

Nairobi Metropolitan Area

Country	Kenya
Population	6,9 millions
World region	Africa

● Context

The Nairobi Metropolitan Region (NMR) encompasses Nairobi City County and the four neighbouring counties defined under the NaMATA framework: Kiambu, Kajiado, Machakos and Murang'a. It was conceptualised in 2008 with the creation of the Ministry of Nairobi Metropolitan Development and the Nairobi Metro 2030 strategy. After the 2010 Constitution, Nairobi became both a capital city and a county. The region lacks a single elected metropolitan government; metropolitan functions are coordinated by national institutions and specialised agencies, such as NaMATA for transport planning and regulation.

● Economic profile

World Bank income group: Lower-Middle

Major economic activities

Nairobi is East Africa's leading financial and business hub, with a fast-growing ICT sector that has positioned the city as a key tech destination on the continent. Transport and logistics, wholesale and retail trade, real estate and construction, tourism, and light manufacturing and agro-processing are economic base, alongside the regional headquarters of UNEP and UN-Habitat.

Own source revenues

At metropolitan scale, own-source revenues are mainly collected by county governments, particularly Nairobi City County. The main revenue instruments include property rates, single business permits, trade licences, parking fees and transport-related charges, outdoor advertising fees, development control and building approval fees, and market levies.

● Governance structure

Year of constitution: 2008

Type of metropolitan government: Vertical Coordination

Legal framework

The metropolitan area is framed by Kenya's 2010 Constitution, which establishes a two-tier system of national and county governments and designates Nairobi as both capital city and county. Although the Nairobi Metropolitan Region itself was institutionalised before (in 2008), sectoral metropolitan functions—particularly transport—are now anchored in specific legal instruments such as the Nairobi Metropolitan Area Transport Authority (NaMATA).

Administrative structure

The Nairobi Metropolitan Region has no single elected metropolitan government. Instead, it comprises Nairobi City County and surrounding counties that coordinate through inter-governmental mechanisms and national line ministries. Nairobi City County is governed by an elected Governor and County Assembly, with sub-county and ward-level administrations.

Annual revenue, expenditure and sources

Metropolitan-scale financing is largely channelled through county budgets and national programmes rather than a single metropolitan budget. For example, Nairobi City County's budget combines national transfers, conditional grants and substantial own-source revenues. Metropolitan investment programmes, such as the Nairobi Metropolitan Services Improvement Project (NaMSIP) or mass-transit corridors, are funded through national budget lines, concessional loans and grants. Metropolitan agencies such as NaMATA are primarily financed through national government budget allocations and development partner funding.

Number and type of administrative units

5 county governments.

KEY STRATEGIC PLAN



Resilience

Nairobi City County Climate Action Plan 2020-2050



Strategic

Nairobi City County Integrated Development Plan (CIDP) 2023–2027



Innovation

Nairobi Metro 2030 – A World Class African Metropolis