

## COUNTRY RISK WEEKLY BULLETIN

## NEWS HEADLINES

## WORLD

**Nearly 55% of rated sovereigns have investment grade rating at end-September 2025**

S&P Global Ratings indicated that 54%, or about 77 of the 142 sovereigns that it rates globally, had an investment grade rating at the end of September 2025, compared to 53%, or about 73 of 137 rated sovereigns at the end of September 2024. It said that 21% of rated sovereigns were in the 'B'-rated category at the end of September 2025, 19% stood in the 'BBB' segment, 16.2% of sovereigns came in the 'A' bracket, 14.8% stood in the 'BB' category, 12% were in the 'AA' segment, and 8.5% stood in each of the 'CCC' bracket or lower and the 'AAA' category. In parallel, it noted that there were 15 'positive' outlooks and 15 'negative' outlooks on the long-term foreign currency ratings of sovereigns at end-September 2025, relative to 20 'positive' outlooks and seven 'negative' outlooks on the long-term foreign currency ratings of sovereigns at end-September 2024. It pointed out that seven sovereigns in the Europe, the Middle East and Africa (EMEA) region, four countries in the Americas, and three economies in the Asia-Pacific (APAC) region carried a 'positive' outlook on their ratings at the end of September 2025; while 11 sovereigns in the EMEA region and four countries in the Americas had a 'negative' outlook on their ratings. In addition, it noted that it upgraded 13 sovereigns and downgraded four countries in the EMEA region, while it upgraded five sovereigns and downgraded two economies in the Americas, and upgraded three sovereigns in the APAC region in the first nine months of 2025.

Source: S&P Global Ratings

**International tourist arrivals up 5% to 690 million in first half of 2025**

Figures released by the United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) show that international tourist arrivals reached about 690 million in the first half of 2025, constituting an increase of 33 million visitors, or of 5%, from 657 million global tourist arrivals in the same period of 2024. On a regional basis, the number of tourist arrivals to Africa rose by 12% year-on-year in the first half of 2025, followed by increases of 11% in arrivals to the Asia & Pacific region, to Europe (+4%), and to the Americas (+3%), while tourist visitors to the Middle East regressed by 4% in the covered period. In parallel, tourist arrivals to the Middle East surged by 29% in the first half of 2025 from the same period of 2019, followed by increases of 20% in arrivals to Africa, to Europe (+7%), and to the Americas (+1%); while tourist arrivals to the Asia & Pacific region decreased by 8%. Further, it indicated that the number of international tourist arrivals to Morocco increased by 19% in the first half of 2025 from the same period of 2024, followed by visitors to Jordan (+14%), to Bahrain (+13%), and to Tunisia (+12%). It added that the number of international tourist arrivals to Qatar jumped by 150% in the first half of 2025 from the same period of 2019, followed by visitors to Bahrain (+75%), to Morocco (+65%), to Saudi Arabia (+53%), to Jordan (+34%), to Tunisia (+18%), and to Oman (+9%).

Source: World Tourism Organization, Byblos Research

## EMERGING MARKETS

**Fixed income trading down 5% to \$2,981bn in first half of 2025**

Trading in emerging markets debt instruments reached \$2,981bn in the first half of 2025, constituting a decrease 5.2% from \$3,144bn in the first half of 2024. Turnover in local-currency instruments totaled \$956bn in the covered second quarter, up by 1% from \$946bn in the second quarter of 2024, and accounted for 65% of the debt trading volume in emerging markets in the covered period. In parallel, trading in Eurobonds stood at \$506bn in the second quarter of the year and rose by 2% from \$494bn in the same period last year. The volume of traded sovereign Eurobonds reached \$339bn and accounted for 67% of total Eurobonds traded in the second quarter of 2025, compared to \$394bn in the first quarter of 2025 and relative to \$360bn and a share of 73% in the same quarter of 2024. Also, the volume of traded corporate Eurobonds amounted to \$162bn and represented 32% of total Eurobonds traded. Also, turnover in warrants and options, and loan assignments stood at \$1.4bn in the covered quarter. The most frequently-traded instruments in the second quarter were Mexican fixed income assets with a turnover of \$348bn, or 24% of the total, followed by instruments from Brazil with \$170bn (12%), and securities from India with \$109bn (7%). Other frequently-traded instruments consisted of fixed income securities from South Africa at \$64bn (4.4%) and from Singapore at \$59bn (4%).

Source: EMTA

## MENA

**Investment banking fees up 14% to \$1.3bn in first nine months of 2025**

Figures compiled by data provider LSEG Workspace show that investment banking fees in the Middle East & North Africa (MENA) totaled \$1.32bn in the first nine months of 2025, constituting an increase of 14% from \$1.14bn in the same period last year. The distribution of investment banking fees shows that fees from debt capital markets reached \$422.3m and accounted for 32% of the total, followed by merger & acquisition (M&A) fees with \$337.1m (25.5%), syndicated lending with \$315m (23.8%), and equity capital markets fees with \$247.4m (18.7%). Also, fees from M&A transactions surged by 86%, those from debt capital markets rose by 22%, and fees from equity capital markets improved by 7% in the first nine months of 2025; while syndicated lending fees declined by 22% year-on-year. Also, the materials segment accounted for \$32.6bn or 57.2% of M&A activity in the first nine months of 2025, followed by the energy & power industry and the financial sector with \$4.6bn each (8% each), the high technology segment with \$3.4bn (6%), the consumer products and services sector with \$3.2bn (5.6%), and the industrial sector with \$2.4bn (4.2%), while other segments totaled \$6.2bn or 11% of M&A activity in the covered period. On a country basis, M&A activity in the UAE totaled \$45bn, or 79.2% of aggregate activity in the region in the covered period, followed by Saudi Arabia with \$5.6bn (10%), Egypt with \$1.8bn (3.2%), Kuwait with \$1.7bn (3%), and Morocco with \$700m (1.8%). In parallel, the figures show that the MENA region issued \$91bn in corporate bonds and \$31bn in sovereign bonds in the first nine months of 2025.

Source: LSEG Workspace

# OUTLOOK

## MENA

### Economic activity to pick up to 3.7% in 2026

The International Monetary Fund projected the real GDP growth rate of the Middle East & North Africa (MENA) region at 3.3% in 2025 compared to its May forecast of 2.6%. It noted that its upward revisions reflect higher oil production among oil exporters, continued progress on structural reforms in the region's key emerging market and middle-income economies, and improved agricultural production. Also, it expected growth to improve to 3.7% in 2026, up from its May forecast of 3.4%. Further, it forecast the real GDP growth rate of Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries to pick up from 3.9% in 2025 to 4.3% in 2026 due to the faster-than-expected unwinding of the OPEC+ coalition's voluntary production cuts, with their real non-oil GDP growing by 1.8% and 2.2% in 2025 and 2026, respectively. Further, it projected the real GDP growth rate of the MENA region's oil-importing economies at 3.5% in 2025 and 4.1% in 2026, relative to 3.2% and 3.9% in 2025 and 2026, respectively, in its May forecast, driven by tourism inflows, a rebound in agricultural production, rising investments in infrastructure, and strong remittance inflows.

Further, it projected the fiscal deficit of the MENA region at 2.6% of GDP in 2025 and 2026, with the deficit of the region's oil exporting economies narrowing from 1.5% of GDP in 2025 to 1.4% of GDP in 2026. In addition, it forecast the current account of balance of the MENA region to post surpluses of 1.7% of GDP in 2025 and 1.5% of GDP in 2026, with the surplus of oil exporters declining from 3.4% of GDP in 2025 to 2.9% of GDP in 2026. Also, it projected the fiscal surplus of the GCC economies at 0.8% of GDP in 2025 and 0.9% of GDP in 2026, and for their current account surplus to decrease from 4.9% of GDP in 2025 to 4.3% of GDP in 2026. Further, it forecast the region's gross foreign currency reserves to reach \$1,221bn at the end of 2025, with the GCC economies accounting of 68% of the total, and to cover 7.5 months of next year's imports.

In parallel, it considered that the balance of risks for the region's outlook is tilted to the downside, and include elevated global uncertainties, fiscal concerns, and greater-than-projected inflationary pressures. But it said that upside risks include a more effective implementation of structural reforms and a faster-than-expected resolution of conflicts in the region.

*Source: International Monetary Fund*

## AFRICA

### Economic activity to improve in near term, risks tilted to the downside

The International Monetary Fund projected the real GDP growth rate of Sub-Saharan Africa (SSA) to accelerate from 4.1% in 2025 to 4.4% in 2026, supported by macroeconomic stabilization and reform efforts in key economies. But it noted that resource-intensive and several conflict-affected countries continue to face significant headwinds. Further, it anticipated economic activity in resource-intensive economies to accelerate from 3.6% this year to 3.9% next year, and forecast the real GDP growth rate in non-resource intensive countries at 5.8% in each of 2025 and 2026. Also, it expected the real GDP growth rate of SSA's oil-exporting countries at 3.7% in 2025 and 4% in 2026.

In addition, it projected the fiscal deficit of resource-intensive economies in SSA at 3.5% of GDP in each of 2025 and 2026, and for the deficit of non-resource intensive countries to narrow from 4.6% of GDP this year to 4% of GDP in 2026. Also, it forecast the fiscal deficit of the SSA region's oil exporters to widen from 2.4% of GDP in 2025 to 3.1% of GDP in 2026. In turn, it projected the public debt level of the region's oil-exporting countries at 45.4% of GDP at end-2025 and 44% of GDP at end-2026. Also, it anticipated the public debt level of resource-intensive economies at 55.7% of GDP at end-2025 and 54.4% of GDP at end-2026, and the debt level of non-resource intensive countries at 65.6% of GDP at end-2025 and 64.4% of GDP at end-2026. In parallel, it estimated the current account deficits of resource intensive countries at 0.1% of GDP in 2025 and 0.3% of GDP in 2026, and of non-resource intensive economies at 5.8% of GDP in 2025 and 5.3% of GDP next year. Also, it anticipated the aggregate current account surplus of SSA oil exporters at 2.5% of GDP in 2025 and 1.3% of GDP in 2026.

In parallel, it considered that the economic outlook of the SSA region is subject to downside risks that include potential escalation of geopolitical tensions, volatility in commodity prices, tight borrowing conditions, and the deterioration of global trade.

*Source: International Monetary Fund*

## ARMENIA

### Economic outlook contingent on domestic reforms and external environment

The International Monetary Fund (IMF) projected Armenia's real GDP growth rate at 5% in 2025 and 5.5% in 2026. It noted that buoyant consumption and investments, as well as strong tourist arrivals, have supported economic activity so far this year. Also, it called for diversifying the country's export basket and markets, and for improving the business environment in order to enhance economic resilience and increase potential growth in the medium-term. Further, it expected the inflation rate to remain around the Central Bank of Armenia's target of 3% by end-2025, and said that the current monetary policy stance is appropriate amid contained inflationary pressures and anchored inflation expectations. It urged the authorities to monitor economic developments and inflation expectations and to remain prepared to adjust the policy rate as needed. Further, it welcomed the authorities' commitment to maintain a healthy level of international reserve buffers, and considered that the flexible exchange rate should remain a key shock absorber.

Further, it indicated that the draft 2026 budget aims to preserve macro-fiscal stability and to support Armenia's priority spending needs, including for social protection, security, health, education, and infrastructure. It expected the careful prioritization of expenditures, along with the strengthening of the revenues administration, to support a gradual fiscal consolidation and to maintain the public debt at a moderate level in the medium term.

In parallel, it considered that downside risks to the outlook include uncertainties related to ongoing global trade tensions, a potential economic slowdown at trading partners, and regional geopolitical risks. It noted that upside risks include a rise in exports, and the implementation of transportation links related to the peace declaration between Armenia and Azerbaijan.

*Source: International Monetary Fund*



# ECONOMY & TRADE

## GCC

### Agencies take rating actions on sovereigns

S&P Global Ratings affirmed Oman's long-term foreign and local currency sovereign credit ratings at 'BBB-', which is one notch above investment-grade, and maintained the 'stable' outlook on the long-term ratings, as it expected the Omani government to remain committed to financial discipline throughout a potentially extended period of lower oil prices. It said the 'stable' outlook balances the potential benefits of the government's fiscal and economic reforms program with the economy's structural sensitivity to adverse oil price shocks. Further, it forecast the country's gross external financing needs at 109.4% of current account receipts and usable reserves in 2025, as well as at 113.6% of such receipts and reserves in 2026, 112.9% in 2027, and 113.5% in 2028. In parallel, it said that it could upgrade the ratings if measures related to economic diversification, public finances, and the development of domestic capital markets improve. In parallel, Capital Intelligence Ratings affirmed Bahrain's short- and long-term foreign and local currency sovereign ratings at 'B' and 'B+', respectively, with a 'negative' outlook on the long-term ratings. It said the ratings reflect the persistent weaknesses in public finances, including very high central government debt level and increasing liquidity risks. It noted that the ratings are supported by continued, but declining, current account surpluses, and the likelihood of further financial support from GCC economies in case of need. In parallel, it noted that the 'negative' outlook indicates that it is likely to lower the ratings in the next 12 months.

Source: S&P Global Ratings, Capital Intelligence Ratings

## SYRIA

### Physical damage from conflict at \$108bn, recovery needs at \$216bn

In its assessment of the physical damages and reconstruction costs in Syria resulting from the 2011-24 conflict, the World Bank estimated the total damage to physical assets at \$108.2bn and the cost of reconstruction at \$215.6bn. It indicated that infrastructure damages reached \$52bn and accounted for 48.1% of total physical destruction, followed by damage to residential buildings at \$32.7bn (30.2%), and damages to non-residential buildings at \$23.4bn (21.7%). Further, it pointed out that the geographical distribution of the physical damage shows that the Aleppo governorate suffered \$30.9bn, or 28.5% of the total destruction, followed by the Damascus Suburbs governorate at \$22.3bn (20.6%), the Homs governorate at \$10.8bn (10%), the Hama governorate at \$7.5bn (7%), and Al-Raqqa governorate at \$6.8bn (6.3%). In addition, it estimated the cost of rebuilding the infrastructure at \$81.7bn, or 38% of the total reconstruction cost, followed by the reconstruction cost of residential buildings at \$74.5bn (34.6%), and the cost of the reconstruction of non-residential buildings at \$59.3bn (27.5%). Also, it stated that reconstruction costs in the Aleppo governorate stand at \$64.3bn and account for 29.8% of the total, followed by the Damascus Suburbs governorate with \$46.4bn (21.5%), the Homs governorate with \$24.3bn (11.3%), the Hama governorate with \$14.8bn (6.9%), and the Idlib governorate with \$13.5bn (6.3%). Further, it noted that Syria's real GDP contracted by 53% between 2010 and 2022 and that its nominal GDP shrank from \$67.5bn in 2011 to \$21.4bn in 2024.

Source: World Bank

## ETHIOPIA

### Sovereign ratings maintained at Restricted Default

Fitch Ratings affirmed Ethiopia's long-term foreign currency issuer default rating (IDR) at 'Restricted Default' (RD), which is 10 notches below investment grade, and the country's long-term local currency IDR at 'CCC+'. It also affirmed the Country Ceiling at 'B-'. It attributed the affirmation of the foreign currency rating to the country's continued default on its single Eurobond and other non-bond commercial external debt after the government's failure to pay the \$33m Eurobond coupon due on December 11, 2023. But it indicated that the authorities are looking to restructure about \$15bn of external debt under the Group of 20 Common Framework for Debt Treatment which the country's applied in 2021. It stated that Ethiopia concluded a memorandum of understanding with the Official Creditor Committee (OCC) in July 2025, which will provide \$2.5bn in debt relief through the fiscal year that ends on July 7, 2028. Also, it noted that the country has engaged bondholders since December 2023 to restructure its single Eurobond, and it expected the process to accelerate following the agreement on an official debt restructuring. In parallel, it pointed out that Ethiopia has made notable progress on macroeconomic reforms since July 2024. In parallel, Fitch said that it could upgrade the ratings if the government completes the restructuring of its external commercial debt, and/or in case of increased confidence in the implementation of reforms and the restoration of macroeconomic stability.

Source: Fitch Ratings

## GHANA

### Structural reforms critical to sustain growth momentum

The International Monetary Fund (IMF) indicated that Ghana's macroeconomic stabilization is advancing, and that economic growth was stronger than anticipated in the first half of 2025, driven by strong services activity and agricultural output. It expected the positive momentum to continue in 2026 and projected the real GDP growth rate at 4.8% next year. Further, it stated that the inflation rate regressed to single-digit for the first time since 2021 and anticipated it to remain within the Bank of Ghana's target band of between 6% and 10%, which would allow for the gradual normalization of monetary policy. In parallel, it said that the primary balance is on track to achieve the 1.5% of GDP target by year-end, and that the authorities are committed to adopt a budget for 2026 with a primary surplus of 1.5% of GDP on a commitment basis, in line with the recently adopted Fiscal Responsibility Framework. Also, it considered that the authorities are making progress on the public debt's restructuring, as well as on fiscal consolidation, energy sector reforms, foreign currency operations, and financial sector resilience. It pointed out that Ghana's debt trajectory improved due to the positive macroeconomic outlook and continued fiscal discipline, which are supporting the debt's long-term viability. Further, it expected the solid current account surplus to support the accumulation of foreign currency reserves, but it said that external risks remain significant due to lingering uncertainties about the commodity prices of Ghana's key exports. It noted that robust exports, the increase in foreign currency reserves, a favorable external environment and improved investor confidence have supported the exchange rate of the Ghanaian cedi.

Source: International Monetary Fund





# BANKING

## WORLD

### Crypto assets in need oversight and regulations

The Financial Stability Board (FSB) urged jurisdictions to review and prioritize their plans to fully implement the FSB Crypto Framework for the oversight of crypto assets, by using peer-reviewed best practices to keep pace with fast-changing crypto markets and to protect global financial stability. It said that the FSB, other standard-setting bodies, and international organizations should keep promoting the consistent implementation of the FSB Crypto Framework, especially by reaching out to non-member jurisdictions where progress is still unclear. Also, it called on jurisdictions with existing or developing regulations for crypto-asset service providers (CASP) to address any gaps that they identified based on the FSB's 2023 recommendations, mainly for activities that pose financial stability risks, and urged them to implement relevant supervisory reporting requirements. It noted that jurisdictions with existing or developing regulations on global stablecoin arrangements (GSC) should address the gaps that they identified relative to the 2023 GSC recommendations, mainly in areas such as liquidity risks, capital buffers, stress testing, user redemption, asset custody, and recovery or insolvency planning. Further, it called on jurisdictions to strengthen data systems to track financial stability risks in crypto and traditional markets by using reports from CASPs, stablecoin issuers, and other participants to fill data gaps. In addition, it urged jurisdictions to assess the scale and nature of cross-border crypto-asset activities, use existing tools, establish bilateral or multilateral cooperation frameworks, and estimate if there is a need for new tools to address related risks.

*Source: Financial Stability Board*

### Foreign exchange market highly susceptible to uncertainty shocks

The International Monetary Fund indicated that the increasing involvement of non-bank financial institutions (NBFIs) in credit markets and the growing trade in derivatives could raise the vulnerability of the global foreign exchange (FX) market to adverse shocks. It considered that increased macro-financial uncertainties can strain FX market conditions by significantly raising funding costs, impairing liquidity, and amplifying the volatility of excess exchange rate returns. It noted that disruptions in critical payment systems and the potential for settlement failures significantly undermine market liquidity, increase excess exchange rate returns and their volatility, and raise the cost of FX transactions. As a result, it recommended strengthening the oversight of FX markets through systemic risk monitoring, stress testing, and scenario analysis to capture liquidity shocks and spillovers. Also, it advocated for improving reporting and transparency, mainly regarding NBFIs and bilateral exposures outside centralized infrastructures. Further, it recommended maintaining robust liquidity and capital buffers, supported by access to central bank liquidity, sufficient international reserves, and broader central bank swap line arrangements. Moreover, it called for enhancing the operational resilience of financial market infrastructures and institutions by implementing robust cyber risk management frameworks, comprehensive contingency plans, and harmonized supervisory oversight. Finally, it proposed mitigating settlement risks and addressing inefficiencies in over-the-counter FX markets by promoting the adoption of payment-versus-payment mechanisms.

*Source: International Monetary Fund*

COUNTRY RISK WEEKLY BULLETIN

## EGYPT

### Banks' ratings upgraded on improving operating environment

S&P Global Ratings upgraded the long-term issuer credit ratings of the National Bank of Egypt (NBE), Banque Misr (BM), and Commercial International Bank (CIB) from 'B-' to 'B', and affirmed the outlook on the ratings at 'stable'. Also, it affirmed the short-term issuer credit ratings of the three banks at 'B'. It attributed the upgrade to its similar action on Egypt's sovereign ratings due to the improved external position. It added that the banking sector's exposure to the sovereign, through securities and loans, accounts for 58% of total assets as at end-May 2025 and is equivalent about 8.7 times of the sector's equity. Also, it considered that rising confidence, declining interest rates, and stronger economic activity will create lending opportunities for banks. As such, it expected lending growth to start expanding from the fiscal year that ends in June 2026, with private sector loans growing by about 1.6 percentage points of GDP on average in the next two years. It said that the limited deterioration in asset quality last year was due to the negative real interest rates and to the fact that about 35% of total loans that the banks extended were either to the government or to companies earning revenues in the same currency as their loans.

*Source: S&P Global Ratings*

## TUNISIA

### Banks' ratings restricted by sovereign ceiling

Capital Intelligence Ratings affirmed the long- and short-term foreign currency ratings of Banque Internationale Arabe de Tunisie (BIAT), Société Tunisienne de Banque (STB), Union Bancaire pour le Commerce et l'Industrie (UBCI), Banque Nationale Agricole (BNA), and Attijari Bank (AB) at 'C+' and 'C', respectively, and revised the outlook on the long-term ratings from 'negative' to 'stable'. It said that the ratings of the five banks are constrained by their exposure to Tunisia's sovereign credit risk and by the low ratings on the sovereign. Further, it kept the Bank Standalone Ratings (BSR) of the five banks at 'c'. It also affirmed the Core Financial Strength (CRS) of BIAT and AB at 'bb-', the CRS of UBCI at 'b+', and the ratings of BNA and STB at 'b'. In addition, it said that the liquidity and funding profiles of BIAT, UBCI and AB have satisfactory levels, the BSR of STB is supported by improved liquidity and funding, while the liquidity and funding of BNA is tight. It added that the BSRs of BIAT, UBCI and AB are supported by the banks' satisfactory asset quality, while the BSR of BNA is constrained by its very weak asset quality. Also, it said that the BSR of BNA is underpinned by the bank's high capital ratio and that the moderate capital buffers are weighing on the BSRs of BIAT, UBCI, and AB. Further, it pointed out that the BSR of BIAT is underpinned by its high profitability, while the BSRs of BNA, STB, UBCI and AB are supported by their sound profitability. It added that the very high level of non-performing loans (NPLs) are weighing on the ratings of BIAT and STB, while the NPL ratios of BIAT, UBCI and AB are below the sector's ratio. It considered that the banking sector continues to navigate a difficult but slowly improving economic and operational climate.

*Source: Capital Intelligence Ratings*

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## ENERGY / COMMODITIES

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### Oil prices to average \$63 p/b in fourth quarter of 2025

The prices of ICE Brent Crude oil front-month future contracts reached \$62.6 per barrel (p/b) on October 22, 2025, constituting an increase of 2.1% from \$61.3 p/b on October 21 and the largest gain in oil prices almost one month, driven by the new U.S. sanctions on Russia's largest oil companies Rosneft and Lukoil, as well as by growing U.S. energy consumption and signs of progress in the U.S. trade agreement with India. In parallel, Citi Research projected global oil inventories at 1.1 million barrels per day (b/d) in 2025 and 2.1 million b/d in 2026, and expected Saudi Arabia's oil supply to be steady at 10.3 million b/d in 2026. Under its bear case scenario, it forecast Brent oil prices to trade at between \$50 p/b and \$60 p/b in 2026, if global oil demand is further eroded in a weakening macroeconomic and global trade backdrop, if non-OPEC+ supply growth accelerates more than anticipated, if the OPEC+ coalition slowly cuts back production but still does not fully stick to the plan, and if China buys less oil than expected. In its bull case scenario, it projected Brent crude oil prices to exceed \$75 p/b next year if strikes on Russia's energy infrastructure intensify or in case of a renewed escalation between Israel and Iran, particularly following the expiration of the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action on October 18, 2025. It considered that these developments may attract more investors willing to take advantage of price fluctuations in the market, even without significantly impacting global liquid supply balances. In parallel, Citi Research projected oil prices to average \$63 p/b in the fourth quarter of 2025 with a low of \$55 p/b and a high of \$75 p/b.

Source: Citi Research, LSEG Workspace, Byblos Research

### OPEC oil output up by 2% in September 2025

Member countries of the Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC), based on secondary sources, produced an average of 28.44 million barrels of oil per day (b/d) in September 2025, constituting an increase of 2% from 27.92 million b/d in August 2025. On a country basis, Saudi Arabia produced 9.96 million b/d, or 35% of OPEC's total output, followed by Iraq with 4.1 million b/d (14.3%), the UAE with 3.35 million b/d (11.8%), Iran with 3.25 million b/d (11.4%), and Kuwait with 2.5 million b/d (8.8%).

Source: OPEC

### Algeria's oil exports up 3.4% in July 2025

Crude oil production in Algeria reached 924,000 barrels per day (b/d) in July 2025, constituting a decrease of 0.3% from 927,000 b/d in June 2025. Further, aggregate crude oil exports stood at 391,000 b/d in July 2025, and increased by 3.4% from 378,000 b/d in June 2025.

Source: JODI, Byblos Research

### ME&A's oil demand to increase by 2.5% in 2025

The Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries projected the consumption of crude oil in the Middle East & Africa to average 13.82 million barrels per day (b/d) in 2025, which would constitute an increase of 2.5% from 13.5 million b/d in 2024. The region's demand for oil would represent 23.4% of consumption in non-OECD countries and 13.1% of global consumption in 2025.

Source: OPEC

### Base Metals: Aluminum prices to average \$2,650 per ton in fourth quarter of 2025

The LME cash price of aluminum averaged \$2,578 per ton in the year-to-October 22, 2025 period, constituting an increase of 8% from an average of \$2,386.7 a ton in the same period last year, due to a combination of supply disruptions, increased demand from industrial sectors, and geopolitical tensions, particularly trade restrictions between major producers and consumers like China and the U.S. Further, aluminum prices reached a peak of \$2,806.3 per ton on October 9, 2025, driven by strong seasonal demand, supply cuts in China, and refinery closures in Australia. In parallel, Citi Research projected the primary supply of aluminum at 73.97 million tons in 2025, which would constitute an increase of 1.7% from 72.7 million tons in 2024. Also, it forecast the primary demand for the metal at 73.68 million tons this year, which would represent a rise of 1.5% from 72.57 million tons in 2024. In its base case scenario, it expected the price of the metal to average \$2,650 per ton in the fourth quarter of 2025, supported by expectations that the U.S. Federal Reserve will cut its policy rate and by a weaker exchange rate of the US dollar against major currencies. In its bear case scenario, it forecast aluminum prices to average between \$2,350 and \$2,450 per ton in the near term, driven by stagflation risks, persistent tariffs, and weaker global demand. Under its bull case scenario, it projected aluminum prices to average \$2,800 per ton in the fourth quarter, supported by a soft economic landing worldwide, stronger global manufacturing, lower U.S. import tariffs, and a sustained rate cutting cycle by the U.S. Federal Reserve. Also, it forecast aluminum prices to average \$2,650 per ton in the fourth quarter of 2025.

Source: Citi Research, Refinitiv, Byblos Research

### Precious Metals: Silver prices to average \$45 per ounce in fourth quarter of 2025

The future prices of silver averaged \$36.26 per troy ounce in the year-to-October 22, 2025 period, constituting an increase of 31.4% from an average of \$27.6 an ounce in the same period of 2024. The surge in the metal's prices was due mainly to a rise in industrial demand, especially from the solar and electronics sectors, investor interest amid economic uncertainty and tightening global supply constraints, as well as geopolitical instability that reinforced the appeal of the metal as a safe haven for investors. In parallel, Citi Research projected the global supply of silver at 1,039 million ounces in 2025, constituting an increase of 3% from 1,010 million ounces last year. Also, it forecast demand for the metal at 1,279 million ounces in 2025, representing a rise of 7% from 1,195 million ounces in 2024. Further, in its bear case scenario, it projected silver prices to decline to \$37 per ounce in the second quarter of 2026 due to expectations of a further slowdown in solar panels production, tighter-than-anticipated monetary policy from the U.S. Federal Reserve, a prolonged U.S.-China trade war, and to the substantial weakening of demand for the metal from China and India. However, in its bull case scenario, it expected silver prices to rise to \$52 per ounce in the fourth quarter of 2025, driven by expectations of a potential U.S. hard landing and stagflation risks, larger-than-expected interest rate cuts by the Federal Reserve, declining U.S. real rates, a deeper-than-anticipated slowdown in developed markets with strong outperformance in emerging markets, and an escalation in geopolitical tensions. In addition, it anticipated silver prices to rise to \$45 per ounce within the next three months under its base case scenario, in case of strong investment demand for the metal and constrained supply conditions. Also, it forecast silver prices to average \$45 per ounce in the fourth quarter of 2025.

Source: Citi Research, Refinitiv, Byblos Research

# COUNTRY RISK METRICS

Countries	LT Foreign currency rating				General gvt. balance/ GDP (%)	Gross Public debt (% of GDP)	Usable Reserves / CAPs* (months)	Short-Term External Debt by Rem. Mat./ CARs	Gvt. Interest Exp./ Rev. (%)	Gross Ext. Fin. needs / (CAR + Use. Res.) (%)	Current Account Balance / GDP (%)	Net FDI / GDP (%)
	S&P	Moody's	Fitch	CI								
Africa												
Algeria	-	-	-	-								
	-	-	-	-	-3.7	56.9	-	-	-	-	-3.2	0.4
Angola	B-Stable	B3 Stable	B-Stable	-	-1.0	62.06	4.7	52.2	25.9	105.8	2.7	-2.7
Egypt	B Stable	Caa1 Positive	B Stable	B Stable	-4.6	73.3	2.7	97.3	14.6	179.1	-18.5	16.4
Ethiopia	SD -	Caa3 Stable	CCC-	-	-2.5	22.0	0.5	32.1	5.9	158.7	-3.1	1.8
Ghana	CCC+ Stable	Ca Positive	B-Stable	-	-3.2	66.1	0.7	54.3	22.7	139.7	3.0	2.0
Côte d'Ivoire	BB Stable	Ba2 Stable	BB-Stable	-	-4.2	57.0	3.6	45.0	14.6	119.9	-4.6	2.3
Libya	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Dem Rep Congo	B-Stable	B3 Stable	-	-	-0.5	14.5	1.2	5.9	2.2	103.8	-5.4	4.2
Morocco	BBB-Stable	Ba1 Stable	BB+ Stable	-	-4.1	65.8	4.9	30.4	7.3	94.0	-1.4	0.5
Nigeria	B-Stable	Caa1 Positive	B Stable	-	-5.6	41.2	4.1	71.2	28.9	126.8	0.6	0.1
Sudan	-	-	-	-	-5.0	91.0	-	-	-	-	-5.0	0.2
Tunisia	-	Caa1 Stable	B-Stable	-	-5.6	88.7	-	-	26.1	-	-2.7	-1.1
Burkina Faso	CCC+ Stable	-	-	-	-5.8	58.0	1.2	59.0	11.4	156.8	-5.4	0.5
Rwanda	B+ Stable	B2 Stable	B+ Stable	-	-4.6	69.5	3.5	19.8	9.5	111.5	-11.7	3.7
Middle East												
Bahrain	B+ Negative	B2 Stable	B+ Stable	B+ Negative	-4.9	133.7	-3.5	138.2	29.7	331.1	2.1	1.0
Iran	-	-	-	-	-4.2	26.1	-	-	-	-	3.5	-
Iraq	B-Stable	Caa1 Stable	B-Stable	-	-4.5	45.6	15.3	3.2	3.1	42.6	5.6	-1.4
Jordan	BB-Stable	Ba3 Stable	BB-Stable	BB-Stable	-1.8	92.6	1.9	68.5	12	150.3	-4.4	1.6
Kuwait	A+ Stable	A1 Stable	AA-Stable	A+ Stable	-3.9	5.2	2.2	45.3	0.4	107.9	15.4	-4.8
Lebanon	SD -	C -	RD** -	-	0.0	213.0	8.8	181.1	9.0	160.6	-20.1	2.8
Oman	BBB-Stable	Baa3 Stable	BB+ Stable	BBB-Positive	-7.3	51.7	4.4	26.0	6.5	101.2	-8.3	2.1
Qatar	AA Stable	Aa2 Stable	AA Stable	AA Stable	4.0	47.7	2.2	115.4	5.0	168.0	16.7	-0.2
Saudi Arabia	A+ Stable	A1 Positive	A+ Stable	AA-Stable	-2.8	24.6	10.3	25.3	3.5	67.7	-0.2	0.5
Syria	-	-	-	-	-	49.0	-	-	-	-	-15.5	-
UAE	AA Stable	Aa2 Stable	AA-Stable	AA-Stable	5.5	29.9	-	-	4.3	-	6.8	-2.0
Yemen	-	-	-	-	-2.7	50.7	-	-	-	-	-19.2	-2.3

# COUNTRY RISK METRICS

Countries	LT Foreign currency rating				General gvt. balance/ GDP (%)	Gross Public debt (% of GDP)	Usable Reserves / CAPs* (months)	Short-Term External Debt by Rem. Mat./ CARs	Gvt. Interest Exp./ Rev. (%)	Gross Ext. Fin. needs / (CAR + Use. Res.) (%)	Current Account Balance / GDP (%)	Net FDI / GDP (%)
	S&P	Moody's	Fitch	CI								
Asia												
Armenia	BB- Stable	Ba3 Stable	BB- Stable	B+ Positive	-4.6	49.8	2.0	29.6	11.5	114.7	-3.1	2.2
China	A+ Stable	A1 Negative	A+ Stable	- -	-3.0	65.2	10.9	20.6	5.8	60.9	2.3	0.7
India	BBB- Stable	Baa3 Stable	BBB- Stable	- -	-7.8	84.0	7.3	29.8	25.2	82.2	-1.3	1.0
Kazakhstan	BBB- Stable	Baa2 Positive	BBB Stable	- -	-3.1	26.4	4.1	29.4	8.1	100.4	-2.8	2.2
Pakistan	B- Stable	Caa1 Stable	B- Stable	- -	-7.5	71.3	0.7	34.9	55.9	133.4	-1.3	0.4
Bangladesh	B+ Stable	B2 Negative	B+ Stable	- -	-4.8	32.1	3.8	29.0	29.0	102.8	-1.5	0.4
Central & Eastern Europe												
Bulgaria	BBB Positive	Baa1 Stable	BBB Positive	- -	-2.5	24.5	2.0	19.5	1.5	102.8	-0.5	2.0
Romania	BBB- Stable	Baa3 Stable	BBB- Stable	- -	-7.3	51.7	4.4	25.9	6.5	101.2	-8.3	2.1
Russia	- -	- -	- -	- -	-	18.2	18.0	23.6	4.4	45.0	12.1	-0.7
Türkiye	BB- Stable	B03 Stable	BB- Stable	BB- Stable	-5.1	27.0	1.4	63.6	10.8	149.0	-1.2	0.4
Ukraine	CC Negative	Ca Stable	CC -	- -	-17.0	91.6	4.6	40.7	10.1	108.	-6.6	1.4

\*Current account payments

\*\*Fitch withdrew the ratings of Lebanon on July 23, 2024

Source: S&P Global Ratings, Fitch Ratings, Moody's Ratings, CI Ratings, Byblos Research - The above figures are projections for 2025



## SELECTED POLICY RATES

	Benchmark rate	Current (%)	Last meeting Date	Action	Next meeting
USA	Fed Funds Target Rate	4.25	17-Sep-25	Cut 25bps	29-Oct-25
Eurozone	Refi Rate	2.15	11-Sep-25	No change	30-Oct-25
UK	Bank Rate	4.00	18-Sep-25	No change	06-Nov-25
Japan	O/N Call Rate	0.50	19-Sep-25	No change	30-Oct-25
Australia	Cash Rate	3.60	30-Sep-25	No change	04-Nov-25
New Zealand	Cash Rate	2.50	08-Oct-25	Cut 50bps	26-Nov-25
Switzerland	SNB Policy Rate	0.00	19-Jun-25	No change	11-Dec-25
Canada	Overnight rate	2.50	17-Sep-25	Cut 25bps	29-Oct-25
<b>Emerging Markets</b>					
China	One-year Loan Prime Rate	3.00	20-Oct-25	No change	20-Nov-25
Hong Kong	Base Rate	4.50	18-Sep-25	Cut 25bps	N/A
Taiwan	Discount Rate	2.00	18-Sep-25	No change	18-Dec-25
South Korea	Base Rate	2.50	23-Oct-25	No change	27-Nov-25
Malaysia	O/N Policy Rate	2.75	04-Sep-25	No change	06-Nov-25
Thailand	1D Repo	1.50	08-Oct-25	No change	17-Dec-25
India	Repo Rate	5.50	01-Oct-25	No change	05-Dec-25
UAE	Base Rate	4.15	17-Sep-25	Cut 25bps	N/A
Saudi Arabia	Repo Rate	4.75	17-Sep-25	Cut 25bps	N/A
Egypt	Overnight Deposit	21.00	02-Oct-25	Cut 100bps	20-Nov-25
Jordan	CBJ Main Rate	6.50	22-Dec-24	Cut 25bps	N/A
Türkiye	Repo Rate	40.5	11-Sep-25	Cut 250bps	23-Oct-25
South Africa	Repo Rate	7.00	18-Sep-25	No change	20-Nov-25
Kenya	Central Bank Rate	9.25	07-Oct-25	Cut 25bps	09-Dec-25
Nigeria	Monetary Policy Rate	27.00	23-Sep-25	Cut 50bps	25-Nov-25
Ghana	Prime Rate	21.50	17-Sep-25	Cut 350bps	19-Nov-25
Angola	Base Rate	19.00	19-Sep-25	Cut 50bps	18-Nov-25
Mexico	Target Rate	7.75	25-Sep-25	Cut 25bps	06-Nov-25
Brazil	Selic Rate	15.00	17-Sep-25	No change	N/A
Armenia	Refi Rate	6.75	16-Sep-25	No change	04-Nov-25
Romania	Policy Rate	6.50	08-Oct-25	No change	12-Nov-25
Bulgaria	Base Interest	1.81	01-Oct-25	Cut 1bp	03-Nov-25
Kazakhstan	Repo Rate	18.00	10-Oct-25	Raised 150bps	28-Nov-25
Ukraine	Discount Rate	15.50	11-Sep-25	No change	23-Oct-25
Russia	Refi Rate	17.00	12-Sep-25	Cut 100bps	24-Oct-25





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