

Poverty & Equity Brief

Middle East & North Africa

Tunisia

April 2023

In February 2023, the Tunisian National Institute of Statistics (INS) published poverty rates from the 2021 National Survey on the Budget, Consumption and Standard of Living of Households (EBCNV). The EBCNV 2021 provides information on expenditure, household living conditions, and poverty and its determinants. This new wave of the EBCNV also includes new income modules that complements consumption information and will allow for an in-depth analysis of poverty and inequality.

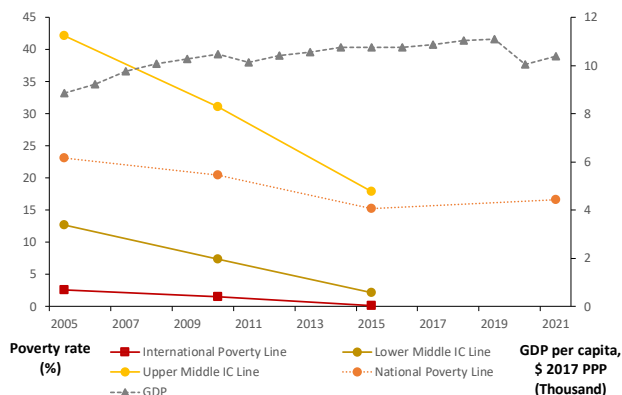
The progress made in poverty reduction over the past decades has been hampered by the economic crisis following the COVID-19 pandemic. Official poverty measured with the national poverty line, declined from 20.5 percent in 2010 to 15.2 in 2015, while increased to 16.6 percent in 2021. Poverty measured using International Poverty Lines generally shows a comparable sharp decline over time. Poverty using the US\$ 3.65 line (in 2017 PPP terms) decreased from 7.4 percent in 2010 to 2.2 percent in 2015 and it is expected to rebound to pre-COVID-19 levels after 2024. Poverty using the US\$6.85 line in 2017 PPP, dropped from 31.1 percent in 2010 to 18.0 in 2015, and it is projected to decline to 17.1 percent in 2024. In line with monetary indicators, the multidimensional poverty was 1.6 percent in 2015. COVID-19 levels in 2024. In line with monetary indicators, the multidimensional poverty registers a low value, 1.5 percent in 2015.

National level estimates confirm sizeable geographical disparities in living standards. Official figures show that in 2021 about 24.8 percent of the population in rural areas is poor compared to 12.7 percent in urban areas. Official poverty is high in the Center-West (37 percent) and North-West (22.5 percent) as opposed to the coastal areas of Grand Tunis (4.7 percent), North-East (15.2 percent), and Center-East (13.2 percent) where the incidence is low compared to the rest of the country, but pockets of poverty exist. Similarly, geographical disparities remain significant. A large part of inequality is driven by disparities within urban and rural areas as well as between regions. The INS shows that the Gini index measuring inequality is 35.3 in 2021.

POVERTY	Number of Poor (thousand)	Rate (%)	Period
National Poverty Line	1,952.8	16.6	2021
International Poverty Line 1.5 in Tunisian dinar (2015) or US\$2.15 (2017 PPP) per day per capita	16.2	0.1	2015
Lower Middle Income Class Poverty Line 2.5 in Tunisian dinar (2015) or US\$3.65 (2017 PPP) per day per capita	255.5	2.2	2015
Upper Middle Income Class Poverty Line 4.7 in Tunisian dinar (2015) or US\$6.85 (2017 PPP) per day per capita	2,074.2	17.9	2015
Multidimensional Poverty Measure		1.5	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		0.51	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, PIP as of April 2023, and Global Monitoring Database for the rest.

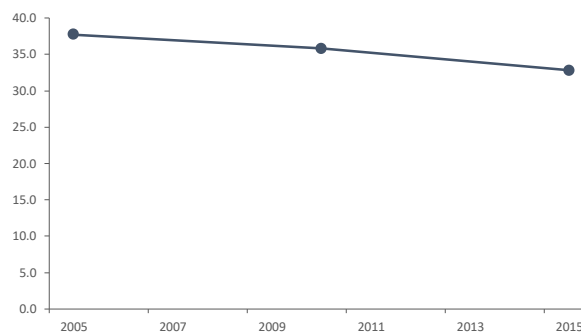
POVERTY HEADCOUNT RATE, 2005-2021



Source: World Bank using NSHBCSL/MNAPOV/GMD

INEQUALITY TRENDS, 2005-2015

Gini Index



Source: World Bank using NSHBCSL/MNAPOV/GMD

KEY INDICATORS

Distribution among groups: 2015	Lower Middle Income line (%)		Relative group (%)	
	Non-Poor	Poor	Bottom 40	Top 60
Urban population	99	1	29	71
Rural population	94	6	65	35
Males	98	2	40	60
Females	98	2	40	60
0 to 14 years old	96	4	50	50
15 to 64 years old	98	2	37	63
65 and older	99	1	33	67
Without education (16+)	98	N/A*	39	61
Primary education (16+)	98	2	45	55
Secondary education (16+)	99	1	28	72
Tertiary/post-secondary education (16+)	100	0	17	83

Source: World Bank using NSHBCSL/MNAPOV/GMD

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

Multidimensional Poverty Measures: 2015

Multidimensional Poverty Measures: 2015	(% of population)
Monetary poverty (Consumption)	
Daily consumption less than US\$2.15 per person	0.1
Education	
At least one school-aged child is not enrolled in school	2.1
No adult has completed primary education	20.2
Access to basic infrastructure	
No access to limited-standard drinking water	2.1
No access to limited-standard sanitation	6.5
No access to electricity	0.2

Source: World Bank using NSHBCSL/MNAPOV/GMD

POVERTY DATA AND METHODOLOGY

The National Institute of Statistics (INS) designs and applies the poverty measurement methodology in Tunisia. Using the most recent survey data from 2021, the INS used poverty and extreme poverty lines estimated in 2015, updated with the consumer price indices between the two periods 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. Poverty lines in Dinars (TND) per person per year are estimated and used to calculate the official poverty rates: On average, the 2021 poverty line is TND 2,536, the Urban one is TND 2,683 while the Rural is TND 2,224.

Note on new global poverty lines: Poverty data are now expressed in 2017 Purchasing Power Parity (PPP) prices, versus 2011 PPP in previous editions. As price levels across the world evolve, global poverty lines have to be periodically updated to reflect the increase of the value of the lines in nominal terms. The new global poverty lines of \$2.15, \$3.65, and \$6.85 reflect the typical national poverty lines of low-income, lower-middle-income, and upper-middle-income countries in 2017 prices. In addition to reflecting updates in nominal terms, upper-middle-income countries raised the standards by which they determine people to be poor from 2011 to 2017. Hence, the increase in the upper line is larger, and the population that does not meet the new standard is higher in most countries than it was with 2011 PPPs. See pip.worldbank.org.

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.