



OVERVIEW OF COMOROS

The Union of Comoros comprises of three main inhabited islands named Grande Comore, Anjouan and Moheli. The total population of Comoros is around 825,000. The capital is Moroni and it is the largest city with a population of 55,000. Though one of the least populated countries of the world, Comoros ranks on high population density with 275 people per square kilometer. Other urban areas are Mutsamudu and Domoni. The archipelago is mired by inadequate internal as well as external transport linkages, very few natural resources and economic volatility emanating from its costly political reform process. It is moreover afflicted with a rapidly increasing population; 50% of the Comoros' population is aged under 15.

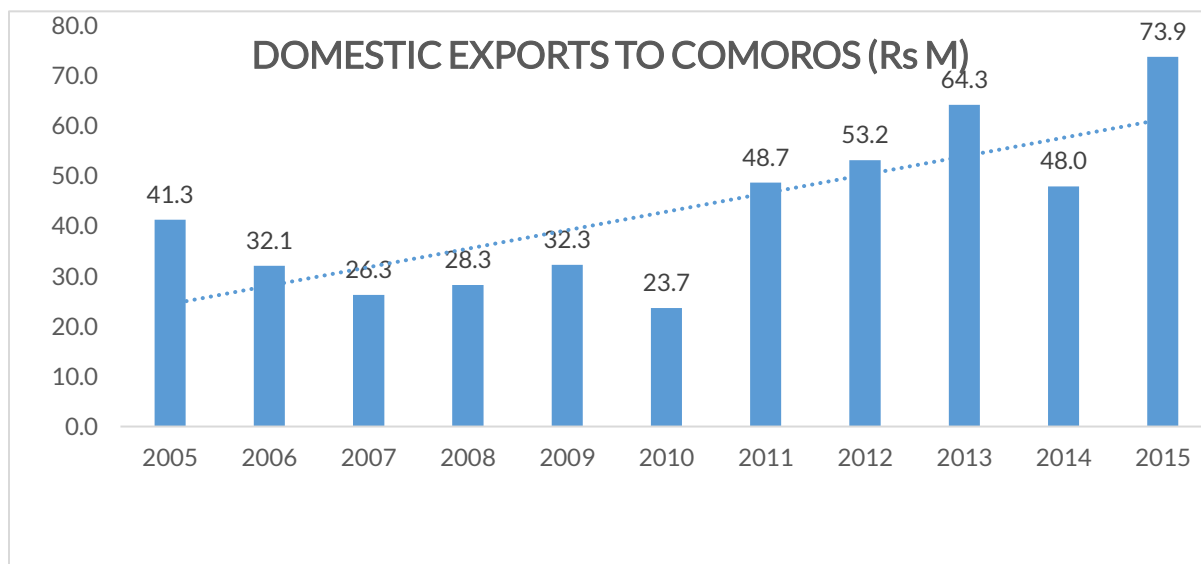
With a low level of education (28% for secondary education, UNICEF 2016), high dependence on external funding and on the agricultural sector, Comoros's trade balance is constantly on an enhanced deficit. From USD 184,121,000 in 2011, the imports of Comoros in 2016 amounted to USD 397,059,000, representing an increase of 21.5%.

According to World Bank (2017) statistics, the most recent Household Budget Survey conducted in 2014 in Comoros revealed that 42.4 percent of the population has "a monthly consumption per capita below the national poverty line and around 18 percent of the population lives below the international poverty line of US\$1.9 per capita per day". Poverty concentrates in the rural areas and in Moheli island.

Economic activities in Moroni are largely that of informal businesses—retailing, transport, garage services etc. There are no large manufacturing enterprises in Comoros. The only entrepreneurs on the archipelago are involved in the distillation of essential oils, production and commercialisation of spices and vanilla, especially. Comoros is the world's second largest exporter of vanilla. Most of the large wholesale shops are centralized in Moroni and shop owners from the other two islands travel to Moroni to procure for goods.

Mauritian Domestic Export to Comoros

Mauritius domestic export to Union of the Comoros has been on an upward trend over the past 10 years. Between 2010 to 2015, exports to Comoros has fluctuated between Rs. 23.6 million and Rs 74 million, peaking in the last year. The graph below depicts the fluctuations.



The majority of products exported to Comoros include, amongst others, wheat flour, white sugar, animal feed, paint, margarine, stationary water minerals, furniture, biscuits, furniture and textile products.

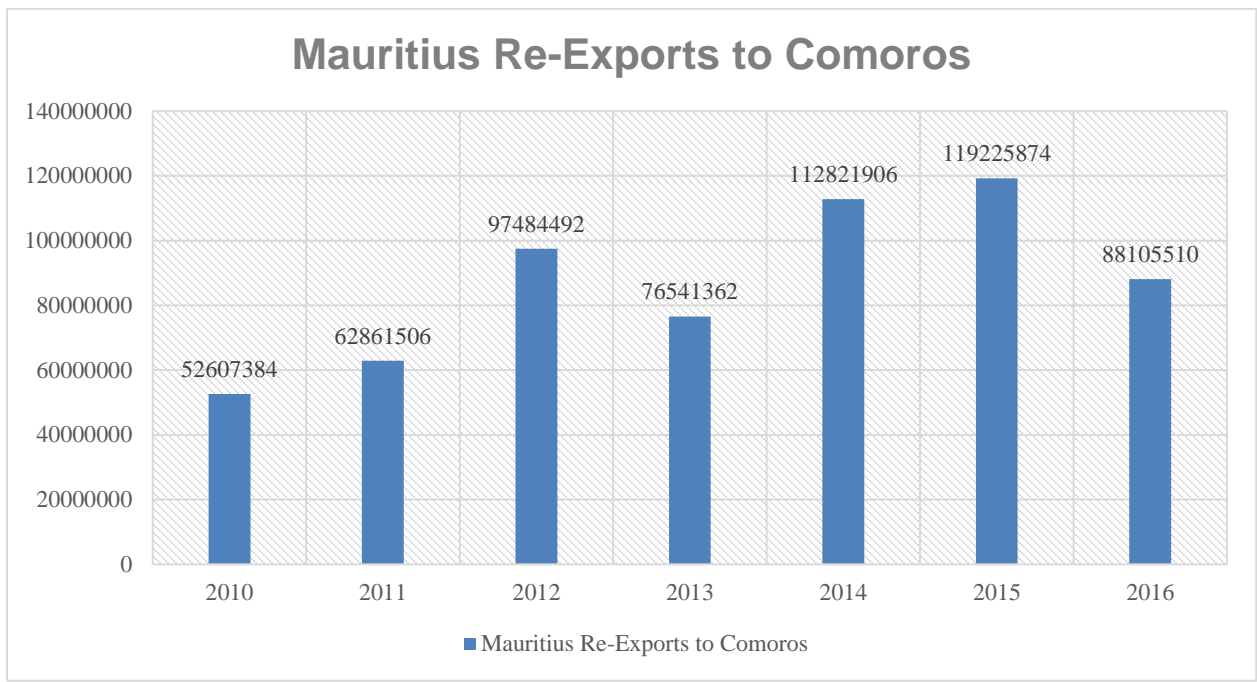
Products exported in 2015 were: wheat or meslin flour, white sugar, preparations used in animal feed, sugar confectionary, soap/organic surface active agents in bar/cakes, bakery additives, inactive yeasts, paints (NES based), flat C-R prod of iron, other beverages of milk, tea, coffee, cocoa and chocolate, preparations having



anti-microbial active agents for cleaning and items other than galvanised welded square on rectangular cross-section, tubes, pipes and hoses (rigid) of polymers of propylene.

However, figures for the year 2016 reveal that there has been a decline of Mauritian domestic exports to Comoros to Rs 57,5 million. This amounted to a substantial slump of 78%.

Similar fluctuations are noticed in Mauritian re-exports to Comoros. The table below displays the trend.



Popular re-exported goods are: Concentrated sweetened milk and cream, basmati rice, sardines, tuna, animal feed preparations, soap, telephones, sugar confectionary, mineral water and cigarettes.

