

Poverty & Equity Brief

Middle East & North Africa

Tunisia

April 2021

The latest numbers for Tunisia refer to 2015, when the Tunisian National Statistics Institute (INS) published a new series of poverty rates based on the consumption patterns observed in the 2015 Household Budget Consumption and Living Conditions Survey. A new survey is under preparation in Spring 2021 and it will include new modules on income.

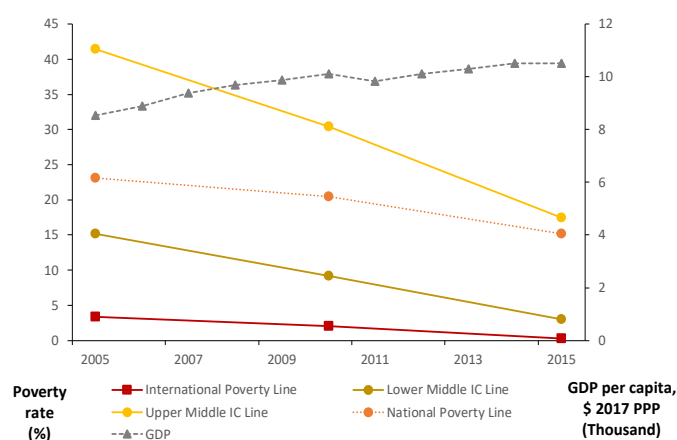
According to official numbers, the 2015 poverty rate in the country was 15.2 percent, significantly lower than the rate of 20.5 percent in 2010 and 23.1 percent in 2005. Likewise, when measured with the International Poverty Lines (IPLs) of US 1.9 \$ PPP and US 3.2 \$ PPP the decline is also sharp. Using the US 1.9 \$ PPP IPL, poverty in 2015 is almost eradicated (below 1 percent) while using the US 3.2 \$ PPP IPL poverty fell to 3.0 percent from 9.0 percent in 2010. In line with monetary indicators, the multidimensional poverty rate registers a very low value, 1.6 percent in 2015. In 2020, due to the COVID-19 crisis and the consequent economic downturn poverty has increased according to latest projections. The same estimates indicate that it will take until 2023 to go back to the pre Covid-19 situation.

In the same period, the median consumption grew at an early rate of 3.96 percent while inequality, as measured by the Gini index, declined from 35.8 in 2010 to 32.8 in 2015. Looking at the spatial distribution, poverty is typically concentrated in the North West (28.4 percent) and Centre West (30.8 percent) landlocked regions. Poverty rates decrease moving towards the coastal North East (11.6 percent), Centre East (11.4 percent) and Greater Tunis (5.3 percent) regions, although there are pockets of relatively high poverty rates there as well. Inequality seems to have followed a downward path in the 2005-2015 period.

POVERTY	Number of Poor (thousand)	Rate (%)	Period
National Poverty Line	1,713.6	15.2	2015
International Poverty Line 1.6 in Tunisian dinar (2015) or US\$1.90 (2011 PPP) per day per capita	27.5	0.2	2015
Lower Middle Income Class Poverty Line 2.7 in Tunisian dinar (2015) or US\$3.20 (2011 PPP) per day per capita	339.0	3.0	2015
Upper Middle Income Class Poverty Line 4.7 in Tunisian dinar (2015) or US\$5.50 (2011 PPP) per day per capita	1,954.8	17.5	2015
Multidimensional Poverty Measure		1.6	2015
SHARED PROSPERITY			
Annualized Consumption Growth per capita of the bottom 40 percent		5.36	2010-2015
INEQUALITY			
Gini Index		32.8	2015
Shared Prosperity Premium = Growth of the bottom 40 - Average Growth		1.97	2010-2015
GROWTH			
Annualized GDP per capita growth		0.79	2010-2015
Annualized Consumption Growth per capita from Household Survey		3.38	2010-2015
MEDIAN INCOME			
Growth of the annual median income/consumption per capita		3.96	2010-2015

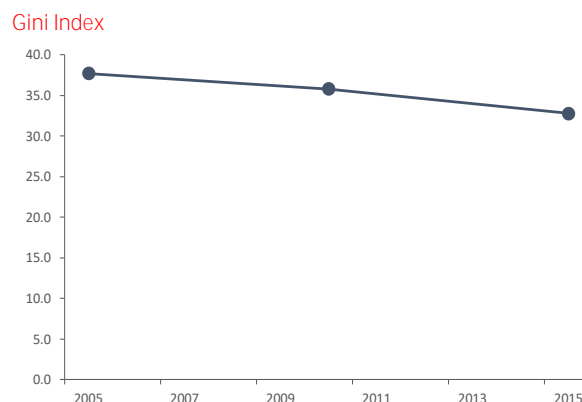
Sources: WDI for GDP, National Statistical Offices for national poverty rates, POVCALNET as of February 2021, and Global Monitoring Database for the rest.

POVERTY HEADCOUNT RATE, 2005-2015



Source: World Bank using NSHBCSL/MNAPOV/GMD

INEQUALITY TRENDS, 2005-2015



Source: World Bank using NSHBCSL/MNAPOV/GMD

KEY INDICATORS

Distribution among groups: 2015	Lower Middle Income line(%)		Relative group (%)		Multidimensional Poverty Measures: 2015	(% of population)
	Non-Poor	Poor	Bottom 40	Top 60		
Urban population	99	1	29	71	Monetary poverty (Consumption)	
Rural population	92	8	65	35	Daily consumption less than US\$1.90 per person	0.2
Males	97	3	40	60	Education	
Females	97	3	40	60	At least one school-aged child is not enrolled in school	2.1
0 to 14 years old	95	5	50	50	No adult has completed primary education	20.2
15 to 64 years old	98	2	37	63	Access to basic infrastructure	
65 and older	98	2	33	67	No access to limited-standard drinking water	2.1
Without education (16+)	98	2	39	61	No access to limited-standard sanitation	6.5
Primary education (16+)	97	3	45	55	No access to electricity	0.2
Secondary education (16+)	99	1	28	72		
Tertiary/post-secondary education (16+)	100	0	17	83		

Source: World Bank using NSHBCSL/MNAPOV/GMD

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Notes: N/A missing value, N/A* value removed due to less than 30 observations

POVERTY DATA AND METHODOLOGY

The National Institute of Statistics designs and applies the poverty measurement methodology in Tunisia. Using the most recent survey data from 2015, the INS conducted a full recalculation of their poverty line to define the thresholds of minimum standard of living in the country. The welfare aggregate is based on a consumption expenditure measure that includes food, education, health, dwelling related expenditures, communications and transportation, clothing, entertainment, and an estimate of rental values for the dwelling where the household resides. The welfare aggregate is not spatially or temporally deflated for poverty measurement, but spatially adjusted using poverty lines for calculating the Gini index. Three poverty lines in Dinars (TND) per person per year are estimated and used to calculate the official poverty rates: Metropolitan areas (TND 1878), Communal (TND 1703) and Non-communal (TND 1501). On average, the poverty line is TND 1706, which roughly translates into \$2.6 USD/PPP.

HARMONIZATION

The numbers presented in this brief are based on the MNAPOV database. MNAPOV is a new data collection effort enacted in 2014, and managed by MNATSD. It covers 36 surveys from 11 countries. Two data points (surveys) are available for each country, except Algeria. The database is organized in 3 modules following the Global Monitoring Database (GMD) Harmonization guidelines, including the welfare aggregate which is used for Global Poverty Monitoring. Terms of use of the data adhere to agreements with the original data producers.