

CLIMAT DES AFFAIRES EN MAURITANIE Aperçu des aspects réglementaires, fiscaux, juridiques, sociaux et comptables





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Avenue AL Khoudoss not SOCGIM N°1 • Tavragh -Zeina – Nouakchott Téléphone :+222 45 24 42 14 + 222 37 12 80 23 Site web: www.maurex.mr E-mail : maurex@maurex.mr





# **I. GENERAL INTRODUCTION**

### **General Overview of Mauritania**

Mauritania is a country located in northwest Africa, covering an area of 1,036,000 km<sup>2</sup>. Its administrative capital is Nouakchott, while Nouadhibou serves as the main economic capital. The country has an Atlantic coastline stretching approximately 754 km, from Ndiago in the south to Nouadhibou in the north.

Mauritania shares borders with Algeria and Western Sahara to the north, Mali to the east, and Senegal to the south. It is composed of three main natural regions:

- The maritime façade, which runs along the Atlantic Ocean for nearly 754 km;
- The central region, consisting of rugged plateaus and vast Saharan dune basins;
- **The Senegal River Valley**, a fertile zone benefiting from river alluvium, favorable for agriculture.

The eastern part of the country is mainly composed of grazing lands, while the south is the primary agricultural area. Most of Mauritania's territory is desert, dominated by the Sahara with its arid plains, rocky plateaus (regs), and some moderate elevations. In the north, the Kédia d'Idjil reaches an altitude of 915 meters, the highest point in the country. In the center, the Hodh basin is flanked by sandstone plateaus, notably those of Adrar and Tagant.

Located at the crossroads between North Africa and Sub-Saharan Africa, Mauritania is a multiethnic country. Its name derives from ancient Mauretania, the land of the Moors—a Berber people from the Roman era.

Mauritania is a member of several regional and international organizations, including the African Union, the Arab League, the Organization of Islamic Cooperation, the Arab Maghreb Union, La Francophonie, and the Senegal River Basin Development Organization (OMVS). It is also a founding member of the G5 Sahel, a sub-regional organization established in Nouakchott on February 16, 2014, alongside Burkina Faso, Mali, Niger, and Chad.







5. Mauritania Airlines International flies to 14 countries

6. 2 languages (arabic & french) and 4 dialects (hassaniya, wolof, soninke, poular)

# II. MACROECONOMIC FRAMEWORK

# **Economic Overview**

- Economic growth is estimated at 5.1% in 2024 (2.1% per capita), down from 6.5% in 2023 (3.4% per capita), as strong export performance and resilient private consumption were offset by weaker public consumption and a slowdown in gold and iron ore production. Inflation fell to 1.5% year-on-year in December 2024, compared to 1.6% in 2023, driven by lower food and oil prices and supported by the Central Bank's tight monetary policy.
- Fiscal consolidation helped reduce the budget deficit to 0.1% of GDP in 2024, compared to 2.4% in 2023, thanks to increased revenues from telecommunications taxes and withholding taxes on extractive industries, as well as controlled spending. The debt-to-GDP ratio dropped to 44.5%, supported by exchange rate stability, reduced external debt, and stronger GDP growth. Mauritania remains exposed to a moderate risk of debt distress, according to the World Bank and IMF debt sustainability analysis from December 2024.
- The current account deficit narrowed in 2024 to -7.6%, due to higher exports and lower imports of hydrocarbons, capital goods, and food products. Foreign exchange reserves slightly increased, covering 6.4 months of imports.



# **Medium-Term Outlook**

The medium-term outlook is favorable, with GDP growth projected to average 5.1% over 2025–2027, driven by the start of gas production and exports under the Greater Tortue Ahmeyim (GTA) project. This growth may be partially offset by declining gold and iron ore production. Modest agricultural performance and rising inflation are expected to increase the poverty rate to 31.8% by 2027, pushing an additional 193,000 people into poverty. The budget deficit is projected to average -1.1% of GDP over 2025–2027, due to increased investment spending, partially offset by higher gas revenues. Public debt is expected to stabilize at 43.7% of GDP by 2027, allowing for the implementation of priority investments. Inflation is forecast to reach 3.5% in 2025 and gradually converge toward 4.0% thereafter. The current account deficit is expected to average 7.8% of GDP over 2025–2027, driven by increased gas exports and lower import prices, with FDI in extractive industries and aid inflows remaining the main sources of external financing.

Source: World Bank Mauritania country page



### Legal and Regulatory Framework

Mauritania has a mixed legal system, combining civil law inherited from the French legal tradition with principles of Islamic law. In recent years, the legal environment has been strengthened through reforms aimed at enhancing transparency, legal security, and the overall attractiveness of the business climate. The country is a signatory to several international conventions on investment and trade.

### Corporate Law, Labor Law, Tax Law

- **Corporate Law:** Corporate law in Mauritania is governed by the Commercial Code. The most common legal forms for businesses are the Limited Liability Company (SARL), the Public Limited Company (SA), and branches of foreign companies. For sole proprietors, the ETS or SARLAU forms are commonly used. Governance and transparency are regulated through mandatory bookkeeping and the filing of annual financial statements.
- Labor Law: Labor relations are governed by the 2004 Labor Code and its implementing regulations. The law sets out the rights and obligations of employers and employees, rules for recruitment and termination, working hours, and obligations concerning social security (CNSS) and health insurance (CNAM). Social dialogue is structured around collective agreements and representative bodies.
- Tax Law: The tax system includes several direct taxes (Corporate Income Tax IS, Personal Income Tax IRPP), indirect taxes (VAT, customs duties), and local taxes. Incentive regimes are available, especially for investments in industrial zones or strategic sectors such as mining, energy, and construction. The Mauritanian tax administration is undergoing modernization, with a gradual digitalization of its services.



### **Investment Code**

Mauritania's Investment Code aims to encourage both domestic and foreign investment by offering an incentive-based, stable, and transparent framework. It outlines various fiscal, customs, and legal benefits designed to stimulate business creation, modernize key economic sectors, and attract structuring projects to the country. Below is a summary of the main incentives provided under the Mauritanian Investment Code:

### 1. Tax and Customs Exemptions

### During the project setup or implementation phase:

• Exemption from customs duties and taxes on equipment, machinery, materials, and goods imported for the execution of the project.

### During the operational phase (up to 8 years depending on the selected regime):

- Exemption from corporate income tax (CIT);
- Exemption from value-added tax (VAT) on certain inputs;
- Exemption from registration and stamp duties on specific legal acts.

### **2.** Three Preferential Investment Regimes

The Code provides for three incentive regimes tailored to the nature and location of the investment project:

### • A – Nouadhibou Free Zone Regime

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Applicable to companies established in the Nouadhibou Free Zone.

Benefits include: full exemption from taxes and duties for an extended period, freedom of foreign exchange operations, and full repatriation of capital and profits.



### Investment Code (continued)

### **B** – Development Support Zone Regime

Applies to specific areas identified as economically sensitive (mainly inland regions). **Benefits include:** extended tax exemptions and support for local employment.

### **C** – Establishment Agreement Regime

Designed for large-scale or strategic projects.

Allows investors to negotiate directly with the State the fiscal, customs, and legal benefits.

Secures the investment through a contractual agreement that guarantees stability of the granted advantages for the duration of the agreement.

### 3. Additional Incentives and Guarantees

- Free transfer guarantee for capital and profits for foreign investors.
- Protection against nationalization and expropriation, except in cases of public interest and with prior and fair compensation.
- **Right to legal recourse** before local courts or international arbitration for dispute resolution.
- Easier access to land for investment projects.
- One-stop shop (via APIM) to simplify administrative procedures.



# **III.LEGAL AND REGULATORY ENVIRONMENT**

# FIRM & COMPANY REGISTRATION





# **III. LEGAL AND REGULATORY ENVIRONMENT**

### **Business Creation: Procedures and Timelines**

Business creation has been significantly simplified thanks to the establishment of the **One-Stop Shop** managed by the **Investment Promotion Agency of Mauritania (APIM)**. This agency centralizes administrative, tax, and social registration procedures.

### Main Procedures for Company Formation:

The company formation process involves submitting a set of required documents to the **One-Stop Shop**, which brings together all the relevant government services involved in business creation. The One-Stop Shop processes the registration request and issues the necessary registration certificates.

### **Documents Required at the One-Stop Shop:**

- A duly completed and signed **business creation application form**
- A certified copy and three (3) photocopies of the company's articles of association (statutes)
- Proof of business address (electricity, water, or phone bill, etc.)
- · A certificate of filing the statutes at the Commercial Court registry
- Four (4) photocopies of the ID of the manager/director and shareholders
- Two (2) photocopies of the ID of each declared employee (at least one employee)
- Certificate of capital deposit issued by the depository, or a manager's declaration stating that the amount has been received (if the share capital exceeds 10,000 MRU)
- Two photocopies of the company bank account certificate
- A photocopy of the activity license, if applicable
- Payment of the Commercial Court registration fees via dedicated mobile banking accounts



# **III.LEGAL AND REGULATORY ENVIRONMENT**

### **Business Creation: Procedures and Timelines**

### Main Procedures for Company Incorporation:

To obtain the basic documents required for company formation, the following steps must be taken:

• Draft and notarize the articles of association before a notary public.

This requires submitting a **Board of Directors resolution** from the parent company, stating the decision to create the new entity, its **legal form**, the **shareholders and their representatives**, the **corporate purpose**, **share capital and its distribution**, the **appointment of the statutory manager**, **account management rules**, and **signatory powers**, etc.

- You must also provide the following documents:
  - Signed minutes of the resolution
  - A copy of the parent company's articles of association
  - Its commercial registration certificate
  - Its tax identification certificate (NIF)
  - A certificate of non-bankruptcy issued within the last three months and legalized by the government of the country of origin
- Open a bank account in the name of the new company and pay at least one-quarter of the share capital. A certificate of capital release will be issued.
- Provide a physical address subject to verification. This may be the company's own premises or a registered address through a consultancy firm.
- <u>Timeline:</u> On average 7 to 10 business days, depending on the completeness of the application file.



# **III. LEGAL AND REGULATORY ENVIRONMENT**

### **Business Creation: Procedures and Timelines**

### **Establishing a Branch – Main Requirements:**

- The establishment of a branch office requires the submission of a complete application to the **One-Stop Shop** (Guichet Unique), which centralizes all administrative procedures. A branch has **no separate legal status or independent articles of association**; it is an **extension of the parent company**.
- Documents typically required:
- Duly completed and signed branch establishment application form
- Certified copy of the parent company's articles of association
- Extract from the commercial registry of the parent company
- Tax identification certificate (NIF) of the parent company
- Minutes/resolution of the competent body deciding on the establishment of the branch
- Appointment of the branch's legal representative (included in the above resolution)
- Proof of address for the branch (physical location or registered office)
- Certificate of non-bankruptcy of the parent company (issued within the last three months)
- Certificate of bank account opening in the name of the branch
- Proof of registration fee payment with the Commercial Court registry

### **Important Notes:**

- No articles of association are required for a branch
- The branch is fully dependent on the parent company and shares its liability
- The procedure is handled via the **One-Stop Shop** with the competent authorities
- Timeline: On average 7 to 10 business days, depending on the completeness of the application file





Corporate taxation in Mauritania is a crucial element of the country's financial framework, influencing both the profitability of economic actors and the dynamics of national development. The Mauritanian business fabric, which is constantly evolving, is subject to a set of tax rules designed to regulate economic activities, ensure transparency, and guarantee a fair contribution to the state budget.

Companies operating in Mauritania must navigate a complex tax environment, which includes various taxes and duties such as corporate income tax, value-added tax, social contributions, registration and stamp duties, among others. The General Tax Code (Code Général des Impôts - CGI), revised in 2019, is the main legislative reference governing the tax obligations of companies, incorporating specific provisions depending on the size, sector of activity, and legal form of the entities concerned.

### Main Taxes and Duties on Companies in Mauritania

Companies are subject to a series of fiscal levies aimed at regulating their activities, strengthening economic transparency, and ensuring their contribution to the national budgetary effort. These tax obligations, primarily governed by the General Tax Code (CGI), reflect the authorities' commitment to building a formal, balanced, and sustainable economy.

The main taxes and duties applicable to companies in Mauritania notably include corporate income tax (CIT), value-added tax (VAT), business license contributions, property tax, tax on income from movable capital (IRCM), payroll tax (ITS), mandatory social security contributions, as well as registration and stamp duties. Each levy serves specific objectives: financing public services, supporting social security, regulating economic practices, and encouraging formal investment.

In this context, it is essential for companies to have a strong understanding of their tax obligations, both to ensure compliance with current legislation and to optimize their financial strategy. Recent tax reforms, notably those introduced by the revision of the CGI, have brought new rules that significantly impact corporate tax management and require constant vigilance from taxpayers.



TAXES	PERIODICITY	DECLARATION DATE	TAX BASE	RATE OrTARIFF Or SCALE
CORPORATE INCOME TAX (CIT) Or (IS) ARTICLE 1-67 OF THE GENERAL TAX CODE (CGI)	Annually	3 months after the end of the fiscal year	<ol> <li>For companies subject to the normal actual profit regime, the corporate income tax due is equal to 25% of the taxable net profit or 2% of taxable revenue, excluding transfers and recovery of expenses, if the latter amount is higher than the first. For taxpayers under the normal actual profit regime, the tax due is equal to 25% of the taxable net profit or 2% of commissions or margins received, if this amount is higher than the first. The minimum tax collection is set at one hundred thousand (100,000) OUGUIYA for taxpayers under the normal actual profit regime.</li> <li>For companies subject to the intermediate actual profit regime, the corporate income tax due is equal to 25% of the taxable net profit or 2.5% of taxable revenue, excluding transfers and recovery of expenses, if the latter amount is higher than the first.</li> <li>For taxpayers whose activity consists of the resale of phone cards and audiovisual subscriptions, travel agency services; sales of second-hand goods acquired from non-taxable persons, carried out by second-hand goods dealers; activities of labor contractors under the intermediate actual profit or 2.5% of the taxable net profit or 2.5% of commissions or margins received, if the latter amount is higher than the first.</li> <li>For companies subject to either the normal actual by second-hand goods dealers; activities of labor contractors under the intermediate actual profit regime, the tax due is equal to 25% of the taxable net profit or 2.5% of commissions or margins received, if the latter amount is higher than the first.</li> <li>For companies subject to either the normal or intermediate actual profit regime whose profits come from artisanal fishing, the corporate income tax due is equal to 25% of the taxable net profit.</li> </ol>	25%, or 2% of the revenues
Financial Transactions Tax (TOF)Articles 274-280 of the General Tax Code (CGI)	Monthly	The 15th day of the month following the month in which the operations were carried out	Interest, commissions, and other fees received by banks and financial institutions on loans, credits, advances, commitments, and all service operations carried out with customers.	16%

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TAXES	PERIODICITY	DECLARATION DATE	TAX BASE	RATE Or TARIFF Or SCALE
VALUE ADDED TAX (VAT)ARTICLES 209–255 OF THE GENERAL TAX CODE (CGI)	Monthly	The 15th of the month following the month in which the transactions were carried out .	Transactions falling under an economic activity that involve the importation, supply of goods, or provision of services carried out for consideration within Mauritanian territory by a taxable person.	0% ,16%
TAXONINCOMEFROMMOVABLECAPITAL (IRCM)ARTICLES119–130OFTHEGENERALTAXCODE (CGI)	Quarterly	The 15th of the month following the month in which the transactions were carried out and paid	<ul> <li>les produits distribués par les sociétés et autres collectivités assujetties à l'impôt sur les bénéfices industriels et commerciaux ;</li> <li>les revenus des créances, dépôts, cautionnements et comptes courants</li> </ul>	10%
TAX ON AIRPORT DEPARTURES TO FOREIGN DESTINATIONS (TADE) Articles 290–293 of the General Tax Code (CGI)	Monthly	The 15th of the month following the month in which the collections were made.	An airport tax is payable for each commercial flight. It is based on the number of passengers boarding in Mauritania, set at 600 UM per passenger departing to a foreign destination. Children under two years old pay a tax of 200 UM.	Scale
BUSINESS LICENSE TAX (PATENTE)Articles 184-200 of the General Tax Code (CGI)	Annually	Before February 28	The fixed fee, which depends on the total turnover achieved during the previous year within the territorial jurisdiction of the relevant municipality.	Scale



TAXES	PERIODICITY	DECLARATION DATE	TAX BASE	RATE Or TARIFF Or SCALE
TAX ON SALARIES AND WAGES (ITS) ARTICLES 109-118 OF THE GENERAL TAX CODE (CGI)	Monthly	The 15th day of the month following the withholding month.	<ul> <li>Income from salaries and wages (ITS):</li> <li>Income derived from public and private salaries, wages, and related allowances, provided that the remunerated activity is carried out in Mauritania, regardless of whether the employer or beneficiary is domiciled there or not.</li> <li>Public or private pensions and life annuities:</li> <li>a) when the beneficiary is domiciled in Mauritania;</li> <li>b) when the beneficiary is domiciled outside Mauritania, provided that the debtor is established in Mauritania.</li> </ul>	15 ,25 et 40%
APPRENTICESHIP TAX (TA): ARTICLES 151-158 OF THE GENERAL TAX CODE (CGI)	Annually	Before January 31st	The tax is levied annually on the total amount of wages, salaries, allowances, and any other remuneration, including benefits in kind, paid by the employer during the period used to determine the taxable base for the corporate income tax.	0.6%
WITHHOLDING TAX ON NON- RESIDENTS ARTICLES 132-133 OF THE GENERAL TAX CODE (CGI)	Periodic	The 15th day of the month following the month in which the operations were carried out. In cases where the service provision has not been effectively paid by the beneficiary, the withholding tax payment by the beneficiary must be made within three (03) months following the end of the fiscal year during which the unpaid expense was recorded in the accounting records.	Amounts paid by resident companies in Mauritania on the income of foreign companies and non-resident individuals	15%

TAXES	PERIODICITY	DECLARATION DATE	TAX BASE	RATE Or TARIFF Or SCALE
WITHHOLDING TAX BY RESIDENTS Articles 131 - 133 of the General Tax Code (CGI)	Périodic	The withholding tax must be remitted no later than the 15th day of the month following the deduction to the tax office to which the taxpayer who applied the withholding is affiliated.	Amounts paid to taxpayers practicing a liberal profession and subject to the tax on business income of individuals.	2,5 %.
WITHHOLDING TAX ON RENTS ARTICLE 137 OF THE GENERAL TAX CODE (CGI)	Monthly	Withholdings made on rents paid for a given month must be remitted no later than the 15th day of the following month.	The tax on property income and the land tax on built properties owed by the owners of the premises they occupy.	18 %( 10 % au titre de l'IRF et 8 % de CF )
FEES DECLARATIONS Article 10 of the General Tax Procedure Law (LPF)	Périodic	Before February 1st	Commissions, brokerage fees, rebates, fees for services, occasional or regular fees, bonuses, and other remunerations	Nothing



TAXES	PERIODICITY	DECLARATION DATE	TAX BASE	RATE Or TARIFF Or SCALE
TAX ON RENTAL INCOME (IRF) ARTICLES 99-108 OF THE GENERAL TAX CODE (CGI)	Annually	Before March 1st	<ul> <li>Rental income, when not included in the profits of an industrial, commercial, or artisanal business:</li> <li>Income from built properties such as houses, factories, stores, or offices;</li> <li>Income from unbuilt real estate of any kind;</li> <li>Capital gains on real estate, including notably those realized from the transfer of mining exploitation permits.</li> </ul>	10%
PROPERTY TAX ON BUILT PROPERTIES ARTICLES 159-169 OF THE GENERAL TAX CODE (CGI)	Annually	Before February 28th	<ul> <li>Built properties, except those expressly exempted.</li> <li>Built properties refer to all constructions made of masonry, iron, wood, or other materials, permanently fixed to the ground in such a way that they cannot be moved without being demolished.</li> <li>The following are also subject to the property tax on built properties: <ul> <li>a) The land of buildings and plots forming an essential and immediate dependency of the constructions.</li> <li>b) Lands used for commercial, industrial, or artisanal purposes, such as construction sites, goods storage areas, and other similar locations.</li> <li>c) The equipment of industrial establishments attached permanently to the property in such a way that it cannot be moved without damaging the building, or resting on special foundations integral to the property, as well as all commercial or industrial installations considered as constructions.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	de 3 à 10% selon les communes

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# **V. SOCIAL CONTRIBUTIONS**

In Mauritania, social contributions paid by employers and employees are regulated by the applicable legislation, notably the texts governing the CNSS (National Social Security Fund) and the CNAM (National Health Insurance Fund). These contributions are calculated based on the gross salary.

The main contribution rates currently in force are as follows:

### CNSS, CNAM

Tax and Contribution	Operating method	Base	Rate	Termes
CNSS	Employee Deduction, Occupational Health Contribution, Social Welfare Contribution	Gross remuneration (GR) capped at MRU 15,000 per month	1% 2% 13%	The 15th day of the first month of the following quarter.
CNAM	Employee Contribution ,Employer Contribution	Gross remuneration	4% 5%	The 15th day of the first month of the following quarter.



# **V.ACCOUNTING OBLIGATIONS OF COMPANIES IN MAURITANIA**





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# **V. ACCOUNTING OBLIGATIONS OF COMPANIES IN MAURITANIA**

Any company operating in Mauritania is subject to accounting obligations mainly defined by the National Chart of Accounts (PCM) related to accounting law and financial reporting.

Domain	Requirements
Legal framework	National Accounting Plan, Commercial Code, General Tax Code.
Language and currency	Arabic- French – Ouguiya (MRU)
Applicable accounting system	Mauritanian Accounting Plan
Accounting record keeping	Mandatory for all companies; accounting must be regular, truthful, and continuous.
Required documents (Financial statements)	- Balance sheet
	- Income statement
	- Notes to the accounts
	- Financial Resources and Uses Statement (TFRE)
Retention period	10 years
Certification	<ul> <li>Financial statements of large companies must be certified by a chartered accountant or statutory auditor (CAC) in the following cases:</li> <li>For tax purposes, when the declared annual turnover exceeds 30,000,000 MRU;</li> <li>For compliance with the Commercial Code, in the case of public limited companies (SA), regardless of their size;</li> <li>Also for limited liability companies (SARL) whose annual turnover exceeds 4,000,000 MRU, according to Mauritanian Commercial Code provisions</li> </ul>
Filing of financial statements	Mandatory for certain entities, notably medium and large companies, with the tax authorities.
Connection with taxation	Basis for calculating Corporate Income Tax (IS), VAT, ITS, TA, IRCM, and other taxes.
Small companies	Simplified accounting regime possible under certain conditions (turnover thresholds).



Le climat des affaires en Mauritanie, bien que dynamique et porteur d'opportunités, nécessite une bonne compréhension des cadres réglementaire, fiscal, juridique, social et comptable pour assurer la conformité et optimiser les activités des entreprises. Ce document vise à fournir une vue d'ensemble claire et concise des principales obligations et environnements dans lesquels évoluent les acteurs économiques.

Pour toute question, besoin d'accompagnement personnalisé ou conseil approfondi, n'hésitez pas à contacter directement notre cabinet. Vous pouvez nous joindre par email à <u>maurex@maurex.mr</u> ou contacter notre associé, M. Malainine El Moujtaba Taleb, à l'adresse suivante : malainine@maurex.mr

Nous restons à votre disposition pour vous accompagner dans vos projets et vous aider à naviguer avec succès dans le paysage des affaires en Mauritanie.