MAURITANIA

Growth is set to rebound to 4.6 percent in 2026, despite headwinds from the Middle East conflict. Liquefied natural gas (LNG) exports and stronger extractive revenues are expected to strengthen fiscal and external buffers, partially offsetting higher social spending and import costs. Rising food and energy prices pushed inflation sharply higher, eroding household purchasing power. In combination with weak agricultural growth, poverty is expected to increase by 0.5 points in 2026.

Population[1]	Poverty[2]
million	millions living on less than $4.20/day
5.3	1.2
Life expectancy at birth[3]	**School enrollment[4]**
years	primary (% gross)
68.7	105.4
GDP[5]	**GDP per capita[6]**
current US$, billion	current US$
12.4	2327.5

Sources: WDI, MFMod, and official data. 1/ 2025. 2/ 2019 (2021 PPPs). 3/ 2024. 4/ 2024. 5/ 2025. 6/ 2025.

Key conditions and challenges

Mauritania benefits from abundant natural resources and a strategic location along major trade routes, but economic activity remains concentrated in extractive industries and vulnerable to commodity price fluctuations, climate shocks, and regional instability. While the start of gas production and recent investments in energy and infrastructure have opened new opportunities, limited economic diversification and a narrow private sector constrain the creation of productive jobs for a rapidly growing population.

Poverty remains disproportionately concentrated in rural areas, where livelihoods depend on rain-fed and subsistence agriculture and livestock, sectors increasingly exposed to climate variability and desertification. Labor market outcomes continue to be shaped by widespread informality, low productivity and earnings, limited formal job creation, and persistent gender gaps in economic participation. Human capital challenges remain significant, reflected in weak learning outcomes, skills shortages, health gaps, and uneven access to quality public services. Addressing these constraints will be critical to raising productivity, expanding economic opportunities, and translating resource-led growth into more inclusive and resilient development.

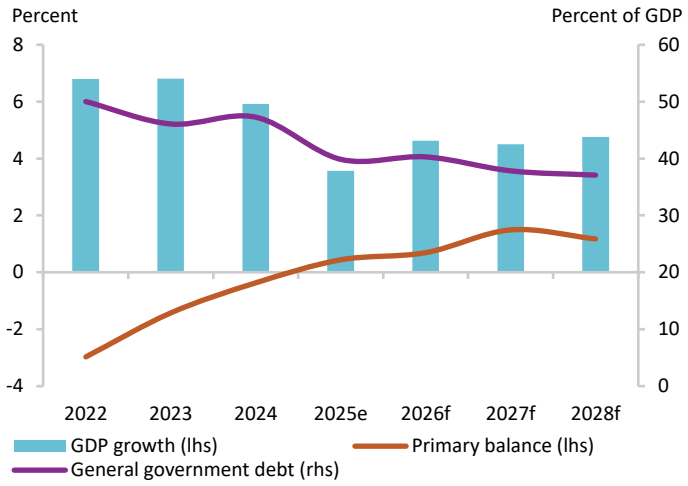
Recent developments

After growing by 3.6 percent (0.7 percent in per capita terms) in 2025, economic activity rebounded, growing at 9.0 percent y/y in Q1-2026, driven by resilient services activity and higher gold and gas production. Growth is projected at 4.6 percent in 2026 (2.1 percent in per capita terms), as stronger extractive output offsets adverse spillovers from the Middle East conflict.

Inflation rose to 9.2 percent y/y in June 2026, from 0.3 percent a year earlier, reflecting domestic supply constraints in livestock and fisheries, and higher fuel and transport costs. Credit to the private sector remained robust (12.8 percent y/y at end-June 2026). The Central Bank of Mauritania tightened its policy rate from 6.0 to 6.75 percent in July 2026.

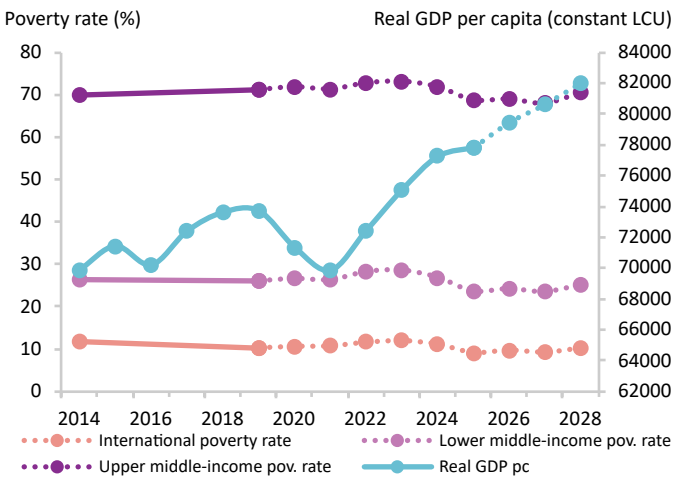
Weak agricultural growth and rising inflation are estimated to increase the lower-middle-income poverty rate (US$4.20 per day, 2021 PPP) from 23.6 percent in 2025 to 24.1 percent in 2026,

FIGURE 1 / Evolution of main macroeconomic indicators



Source: World Bank.

FIGURE 2 / Actual and projected poverty rates and real GDP per capita



Source: World Bank. Notes: See footnotes in table on the next page.

pushing around 60,000 Mauritanians into poverty. Higher energy and food prices are eroding purchasing power in urban areas, while growing food insecurity is placing additional pressure on rural households.

The fiscal surplus reached 0.9 percent of GDP at end-June 2026, supported by strong extractive revenues and tax revenues. However, the non-extractive primary deficit (NEPD) widened to 1.9 percent of GDP (up 50 percent y/y), reflecting higher subsidies and social spending to cushion the impact of rising food and energy prices. It is projected to exceed the 3.5 percent of GDP target in 2026.

The current account balance shifted from surplus in Q1 to deficit in Q2 2026, driven by higher import costs, and is projected to post a deficit of 7.8 percent of GDP in 2026. The capital and financial accounts balance is projected to improve to 5.9 percent of GDP, reflecting lower private sector outflows from the extractive sector. International reserves reached US$2.65 billion at end-June 2026 (about 6.8 months of imports). The ouguiya remained broadly stable against the U.S. dollar in the H1 2026, but appreciated by 2.7 percent against the euro over the same period.

Outlook

Growth is projected to stabilize at around 4.6 percent in 2027–2028 (1.6 percent in per capita terms), supported by Greater Tortue Ahmeyim (GTA) gas production, continued public investments, and a stronger net external position. Industry and services are expected to remain key drivers of growth. Inflation is expected to moderate gradually to 3.8 percent by 2028 as global price pressures ease.

Limited agricultural growth, rapid population growth, and persistently high inflation are expected to constrain poverty reduction. The poverty rate is projected to rise to 25.1 percent by 2028, equivalent to about 1.5 million people living in poverty. Urban households are expected to be particularly affected as they are more likely to be net food buyers and rely more on transportation.

The overall fiscal balance is projected to hover around 0.2 percent of GDP through 2028, supported by extractive revenues, ongoing tax administration reforms, and current expenditure rationalization. The NEPD is expected to converge toward its 3.5 percent of GDP target, while public debt stabilizes at around 37 percent of GDP by 2028.

The current account deficit is expected to average 6.8 percent of GDP in 2027–28, supported by LNG production and gold and iron exports, helping maintain adequate reserve buffers.

Risks to the outlook remain tilted to the downside. Weaker extractive production, adverse terms-of-trade shocks, heightened insecurity in the Sahel, and climate-related shocks, including El Niño-related droughts and flooding, could hinder economic growth and constrain fiscal policy. Persistent supply constraints in livestock and fisheries could keep food inflation elevated and slow poverty reduction. On the upside, sustained GTA gas production and faster reform implementation could support stronger growth and attract additional foreign direct investment.

Recent history and projections	2023	2024	2025e	2026f	2027f	2028f
Real GDP growth, at constant market prices	6.8	5.9	3.6	4.6	4.5	4.8
Private consumption	3.0	3.8	4.3	4.8	3.7	4.1
Government consumption	6.7	3.3	6.1	10.2	7.3	6.8
Gross fixed capital investment	-11.7	15.5	46.3	2.7	6.8	8.1
Exports, goods and services	3.5	6.2	-3.1	13.0	4.2	7.3
Imports, goods and services	-0.3	9.3	29.7	7.2	3.8	6.0
Real GDP growth, at constant factor prices	3.3	3.9	5.8	4.6	4.5	4.8
Agriculture	3.8	2.4	9.1	2.4	3.9	4.0
Industry	3.8	0.7	-3.3	13.7	5.6	6.7
Services	2.8	6.7	10.1	0.7	4.1	3.9
Inflation (consumer price index)	5.0	2.5	1.6	7.6	3.5	3.8
Current account balance (% of GDP)	-9.0	-9.6	-5.9	-7.8	-7.4	-6.3
Fiscal balance (% of GDP)	-2.4	-1.4	-0.3	-0.2	0.6	0.3
Revenues (% of GDP)	22.3	22.3	22.5	24.9	24.7	25.2
Debt (% of GDP)	46.1	47.3	39.9	40.3	37.9	37.1
Primary balance (% of GDP)	-1.4	-0.4	0.4	0.7	1.5	1.2
International poverty rate ($3.00 in 2021 PPP)[1,2]	12.0	11.2	9.1	9.7	9.2	10.2
Lower middle-income poverty rate ($4.20 in 2021 PPP)[1,2]	28.5	26.8	23.6	24.1	23.4	25.1
Upper middle-income poverty rate ($8.30 in 2021 PPP)[1,2]	73.1	71.8	68.8	69.0	68.0	70.5
GHG emissions growth (mtCO2e)	3.7	4.3	3.4	4.0	3.9	4.5

Source: World Bank, Fiscal Policy & Growth Department. Emissions data sourced from CAIT and OECD.
Notes: e = estimate, f = forecast. Data in annual percent change unless indicated otherwise.
1/ Calculations based on 2019-EPCV. Actual data: 2019. Nowcast: 2020-2025. Forecasts are from 2026 to 2028.
2/ Projections using microsimulation methodology.