Foreign Affairs in May 2017. 3. The decision if an internal relocation could be considered as a viable option is taken on a case-by-case basis and is dependent on mainly three factors that are related to: the security situation, any existing family links and the economic subsistence opportunities. In this context, it needs to be underlined that the analyze of the volatile security situation and the presence of Al Shabbab are key components of the decision making process when it comes to the internal flight option. N/A. 4. There is hardly any assistance or protection given to IDPs in Mogadishu. The government even participates actively in their displacement by forcefully evicting or displacing them from camps. This assessment is based on the latest update of the USDS Country Reports on Human Rights Practices – Somalia. 5. Luxembourg does not carry out forced returns to Somalia. Voluntary return is always possible. No. See above. 6. See answer to question 4.
		o, see answer to question 4.

Malta	Yes	 The Office of the Refugee Commissioner, while acknowledging the fact that the security situation in Mogadishu has improved in the past few years (especially given the presence of AMISOM and SNAF), and that it is highly unlikely that at this point in time al-shabaab regain effective control of the city or parts of it, still considers the security situation to be a volatile one with a considerably high number of attacks still being carried out by al-shabaab on a regular basis. The Office of the Refugee Commissioner does not currently consider that the security situation in Mogadishu differs significantly from the security situation in the rest of South and Central Somalia. This assessment is based on the fact that while al-shabaab is no longer in control of Mogadishu, it is still able to mount regular attacks against both military and civilian targets. No. Currently, the Office of the Refugee Commissioner is of the opinion that internal protection alternative is not available in South-Central Somalia, including Mogadishu. The Office of the Refugee Commissioner is of the opinion that the security situation in the IDP camps in and around Mogadishu is worse when compared to other parts of the city which have a stronger presence of AMISOM and SNAF forces. It should also be pointed out that a number of reports have highlighted the fact that there have been forced evictions of IDPs in Mogadishu leading to IDPs being forced to relocate in areas where they continue to suffer considerable human rights violations. No. Currently, the Office of the Refugee Commissioner is of the opinion that internal protection alternative is not available in South-Central Somalia, including Mogadishu and IDP camps in and around the city. No.
Netherlands	No	This EMN NCP has provided a response to the requesting EMN NCP. However, they have requested that it is not disseminated further.
Poland	No	This EMN NCP has provided a response to the requesting EMN NCP. However, they have requested that it is not disseminated further.

	Slovak Republic	Yes	 The Slovak Republic has not recorded any asylum seekers from Mogadishu in the past year. However, the security situation is constantly being monitored and certain improvements have been recorded compared to 2015 and 2016. Currently, it is not possible to evaluate whether these improvements are permanent or just temporary. Recently, the security situation in Mogadishu has been different from the security situation in the Central and Southern Somalia, especially with regard to the lower number of fights, attacks on civilians, general security situation as well as needed infrastructure for the population. No. The internal flight alternative has not been applied yet. It would not be possible for an applicant to relocate within Somalia as the access to protection against persecution, safe and rightful departure and arrival in the specific part of the country as well as settling down there cannot be guaranteed. When assessing a well-founded fear of persecution or the access to internal protection, general circumstances, especially those during relocation within Somalia as well as the possibility to settle in the above mentioned IDP camps, are not favourable. There is not enough information on the security situation in IDP camps in Mogadishu available. No. Each case is considered separately, there has not been any special policy regarding returns to Somalia. However, there have not been such cases recently. No. It is not possible to apply the same policy in all cases e.g. a person expresses the willingness to return and cooperates, it is possible to return him/her. No.
-	Slovenia	Yes	 So far we do have only 3 applications for international protection NTR NTR NTR NTR

			6. NTR
<u> </u>	Spain	Yes	1. Asylum seekers whose Somali nationality can be confirmed in the course of interviews (conducted in their language and raising questions related to their country of origin) and who are originary from central and southern Somalia, including the capital, are granted subsidiary protection in accordance with article 15 c of the Qualification Directive. International protection is granted if it can be proved that the applicant suffered persecution. It is interesting to note that Spain has no cases of applicants claiming to be originating or residing in Somaliland or Puntland, the northern part of the country, in which case if they not claim to be persecuted they could be returned to their place of residence since these territories are pro-government zones and there is no presence of the Al Shabab group. 2. Spain does not make any distinction between the origin of the asylum seekers, they cases are considered in the same way irrespective of whether they are from Mogadishu or the rest of areas of the country (central or southern Somalia.) 3. No. Spain does not refer asylum seekers to seek internal relocation in Mogadishu. The majority of applicants is originary from territories occupied by the radical jihadist group or areas of territorial control conflict between this jihadist group and the government. 4. Since no return applies, no specific security information is available. 5. There are no cases of rejected asylum seekers returned to Mogadishu. No changes in such policy are considered to date, given the current security situation in Somalia and the changing control circumstances between governmental forces and the Al Shabab group.
	Sweden	Yes	1. The situation in Mogadishu is assessed as covered by article 15c in the Qualification Directive (2011/95/EU)
			but an individual assessment of the applicants exposure must be done. 2. No. The security situation is considered as serious in the whole of South and Central Somalia including Mogadishu where Al Shabaab is carrying out attacks.

		V	3. Yes. For persons who have their clan or other network there and who have access to protection. This is not valid for minority groups, women without a male network, unaccompanied minors or those who risk becomming internal refugees. The person must also be able to work. 4. An internal relocation alternative is not considered to be reasonable if the person is forced to live in a refugee camp and there is therefore no reason to do any particular evaluation of the security situation in the internal refugee camps located in and around Mogadishu. 5. No. Changing this policy in not under consideration since it is the Swedish Migration Agency having the burden of proof that there is an internal relocation alternative that is both relevant and reasonable. 6. No
•	Switzerland	Yes	 The security situation in Mogadishu is still precarious. During daytime, there is a superficial control by the AMISOM, but attacks by Al-Shabaab have become more frequent again since early May. In this situation of general nervousness, a minister was killed by mistake by bodyguards. The security situation in the rest of South and Central Somalia requires geographical differentiation. In garrison towns held by the Amisom, the situation may be comparable with Mogadishu, though the Amisom control is usually even more precarious and ends at the outskirts. N/A The security situation in IDP camps is precarious. Especially women and children are easy targets for human rights violations. NO NO
	United Kingdom	Yes	1. We assess that there is no Article 15(c) risk or that ordinary civilians would not require protection under Article 3 of the ECHR.

			 2. No. We consider that the general conditions in South and Central Somalia are similar, but particular factors relevant to a person's individual circumstances might place them at risk on return. Some people, for example, would be a risk in areas under the control of Al Shabaab. 3. Yes. Any failed asylum seeker returning to Somalia, who may have previously lived elsewhere in Somalia, should (each person's individual circumstances allowing) be able to relocate to Mogadishu provided they have clan or family support or remittances from abroad or have a likelihood of securing employment. 4. We assess that minority group members who become IDPs and have no choice but to live in an IDP camp (i.e. without the support mentioned above) may be at risk on the basis of their social group or ethnic origin. Some established, settled, camps are dominated by minority groups and the situation may be better. Each case would be decided on its own facts. Other returnees, if they should find themselves in an IDP camp, are likely to have clan support within the camp. 5. Decision makers would have to take account that the Upper Tribunal in the case of MOJ & Ors (Return to Mogadishu) Somalia CG [2014] UKUT 00442 (IAC) (paragraph 425) found that a person from a minority clan with no links to Mogadishu, no access to funds and no other form of clan, family or social support, is at 'a real risk of having no alternative but to live in makeshift accommodation within an IDP camp where there is a real possibility of having to live in conditions that will fall below acceptable humanitarian standards'. 6. No
##	Norway	Yes	 The Norwegian Directorate of Immigration(UDI) recognizes that the security situation in Somalia is problematic. However, the UDI assessment is that the security situation in Mogadishu is not of such a nature that every Somali person from Mogadishu should be granted a protection status in accordance with Section 28 of the Immigration Act merely because of the general security situation in the country. An asylum applicant will be granted a protection status (refugee status or subsidiary protection) if there is a risk of persecution or serious harm due to individual circumstances or characteristics (for example a risk profile). Yes. Unlike the situation in Mogadishu, there are few possibilities to obtain reliable information about power relations in Southern and Central parts of Somalia. However it is clear from the information provided from COI that there is an ongoing power struggle in Southern Somalia, mainly between the Somali authorities, supported by the military forces from the African Union (AMISOM). and Harakat al-Shabaab al-Mujahideen (al-

	Shabaab). We therefore consider the current security situation in South and Central Somalia to be more complex and uncertain than that of the current security situation in Mogadishu. 3. Yes. According to our current practice we refer asylum seekers to internal relocation in Mogadishu in these typical cases; - they have personal experiences of living in Mogadishu as adults, even though Mogadishu was
	not their current home at the time of leaving Somalia - they have close family connections in Mogadishu. Because of the uniqueness of Somali family structure, and the importance of clan affiliation, we consider the definition of family to be broader in Somalia than in Norway, for example In addition to these factors we can also take into account whether or not they have family members outside Somalia who will help them financially on their return to Mogadishu. According to COI, the major difference between those who have no choice but to live in an IDP camp, and those who do, is often their access to remittances from abroad
	4. The UDI have new COI indicating that the security situation in the IDP camps in and around Mogadishu have improved and is now no worse than the security situation in Mogadishu generally.
	5. No. Yes: We are considering changing this policy, however, because of the improved security situation in these IDP camps.
	6. Yes: COI report: Query response Somalia: The settlement in Mogadishu 11.11.2016. UNHCR: International Protection Considerations with Regard til people fleeing Southern and Central Somalia» 17.01.2014. UNHCR Position on Returns to Southern and Central Somalia (Update I) 01.05.2016