



Venezuela Economic Outlook

By Arca Análisis Económico

Here is our monthly summary of recent economic developments in Venezuela:

- The National Assembly's approval of the 2026 National Budget has revealed the inherent tensions of an economy facing simultaneous external and internal pressures. The legal instrument establishes spending equivalent to \$19.475 billion, representing a 14 percent reduction compared to the budget authorized for 2025 when measured in dollars. However, when expressed in national currency, the budget shows a 454 percent increase, rising from 906.459 billion bolivars to 5.022.969 billion bolivars, demonstrating the impact of the bolivar accumulated depreciation during the current year.
- The foreign exchange market has experienced a significant divergence between the official rate of the Central Bank of Venezuela (BCV) and the parallel exchange rate based on USDT (Tether). As of Dec. 5, 2025, the official exchange rate stood at 257.93 bolivars, reflecting a weekly increase of 14.8 percent and a monthly increase of 21.8 percent. The exchange rate gap currently stands at 67.1 percent and continues to generate inflationary pressures and distortions in price formation, particularly in sectors dependent on imported inputs.
- International reserves maintained an upward trend, closing on Dec. 4, 2025, at \$13.7 billion, an increase of \$307 million in two weeks. This growth is mainly attributed to the appreciation of gold, whose spot price reached \$4,224 per troy ounce, representing a weekly increase of 1.6 percent. Liquid foreign currency reserves remained at \$1.5 billion, implying a limited capacity for direct intervention by the BCV in the foreign exchange market.
- Meanwhile, the oil sector faced an unfavorable international environment during November 2025. Benchmark prices showed consecutive declines. The Brent closed at \$63.8 per barrel, WTI at \$60.1 per barrel and Maya crude at \$47.5 per barrel as of Dec. 5, 2025. This drop, attributed to global oversupply conditions and reduced geopolitical risk, represents the fourth consecutive month of losses, limiting oil tax revenues at a time when exports exceeded 900,000 barrels per day in November, with China receiving 80 percent of shipments.
- The U.S. military deployment in the Caribbean and restrictions on Venezuelan airspace have had adverse effects on foreign trade and investment. Economist Francisco Rodríguez warned that these pressure tactics have slowed international trade, reduced tourism and hindered investors from entering the country. The suspension of international flights by commercial airlines has affected both cargo transport and the flow of passengers carrying goods in their luggage.
- Eduardo Quintana, president of La Guaira Chamber of Commerce, warned that cargo and passenger flights were only partially offsetting the reduction in the arrival of ships carrying goods. With the suspension of these air operations, merchants are warning of potential product shortages

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and price increases that would affect the end consumer. Although some industries managed to build up inventory reserves, the prolonged delays in imports represent a growing risk to national supply.

- Despite these logistical constraints, e-commerce showed outstanding performance during Black Friday. According to Richard Ujueta, president of Cavecom-e, \$71 million was transacted during the three days of sales, doubling the figures recorded in 2024. The footwear, fashion, technology and home goods sectors led sales, boosted by digital financing and transactions at the official BCV exchange rate, which allowed large stores to liquidate accumulated inventory.
- Projections for December 2025 and the first quarter of 2026 suggest a scenario of moderate economic slowdown. The combination of exchange rate pressures, logistical constraints in foreign trade, volatility in oil prices and limitations in fiscal capacity creates a complex environment for productive activity. The effectiveness of the 2026 budget will depend on the government's ability to manage the exchange rate gap, maintain the stability of international reserves and mitigate the impact of sanctions on trade and investment.

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Venezuela is Transferring Toll Collection Stations to the National Executive

By Tinoco Travieso Planchart & Nuñez

Decree No. 5,171, dated Oct. 20, 2025, which transferred the administration and operation of toll collection stations to the National Executive, was published in the *Official Gazette* Extraordinary No. 6,934.

The decree establishes the transfer to the National Transportation Fund (FNT), a decentralized service under the Ministry of Popular Power for Transportation, the administration and operation of the infrastructure of toll collection stations and other facilities and services that comprise the toll plazas located within the national territory. The scope of application applies to the assets that comprise the infrastructure of toll collection stations (facilities, technological equipment and toll services) located within the national territory.

Some of its main takeaways:

- The decree is issued within the framework of the economic emergency declared by the National Executive.
- Administrative acts granting the administration and use of the toll collection station infrastructure, as well as any agreements, alliances, contracts and concessions entered into for this purpose, are hereby revoked.
- The resources generated from toll collection nationwide will be collected through trust accounts established by the Ministry of Popular Power for Transportation and national banks and will be distributed monthly as follows: 50 percent to the FNT for major road infrastructure projects nationwide such as maintenance and development of national road and transportation infrastructure; 25 percent for the Special Fund for Human City, integrated into the Ministry of Popular Power of the Office of the Presidency and Monitoring of Government Management, for the execution, maintenance, conservation and sanitation of state-owned and public works, assets and infrastructure; and 25 percent for the governor's offices for routine preventive maintenance on main roads and local roads.
- Article 8 of Decree No. 5,112 of March 28, 2025, published in the *Official Gazette* No. 43,097 concerning the percentage of the monthly gross toll revenue nationwide allocated to the FNT, is repealed.

This decree entered into force on Oct. 20, 2025.

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