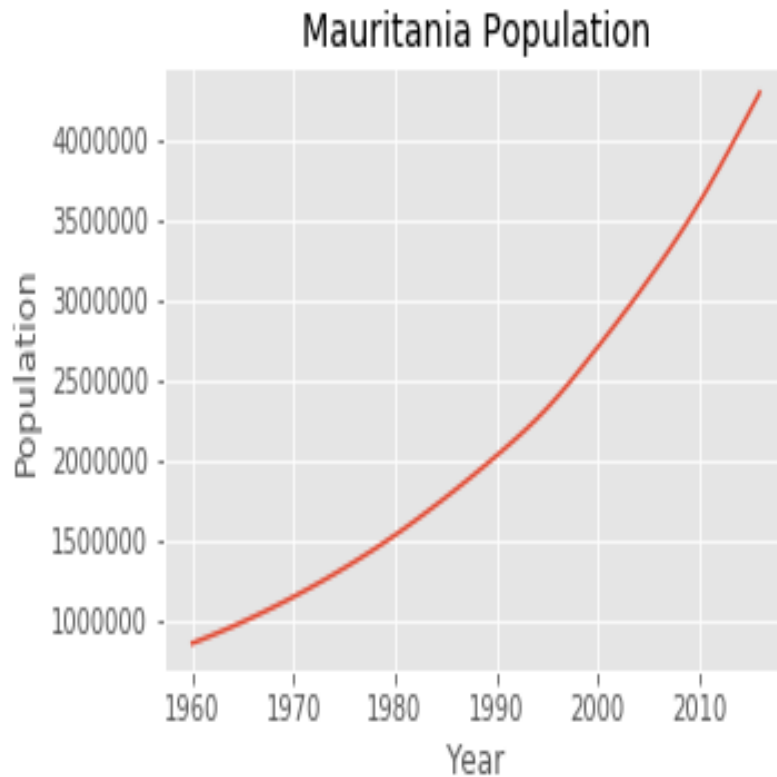


# Mauritania



Coordinates: 20°N 12°W﻿ / ﻿20°N 12°W﻿ / 20; -12Mauritania (/mɔʊˈriːtəni/ (listen); Arabic: موريتانيا Mūrītānyā; Berber languages: Muritanya or Agawej; Wolof: Gàннаar; Soninke: Murutaane; Pulaar: Moritani; French: Mauritanie), officially the Islamic Republic of Mauritania, is a country in the Maghreb region of Northwestern Africa. It is the eleventh largest country in Africa and is bordered by the Atlantic Ocean to the west, Western Sahara in the north, Algeria in the northeast, Mali in the east and southeast, and Senegal in the southwest. The country derives its name from the ancient Berber kingdom of Mauretania, which existed from the 3rd century BC to the 7th century in the far north of modern-day Morocco and Algeria. Approximately 90% of Mauritania's land is within the Sahara; consequently, the population is concentrated in the south, where precipitation is slightly higher. The capital and largest city is Nouakchott, located on the Atlantic coast, which is home to around one-third of the country's 4.3 million people. The government was overthrown on 6 August 2008, in a military coup d'état led by General Mohamed Ould Abdel Aziz. On 16 April 2009, Aziz resigned from the military to run for president in the 19 July elections, which he won.