



The information contained in this sheet has been compiled by [Jaume Portell](#), a journalist specializing in economics and international relations, in an activity 85% co-financed by ERDF funds within the framework of the [AfricanTech](#) project (1/MAC/1/1.3/0088) under the INTERREG VI D MAC 2021-2027 initiative.

## **SUDAN**

### **Macroeconomic framework:**

The war in Sudan, which has been ongoing since spring 2023, has resulted in at least 28,000 [direct](#) deaths and 12.9 million internally displaced persons. 3.8 million people have [abandoned](#) the country and moved to Chad, Egypt, Ethiopia, South Sudan, and other countries. The conflict has hit the country's economy, whose GDP was reduced by 37.5% in 2023, according to the 2024 African Economic Outlook. The fall of government revenues and rising expenditures forced the monetisation of the fiscal deficit. This, together with a currency collapse, has fuelled inflation, which reached 245% in 2023. Poverty in 2022 was 66% of the population, and the conflict is likely to have increased it, the report notes.

The African Economic Outlook, using pre-war data, notes that most of the country's employment is generated by services (45%), ahead of agriculture (40%) and industry (15%). In post-war Sudan, the report notes, it will be necessary to mobilise both the international community - to achieve final debt relief - and the local population. The mobilisation of funds should be used to take advantage of the country's natural resources, which are rich in gold reserves and have great potential in the agricultural sector. Sudan supplies the world market every year with gum Arabic, a key emulsifier for the food and pharmaceutical industries.

Sudan's GDP in 2023 was \$109.27 billion.

### **Debt and currency:**

Sudan had an external debt stock of \$22,581 million in 2023. In 2012, Sudan's annual debt service payments amounted to \$362 million. The war has meant that the country has stopped to pay its debt service.

Almost half of Sudan's debt is held by bilateral creditors (49%), including Saudi Arabia (13%), Kuwait (7%) and China (6%). Private creditors account for 29% of the debt. The rest is held by multilateral creditors (22%), led by the International Monetary Fund (8%).

The destabilisation of the exchange rate has reflected - and accelerated - Sudan's economic and political difficulties over the past decade. In 2015 the exchange rate was 10

Sudanese pounds per dollar. That exchange rate in the spring of 2025 was 600 Sudanese pounds per dollar.

### **Imports and exports:**

Sudan exported \$5.09 billion worth of goods in 2023, in a trade balance divided into five major items. Petroleum represented 22%, closely followed by gold (20%). Sesame (14%), livestock (13.7%) and peanuts (8.6%) were the other major sales that generated dollars for the country. The main destinations for these exports were the United Arab Emirates (21.4%), China (17.3%) and Saudi Arabia (15.8%).

Imports amounted to \$6.26 billion, with special importance for imports linked to food and energy. Sugar (12.7%), wheat flour (5.3%), coffee (2.42%), and pulses (1.65%) were among the country's main purchases abroad. Gasoline accounted for 4.2% of imports. Medicines, cars, or vaccines were other important expenditures in purchases from abroad. Most of the goods came from Asia, with China (20.6%), India (19.2%), the United Arab Emirates (13.8%) and Saudi Arabia (6.54%) accounting for a significant weight. Egypt was the main origin of their purchases in Africa (15.7%).

### **Electricity:**

In 2010, Sudan generated 7.58 TWh, of which 81% was hydroelectricity, followed by other fossil fuel generation (17.15%) and bioenergy. By 2023, this generation had increased by 16.75 TWh. Hydroelectricity continued to play a crucial role (68%), followed by non-renewable sources such as other fossil fuels (30%). Solar and bioenergy completed the country's electricity mix.

### **Defence:**

Sudan's annual defence spending was \$668 million in 2021, according to SIPRI, a Swedish institute specialising in the trade of this type of product. In total, defence accounted for about 9.5% of government spending in 2021, the latest year for which data is available. The country's main supplier since 2000 has been Russia.

### **Demographics:**

Sudan's population has increased significantly, while maintaining a high rural proportion. In 1990, the country had 22 million inhabitants, with 71.4% living in rural areas. In 2023, the population grew to 50 million, with 63.7% still residing in rural areas. Life expectancy has increased markedly from 50 years in 1990 to 66 years in 2022.

Half of the population is less than 19 years old.

**Technological innovation:**

In 2010, Sudan received a loan from the Chinese government to upgrade computer systems to improve the education sector and administration. The loan was for about \$10 million. Data on internet access among the Sudanese population shows an increase in internet use in the country: in 2007, only 9% of the population had access to the internet, rising to 26% by 2020.