

AFRICA RISK CONSULTING

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Kenya Summary 8 December 2025

President William Ruto's (2022-present) United Democratic Alliance (UDA) and its Kenya Kwanza coalition allies win four of seven high-profile parliamentary and senatorial races in by-elections on 27 November, while Orange Democratic Movement (ODM) retains three key positions, giving the UDA-ODM broad-based partners about two-thirds of all contested positions. The results modestly reinforce the ruling arrangement, but electoral risks remain elevated as the Elections Observation Group reports several legitimacy concerns. Ruto signs the Government Owned Enterprises Act 2025 into law, restructuring commercial state corporations into public limited companies and centralising state-shareholder control in the National Treasury. The act tightens governance and divestment framework that is likely to improve transparency and strengthen credibility in international financial arrangements. A coordinated cyberattack on 17 November defaces and briefly disrupts multiple key Kenyan government websites, sharpening scrutiny of Kenya's cyber resilience amid Ruto's plans to present Kenya as a 'Silicon Savannah'.

By-elections give Ruto a modest boost

Kenya held 24 by-elections on 27 November for one **Senate** seat, six **National Assembly** constituencies and 17 county assembly wards across 14 counties and election constituencies, including **Baringo County, Manderu, Malava, Mbeere North, Kasipul, Magarini** and **Ugunja**. **United Kingdom**-headquartered **Amnesty International** touted the polls as a "[stress test](#)" ahead of the 2027 general election and an assessment of Kenya's ability to conduct credible elections under tighter fiscal and governance scrutiny. The by-election was also the first major test of the reconstituted **Independent Electoral and Boundaries Commission (IEBC)**, led by chairperson **Erastus Ethekon**.

IEBC [results](#) and media tallies showed President **William Ruto's** (2022-present) ruling **United Democratic Alliance (UDA)** and its **Kenya Kwanza** allies won four of the seven parliamentary and senatorial races (Baringo Senate, Banisa, Malava and Mbeere North) while the **Orange Democratic Movement (ODM)** retained influence in its traditional strongholds, winning Kasipul, Ugunja, and Magarini. Local media also [reported](#) that in the 17 ward contests, UDA secured seven seats, ODM one, **Democracy for Citizens Party (DCP)** three, **United Progressive Alliance (UPA)** two, while **Wiper, FORD-Kenya, People's Democratic Party** and one independent candidate each secured one. This outcome gives the UDA - ODM partners about two-thirds of all positions (16 of 24). The outcome reinforces the UDA - ODM "*broad-based government*" and exposes organisational and strategic weaknesses in the emerging **United Opposition** led by former deputy president **Rigathi Gachagua**, **Wiper** leader **Kalonzo Musyoka**, and former interior cabinet secretary (CS) **Fred Matiang'i**.

Pre-election signals also revealed both institutional preparation and underlying fragility. IEBC chief executive **Marjan Hussein Marjan** [told](#) local media that all was set for a "*free, fair and credible*" exercise, citing trained clerks, logistics groundworks, and at least two police officers per polling station. **The National Police Service (NPS)** separately [announced](#) a "*robust, multi-faceted security plan*" and pledged a "*zero-tolerance*" stance towards violence and hate speech before, during, and after polling. Despite the publicised security efforts, the UK's **Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office (FCDO)** [updated](#) its Kenya travel advice on 24 November to warn UK nationals that protests and demonstrations were possible around the by-elections, particularly in **Nairobi**, and urged them to avoid political rallies and large crowds.

IEBC commissioner **Alutalala Mukhwana** [rated](#) the commission's performance at 95%, arguing that the remaining 5% fell to other state agencies. However, DCP organising secretary **Peter Mbae** [announced](#) that the party would petition the Mbeere North outcome, alleging procedural flaws and weak responses to complaints. Pre- and post-poll poll [commentary](#) also criticised the growing involvement of senior state officers including deputy president **Kithure Kindiki**, prime CS **Musalia Mudavadi** and **National Assembly Speaker Moses Wetang'ula** in campaigning. Former agriculture CS **Mithika Linturi** [claimed](#) that campaigns in Mbeere North consumed approximately KSh 600m (\$4.6m), a figure that, if accurate, would far exceed typical constituency races and highlight weak enforcement of the **Election Campaign Financing Act 2013**. The **Elections Observation Group (ELOG)** [concluded](#) in its report on 3 December that while polling-day logistics demonstrated "technical capability" in meeting legal standards, it still [documented](#) instances of open voter bribery, distribution of cash and relief goods, harassment of observers, and the presence of unauthorised "super agents" and plain-clothes officers in polling stations.

[Low turnout](#), including in Ugunja, where only about a quarter of registered voters cast ballots, combined with [evidence](#) that only 90,000 of a targeted 6.3 million new voters (around 1.4%) had registered by the end of October, underlines persistent youth apathy and frustration. Although the by-elections ultimately illustrate a modest vote of confidence in Ruto's broad-based government, the results should not be considered evidence of popular enthusiasm. While ODM and other parties were able to retain their strongholds, a united opposition remains fragmented having struggled to convert national discontent over living costs into poll victories to threaten ODM dominance.

New law resets Kenya's state enterprise model

Ruto [signed](#) the **Government Owned Enterprises (GOE) Act 2025** on 24 November, restructuring Kenya's commercial state corporations into public limited companies under the **Companies Act**. Government published the GOE Act on 16 July 2025, [passed](#) by the National Assembly on 14 November, and signed with amendments on 21 November. The act provides for the establishment, control, governance, performance and ownership of GEOs and reconstitutes them as public limited liability companies to "enhance their corporate governance."

The government [defines](#) a GOE as a self-financing, self-sustaining commercial company that is either wholly-owned by the state, majority-owned, or delegated financial and operational powers to carry out business. The act specifies approximately [66](#) existing commercial companies and 18 statutory entities with commercial activities across energy, transport, agribusiness, finance and manufacturing sectors, including **Kenya Power and Lighting Company (KPLC)**, **Kenya Airports Authority (KAA)**, **Kenya Railways Corporation (KRC)**, **New Kenya Cooperative Creameries**, **Kenyatta International Convention Centre (KICC)**, **Rivatex East Africa**, and **Kenya Literature Bureau**.

The [act](#) further mandates the [establishment](#) of the **Government-Owned Enterprises Authority (GOEA)**, a central oversight body tasked with enforcing governance standards and evaluating performance across all commercial state corporations. Ownership is [centralised](#) in the **National Treasury** with the treasury CS acting as shareholder on behalf of the government, responsible for board appointment processes, performance contracting and remuneration frameworks. Each GOE must have a nine-member board with six independent directors selected through an independent panel, which then elects its chair from among the independent members.

Kenyan corporate lawyer **Stephen Mallowah** [described](#) the statute as "the most far-reaching governance reform of government corporations since independence", arguing that it rewrites the sector "from patronage to performance." It also mandates performance-based contracts for CEOs and senior managers, tying leadership tenure to measurable financial and operational targets. For international investors and lenders, the GOE, alongside the **Privatization Act** (signed into [law](#) on 15 October), marks a significant shift towards a more coherent, shareholder-driven model of state ownership, potentially improving transparency and reducing contingent liabilities.

The GEO act broadly aligns with the **International Monetary Fund's (IMF)** long-standing conditionality on Kenya's state-owned enterprises (SOEs); recent IMF reviews [highlighted](#) SOE reform and a more rules-based privatisation framework as key to safeguarding debt sustainability and anchoring investor confidence. The act moves Kenya closer to these [benchmarks](#) by centralising the shareholder role in the National Treasury, converting commercial entities into Companies Act companies, and requiring performance contracts and explicit budget compensation for public service obligations (PSOs). If it is implemented credibly, the reform is likely to strengthen Kenya's [position](#) in future negotiations with the IMF and **World Bank**, supporting arguments for continued access to concessional or blended financing.

Kenya cyber-attack tests the nation's Silicon Savannah ambitions

Multiple Kenyan government websites, including the presidency and several key ministries, were defaced and temporarily taken offline on 17 November in a coordinated [cyberattack](#). Officials later [attributed](#) the attack to a group calling itself **PCP@Kenya** but no hacking group has taken credit. In a statement following the incident, the interior ministry's principal secretary **Raymond Omollo** [stated](#) that incident response and recovery procedures were activated immediately and that systems were subsequently stabilised and under continuous monitoring.

The November incident primarily involved website defacement and temporary service disruption. Local media [reported](#) that affected portals included the interior, health, education, energy, labour and water ministries, as well as **State House**, the **Directorate of Criminal Investigations (DCI)**, and the **Immigration Department**. During the takeover, some of these websites briefly [displayed](#) far-right ideological messages and symbols praising **Adolf Hitler**. This attack follows days after a [breach](#) of **Somalia's Immigration and Citizenship Agency** e-visa system which potentially [exposed](#) the personal data of approximately 35,000 people, including international citizens. Unlike the hacking incident in Somalia, the Kenyan government [stated](#) that there was no confirmed compromise of personal or government data.

Although the origins of the hack's ideological motivation remains unknown, analysts [note](#) that this simultaneous defacement of multiple government platforms suggests a deliberate attempt to undermine public confidence in state digital services which have been increasingly prioritised and developed under Ruto's administration. Domestically, the episode is likely to increase pressure on the **National Computer and Cybercrimes Coordination Committee (NC4)** and the **National Kenya Computer Incident Response Team** which is tasked to coordinate incident response under the **Computer Misuse and Cybercrimes Act 2018 (CMCA)**.

The hack fits a broader trend of intensifying cyber risk. In July 2023, **Anonymous Sudan** claimed an [attack](#) on Kenya's **e-Citizen** platform, through which over 5,000 services from more than 100 ministries, departments and agencies are delivered. The attack disrupted services and forced the foreign ministry to temporarily revert to visas on arrival. The Distributed Denial-of-Service (DDOS) attack lasted over a week and [affected](#) key private providers including **M-Pesa** mobile money and KPLC's prepaid electricity platform. In its October report, the **Communications Authority of Kenya** [noted](#) it has recorded 842 attempted cyberattacks between July and September 2025 alone. Pan-African cybersecurity firm **Serianu's Africa Cybersecurity Report**, [estimated](#) that Kenyan organisations and public agencies lost KSh 29.9 billion (\$229.6m) in 2025, while continent-wide losses reached KSh 650 billion (\$4.9 billion). The report detailed that online and email fraud accounted for 40% of incidents and 32% of losses. The same assessment highlights hackers' increasing use of AI-enabled phishing, credential theft and ransomware campaigns across financial and public-sector systems. **INTERPOL** data [indicates](#) a 25% year-on-year increase in cyberattacks on African countries, suggesting that Kenya's experience is part of a wider regional escalation.

These statistics emerge as Ruto [advances](#) his **National Digital Masterplan**, which targets a 100,000km fibre backbone, 25,000 public Wi-Fi hotspots and digital hubs in all 1,450 wards, alongside expanded digitisation of public services through 2032. The programme is central to Kenya's ambition to position Nairobi as a '[Silicon Savannah](#)' and to sustain regional leadership in fintech,

enterprise software, and digitally enabled trade. In parallel, the government is also prioritising the sector's security and legal framework. The [CMCA](#) criminalises a wide range of cyber offences and provides for coordinated prevention, incident response, and international cooperation. The **National Cybersecurity Strategy 2022–2027** (alongside a [draft](#) 2025-2029 strategy and the 'Code Nation' skills [initiative](#)) outlines the government's priorities on critical information infrastructure protection, institutional strengthening, and workforce development.

Implementation and operational capacity are also being broadened - from 12 to 14 November approximately 50 magistrates attended **Commonwealth and United Kingdom (UK)** funded [training](#) focused on cybercrime case management and electronic evidence, ultimately increasing participants' literacy into what they formerly considered a "bottomless pit" of complexity. In early December, the DCI [announced](#) the close of a five-day **Blockchain and Cryptocurrencies Crime Investigations Course** at the **National Criminal Investigations Academy (NCIA)**, which brought together investigators from over ten African countries. DCI's investigations bureau director **Abdalla Komesha** [said](#) the programme equipped detectives with advanced forensic techniques and "*practical strategies for combating cross-border illicit transactions,*" reflecting rising official attention to cryptocurrency-enabled fraud and organised crime.

Cybersecurity also features strongly in Kenya's bilateral relations and the private sector. On 25 November, **Germany**, through the **African Union's (AU) AFRIPOL**, [donated](#) digital forensics equipment to the DCI. The German government-funded **Digital Forensics Project** also designates the DCI's **Cyber and Digital Forensics Laboratory** as the primary centre of excellence for **Eastern Africa**, signalling deeper **European** support for Kenya's evolving cyber enforcement role. Additionally, **United States (US)**-headquartered **Microsoft's** Advancing Regional Cybersecurity (ARC) initiative has [committed](#) to working with NC4 to improve regional coordination, preparedness and skills.

Together with the broader national strategy, these developments suggest that looking forward, there will be an ongoing intensification of scrutiny of businesses' digital-asset compliance, fraud controls, and cross-border transaction monitoring, particularly for banks, mobile money operators, fintech's, and other virtual service providers. While Kenya continues to advance its ambitions to become a regional tech hub, the recent breaches illustrate the parallel necessity of also emerging as a cybersecurity hub.

2026 outlook

In 2026 Kenya will continue to navigate a tighter fiscal environment and sensitivity to public discord following the **2024 Finance Bill** unrest, while political actors start to position more openly for the August 2027 election. After the late-November by-elections signalled uneven opposition coordination, political discourse will increasingly test whether prominent political figures, notably Gachagua and Musyoka, are able to translate sporadic cooperation into a unified national platform against Ruto's ruling Kenya Kwanza coalition.

Kenya is poised for steady growth in 2026 despite debt and cost of living pressures. The finance ministry projects real GDP growth of = 5.3% in 2026, while private-sector forecasts cluster around 5.1% to 5.8%. Economic performance is likely to remain resilient with upcoming large-scale projects due for construction. The 28 November launch of a KSh 194 billion (\$1.5 billion) **China Road and Bridge Corporation** and **Shandong Hi-Speed Road and Bridge International**-backed Public-Private Partnership (PPP) highway expansion linking the **Nairobi-Mombasa** and **Nairobi-Nakuru-Mau Summit** corridors, will shape much of the political economy narrative through 2026 as construction ramps up. Implementation risk will centre on toll policy, procurement scrutiny, and construction milestones. Successful completion has the potential to support regional trade flows with **Uganda** and **Rwanda** and ease freight bottlenecks from **Mombasa Port**.

As evident in the 2025/26 budget framework, the government targets a budget deficit of 4.5% of GDP and is seeking to avoid major new tax increases in a bid to prioritise stability and revenue

administration, also reflecting sensitivity to past street mobilisation and online dissent. Rights and governance debates are likely to remain prominent after high-profile 2025 cases involving digital activist **Rose Njeri** and the death in custody of blogger **Albert Ojwang**, which increased regional and international scrutiny of the policing and civic space. Recurring incidents could potentially complicate Kenya's positioning as a stable democratic and investment anchor in East Africa.

Security and foreign-policy balancing will remain central in 2026. Kenya's counterterrorism cooperation with the US is likely to remain a pillar of bilateral relations, with **al-Shabaab** linked risks along the Somalia border in **Mandera, Wajir, and Garissa** likely to remain elevated. Ruto's early December meetings with US President **Donald Trump** (2017-2021, 2025-present) and US secretary of state **Marco Rubio** alongside the signing of a new US-Kenya health cooperation framework and agreement to advance a \$1 billion debt-for-food security swap, signal a renewed push to anchor the bilateral agenda in security cooperation and development finance.

Planner

8-12 Dec 2025 **Nairobi (Kenya) United Nations Environment Assembly (UNEA-7)**
 22 Jan 2026 **Nairobi (Kenya) United Kingdom–Kenya Business Forum**
 11-12 Feb 2026 **Nairobi (Kenya) Africa Tech Summit**
 24 Feb 2026 **Nairobi (Kenya) World Financial Innovation Series (WFIS) Kenya 2026**
 25 Mar 2026 **Nairobi (Kenya) Kenya International Investment Conference (KIICO 2026)**
 Mar 2026 **Nairobi (Kenya) 11th Our Ocean Conference (OOC)**
 11-12 May 2026 **Nairobi (Kenya) Africa-France Summit 2026**
 10 Aug 2027 **(Kenya) General election**

Chronology

7 Dec 2025 **Mombasa (Kenya) The East African**. Danish shipping group **Maersk** introduces operational cost imports (OCI) fee for cargo destined for **Mombasa Port** to cover additional expenses related to container inspections;

6 Dec 2025 **Nairobi (Kenya) Citizen Digital**. In a post on X, President **William Ruto** praises **United States (US) President Donald Trump's** "*personal leadership and the renewed momentum he has brought to our bilateral relationship;*"

5 Dec 2025 **Nairobi (Kenya) Bizna Kenya**. Kenya's exports to the **United Arab Emirates (UAE)** increase by 26% to KSh 43 billion (\$331.1m) in the first nine months of 2025, with gold shipments leading the growth;

4 Dec 2025 **Nairobi (Kenya) Africanews**. Kenya and the **United States (US)** sign a five-year \$2.5 billion health agreement;

4 Dec 2025 **Nairobi (Kenya) Tech Cabal**. Kenya's largest mobile operator, **Safaricom**, confirms that the government is selling a 15% stake in the company to **South Africa**-headquartered **Vodacom** for \$1.57 billion;

3 Dec 2025 **Nairobi (Kenya) Reuters**. The **Stanbic Bank Kenya Purchasing Managers' Index (PMI)** rises to 55 in November from 52.5 in October, the highest figure since October 2020 and third straight month above 50;

3 Dec 2025 **Nairobi (Kenya) The Standard**. President **William Ruto** unveils the **Jukwaa la Usalama** report which indicates that Sexual and Gender-Based violence (SGBV) has emerged as one of the most alarming cross-country security threats;

2 Dec 2025 **Washington DC (United States)** *Reuters*. President **William Ruto** travels to Washington DC to attend the signing of a US-brokered peace agreement between the **Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC)** and **Rwanda**;

2 Dec 2025 **Nairobi (Kenya)** *The Standard*. Government bans 400 overseas job recruitment agencies implicated in scamming Kenyans or sending them to non-existent jobs abroad;

2 Dec 2025 **London (United Kingdom)** *FCDO*. **United Kingdom's (UK) Foreign, commonwealth, and Development Office (FCDO)** issues a new Kenya travel advisory, advising citizens against all travel to **Mandera, Wajir, Garissa** and parts of **Lamu County**, and warning of a high risk of terrorism and kidnapping;

30 Nov 2025 **Nairobi (Kenya)** *Kenyans*. **Ethics and Anti-Corruption Commission (EACC)** announces it will hear 12 high-value graft cases involving over KSh 1.6 billion (\$12.28m) between 1 and 5 December;

30 Nov 2025 **Garrissa (Kenya)** *Kenyans*. **National Counter Terrorism Centre (NCTC)** states that a multi-agency team shot dead a group suspected terrorists trying to enter Kenya through the **Somalia** border;

29 Nov 2025 **Nairobi (Kenya)** *Kenyan Wallstreet*. A new industry report estimates Kenya lost KSh 29.9 billion (\$240m) to cybercrime in 2025, with financial institutions and government agencies among the most targeted;

28 Nov 2025 **Nairobi (Kenya)** *Kenyans*. The **East African Court of Justice (EACJ)** ruled that Kenya violated former Nairobi governor **Mike Sonko's** right to a fair trial during his impeachment and subsequent bar from holding office, citing procedural flaws and delays in the Kenyan judiciary;

28 Nov 2025 **Kisumu (Kenya)** *AP News*. Kisumu high court declares sections of a controversial seed law that prevented farmers from sharing and selling indigenous seeds and gave government officials authority to raid community seed banks as unconstitutional;

27 Nov 2025 **Nairobi (Kenya)** *Citizen Digital*. High court nullifies a directive issued by the **Communications Authority of Kenya (CA)** seeking to ban media houses from broadcasting protests live;

27 Nov 2025 **Marrakech (Morocco)** *Interpol*. The **INTERPOL General Assembly** elects Kenya's Director of Criminal Investigations **Mohamed Ibrahim Amin** to serve on its executive committee as a delegate for Africa;

26 Nov 2025 **Luanda (Angola)** *Capital FM*. **Kenya, the Netherlands, the European Union (EU), and Invest International** sign a Letter of Intent to scale up investments along the **Northern Corridor**, which will see investments in physical infrastructure and digital trade systems, with a focus on cool chain logistics and smart digital trade facilitation;

26 Nov 2025 **Nairobi (Kenya)** *Daily Nation*. Trade minister **Lee Kinyanjui** says Kenya will appeal the **East African Court of Justice** ruling that suspended the implementation of a trade deal between the **European Union (EU)** and Kenya;

24 Nov 2025 **Nairobi (Kenya)** *Daily Nation*. **World Bank** raises Kenya's 2025 economic growth forecast to 4.9%, reflecting improved performance in key sectors;

24 Nov 2025 **Tororo (Uganda)** *Monitor*. President **Yoweri Museveni** and Kenya's President **William Ruto** inaugurate the **Devki Steel Factory** in Tororo, a project expected to create over 15,000 jobs across both countries;

23 Nov 2025 **Nairobi (Kenya)** *Maylasia Ministry of Foreign Affairs*. **Malaysia's** prime minister **Anwar Ibrahim** pays an official visit to Kenya, meeting President **William Ruto** and signing agreements covering trade, housing, ICT, education and investment promotion;

22 Nov 2025 **Nairobi (Kenya)** *Daily Nation*. **Kenya Motor Industry Association** reports that **Chinese** vehicle sales are rapidly rising in Kenya, with their actual market share exceeding 7.46%;

20 Nov 2025 **Nairobi (Kenya)** *People Daily*. President **William Ruto** delivers his **State of the Nation Address**, presenting what he describes as verifiable progress, citing dropping from 9.6% to 4.6%, a strengthened shilling stabilising at KSh 128-129 to the **United States (US)** dollar, down from 165, and record-high reserves of \$12 billion;

20 Nov 2025 **Nairobi (Kenya)** *Daily Nation*. **Treasury** principal secretary **Chris Kiptoo** says Kenya aims to reduce its budget deficit to 4.9% of GDP in the 2026/27 fiscal year;

19 Nov 2025 **Nairobi (Kenya)** *Daily Nation*. **Safaricom** plans to raise KSh40 billion (\$308m) through its largest-ever corporate bond, aiming to strengthen its financial position and support business growth;

19 Nov 2025 **Garissa County (Kenya)** *Anadolu Agency*. An armoured **Border Patrol Unit** vehicle hits an improvised explosive device (IED) in Garissa County, near the Somalia border, killing two officers and critically injuring others;

About Africa Risk Consulting:

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