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MAURITIUS, a smart choice





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Mauritius, a smart choice

Mauritius is attractive to businesses because it offers a series of competitive advantages that are hard to resist. It has a stable, business-friendly economic environment and a high-quality workforce. In addition, its geographical position is enviable, as the country is at the crossroads of maritime routes and its colonial history links it to Africa, Europe and Asia, three continents that are key to its international trade and to which it is well connected despite its spatial isolation. It has been able to take advantage of its position by creating a logistics hub for international trade.

Yet in 1968, at the time of the country's independence, its economic situation was not very promising. Some economists, such as James Edward Meade, predicted a dark future for Mauritius, a rock lost in the Indian Ocean with no natural resources and a poor population.⁽¹⁾ Mauritius rejected these prophets of doom out of hand by taking its destiny into its own hands and mobilising all its forces around inclusive economic development. The country had inherited the sugar industry from the period of British colonisation. It built on this industry by taking advantage of trade agreements with Great Britain and France.

In this way, it was able to make the most of its opportunities and escape poverty.


Mauritius has developed in successive stages, each of which opens up a new horizon of opportunities, moving back the frontiers of scarcity. Towards the end of the 1980s, Mauritius seized the opportunities offered by globalisation. It succeeded in attracting Hong Kong's textile industries by creating free trade zones and offering them opportunities to exploit the African Growth and Opportunity Act (AGOA) agreement with the United States, of which Mauritius was a beneficiary. As a result, Mauritius has acquired know-how and knowledge of international markets due to the presence of major textile brands on its territory. The end of the Multifibre Arrangement in 2005 challenged its economic model and exposed the country to the headwinds of globalisation. It was able to anticipate this economic downturn by focusing on tourism and finance.

As for Mauritius, it's a favourite destination because it's famous for its paradisiacal beaches and enchanting landscapes that make people dream of Jean Jacques Rousseau's *Les rêveries du promeneur solitaire* and a desire to «end one's days on this beloved island without ever leaving», far from the noise and fury of the continent. And this is what Mauritius is all about, with its natural landscapes and tropical climate. Tourism is a key sector, accounting for 24% of GDP. In 2023, Mauritius

received more than one million tourists attracted by its marketing campaigns⁽²⁾.

For the financial sector, Mauritius is known as an offshore centre with a very attractive tax regime for companies and a single tax rate. The country has signed double taxation agreements with a number of countries, making it a magnet for multinationals.

It is obvious from this demonstration that Mauritius is a leading economy on the African continent because, according to the World Bank, it is one of the upper-middle-income economies - having succeeded in taking up challenges and turning them into assets.

Despite its small size, Mauritius is a veritable laboratory for economic development, due to its ability to pursue its ambitions. It constitutes a success story for the African continent and for the global South, thanks to its institutional foundations that inspire confidence. Is Mauritius a good bet for investors? Certainly! 

Douraya Asgaraly

Nous vous invitons à réagir à cet éditorial en nous écrivant à l'adresse mail suivante:
contact@nations-emergentes.org

¹ *Mauritius: from sugar island to knowledge island*
- Emmanuel Grégoire - éditions Le Printemps Ltée (2011)

² *Mauritius Tourist Board*

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