

Fiber optic cables cut in Mauritania



Overview

The program aims to connect all wilayas and moughatas (administrative divisions) to fiber optic networks.

Key Takeaways

Mauritania's internet infrastructure has historically relied on a single submarine cable, making it vulnerable to disruptions, though a second cable is under construction to improve resilience. Current Fiber Optic Infrastructure

Mauritania's international connectivity has primarily depended on the ACE (Africa Coast to Europe) submarine cable, which has been operational since 2011 and connects the country to global networks via Nouakchott . This single-cable reliance has historically made the country susceptible to outages caused by faults, maintenance, or accidental damage, affecting internet and mobile services nationwide . Past disruptions have impacted businesses, public services, and everyday users, highlighting the critical need for redundancy.

Ongoing Measures to Improve Resilience

To address these vulnerabilities, Mauritania is deploying a second international submarine cable through the EllaLink project, which will connect Nouadhibou to Madrid, Spain, and integrate into EllaLink's transatlantic network . Key features of this project include:

- A 28.4 km coastal segment connecting the landing station to the open sea, designed to withstand risks from fishing and maritime activity

- A 500 km subsea branch linking Mauritania to the main EllaLink system, providing a direct, low-latency connection to European internet exchange points .
 - Advanced optical technologies, including two fiber pairs and a ROADM WSS branching unit, to ensure high capacity and reliability .
 - An initial capacity of 200 Gbps, scalable to 12 Tbps, significantly increasing bandwidth and supporting growing digital demand . The project is expected to be fully operational by early 2027, complementing the ACE cable and providing redundancy to reduce the impact of future outages .
- Implications for Internet Users

Until the EllaLink cable is operational, Mauritania remains vulnerable to service disruptions if the ACE cable experiences faults or damage. Internet costs remain high, and service reliability can be affected by maintenance or accidental cuts . Once the second cable is active, the country will benefit from:

- Improved network reliability and continuity of service
- Lower access costs due to increased competition and capacity
- Support for digital transformation, including finance, education, and government services

Conclusion

While there is no confirmed report of a recent fiber optic cable cut in Mauritania, the country's historical reliance on a single submarine cable has made it vulnerable to outages. The ongoing EllaLink project aims to mitigate these risks, enhance international connectivity, and strengthen the resilience of Mauritania's digital infrastructure .

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