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1.9.1. Background and distinctions

Over the past four years, most returnees came from Yemen and from Kenya.784 From Yemen came 1 858 individuals. From Kenya came 427 individuals. From Libya came 188 individuals.785 One source reports that in in 2023, the total number of returnees to Somalia was 2 516.786 These numbers are, however, especially regarding returnees from Kenya, at odds with other sources. Owigo (2022) found that, according to the UNHCR, as of August 2021, '133,166 Somali returnees have been recorded and assisted with the majority of the returnees coming from Kenya through the UNHCR-initiated voluntary repatriation program (VRP).'787 They returned as result of the tripartite agreement entered between UNHCR, Kenya and Somalia in 2013 aiming at sending many of those Somalis who have been living in camps in Kenya for years back to Somalia.788 Other returnees, including from Libya, returned recently (2017-2023) assisted by the European Union's Emergency Trust Fund for Africa, through a project that was implemented by the International Organization for Migration (IOM), called the EU-IOM Joint Initiative for Migrant Protection and Reintegration. 'With a 603-million-euro budget, the initiative assisted the return of more than 134,000 individuals and reintegration of 124,000' from various African countries, including Somalia, in their countries of origin.789 The returnees assisted by the EU-IOM program were often young men stranded along their migration route (e.g., to North Africa and then onward to Europe). They often had experienced capture, torture and other forms of abuse. Their situation was different from 'those returning from Europe, Saudi Arabia, or elsewhere via an assisted voluntary return program.'790 Returnees mostly return to urban areas, largely because rural areas are still considered instable.791

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  Somalia, National Bureau of Statistics, Migration Statistics Report 2024, url, p. 21

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  Somalia, National Bureau of Statistics, Migration Statistics Report 2024, url, p. 21

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  Somalia, National Bureau of Statistics, Migration Statistics Report 2024, url, p. 19

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  Owigo, J., Returnees and the Dilemmas of (Un)sustainable Return and Reintegration in Somalia, 31 August 2022, url, p. 123

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  Owigo, J., Returnees and the Dilemmas of (Un)sustainable Return and Reintegration in Somalia, 31 August 2022, url, p. 126

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  Kuschminder, K., et al., Migration Interrupted: Can Stranded Migrants from Ethiopia, Somalia, and Sudan Rebuild Their Lives upon Return?, 17 July 2024, url

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  Kuschminder, K., et al., Migration Interrupted: Can Stranded Migrants from Ethiopia, Somalia, and Sudan Rebuild Their Lives upon Return?, 17 July 2024, url

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  Owigo, J., Returnees and the Dilemmas of (Un)sustainable Return and Reintegration in Somalia, 31 August 2022, url, p. 123

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