

MAURITANIA

Capital

Nouakchott

Ethnic Groups

Black Moors (Haratines - Arabic-speaking descendants of African origin who are or were enslaved by White Moors) 40%, White Moors (of Arab-Berber descent, known as Beydane) 30%, Sub-Saharan Mauritians (non-Arabic speaking, largely resident in or originating from the Senegal River Valley, including Halpulaar, Fulani, Soninke, Wolof, and Bambara ethnic groups) 30%

Languages

Arabic (official and national), Pular, Soninke, Wolof (all national languages), French

Religions

Muslim (official) 100%

Population

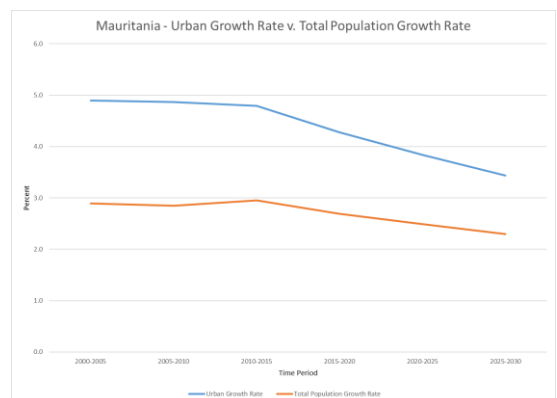
Total: 4.2 million
Median age: 21 years
Population growth rate: 1.96%
Urban: 57.7%
Rural 42.3%

Fertility

Birth rate: 27.61 births/1,000 population
Total fertility rate: 3.46 children born/woman
Sex ratio of population: 0.93 male(s)/female

Mortality

Death rate: 7.33 deaths/1,000 population
Life expectancy at birth: 65.57 years
Maternal mortality rate: 766 deaths/100,000 live births
Infant mortality rate: 49.95 deaths/1,000 live births



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Migration

Net migration rate: -0.71 migrants/1,000 population

Health

Current health expenditure: 3.4% of GDP

Physician density: 0.19 physicians/1,000 population

Adult obesity: 12.7%

Alcohol consumption per capita: 0 liters of pure alcohol

Education

Education expenditures: 1.9% of GDP

Literacy: 53.5%

Population Distribution

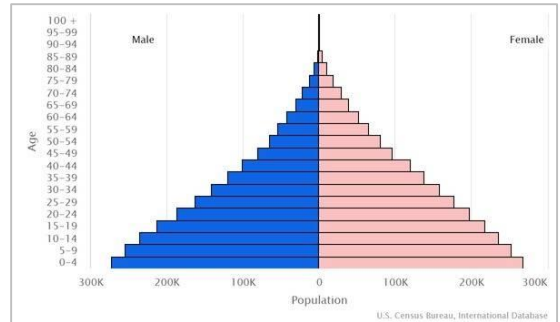
with most of the country being a desert, vast areas of the country, particularly in the central, northern, and eastern areas, are without sizeable population clusters; half the population lives in or around the coastal capital of Nouakchott; smaller clusters are found near the southern border with Mali and Senegal

Demographic Profile

With a sustained total fertility rate of about 3.5 children per woman and almost 60% of the population under the age of 25 as of 2020, Mauritania's population is likely to continue growing for the foreseeable future. Mauritania's large youth cohort is vital to its development prospects, but available schooling does not adequately prepare students for the workplace. Girls continue to be underrepresented in the classroom, educational quality remains poor, and the dropout rate is high. The literacy rate is only about 50%, even though access to primary education has improved since the mid-2000s. Women's restricted access to education and discriminatory laws maintain gender inequality - worsened by early and forced marriages and female genital cutting.

The denial of education to black Moors also helps to perpetuate slavery. Although Mauritania abolished slavery in 1981 (the last country in the world to do so) and made it a criminal offense in 2007, the millenniums-old practice persists largely because anti-slavery laws are rarely enforced and the custom is so ingrained. In addition, many thousands of individuals who are legally free contend with discrimination, poor education, and a lack of identity papers, therefore, live in de facto slavery. The UN and international press outlets have claimed that up to 20% of Mauritania's population is enslaved, which would be the highest rate worldwide.

Age Structure



Population Distribution

