**Facts & figures**

**Emigration**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>% of emigrants in total population</th>
<th>% of which in the EU</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>8.5% 3,136,069</td>
<td>87.8% 2,751,910</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dual citizenship</th>
<th>Right to vote in national elections for citizens residing abroad</th>
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</thead>
</table>

**Remittances as a share of GDP: 0.5%**

Remittances inflow (USD million): 411

**Top countries of destination**

- France: 1,020,162
- Spain: 711,792
- Italy: 450,557
- Belgium: 226,216
- The Netherlands: 180,879

**Political rights**

1. Dual citizenship
2. Right to vote in national elections for citizens residing abroad

**Terminology:** The Kingdom of Morocco refers to its diaspora as ‘Moroccans [living] abroad’ MLA or ‘MRE’ (French, Marocains résidant à l’étranger, Arabic المغاربة المقيمة بالخارج al-maghāribat al-muqiyyimoun bi-l-kharij), although in some internal documents it also refers to the Moroccan diaspora, and ‘Moroccans of the world’ (Marocains du monde).

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2. The reform of the Family Code, the *moudawana*, in 2004, gave Moroccan mothers the right to pass on the Moroccan nationality, where this is in accordance with the Nationality Code (Code de Nationalité), a move that was seen positively by many in the diaspora. The Nationality Code was revised in 2007 to permit Moroccan mothers to pass Moroccan nationality to their children where the father is also Muslim and married to the mother. An unofficial English translation of the Family Code is available here: http://www.hrea.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/02/Moudawana.pdf ; a French version of the Nationality Code is available here: https://www.refworld.org/pdfid/501fc9822.pdf


4. Ibid.
Morocco launched its draft National Strategy for Moroccans Living Abroad (Stratégie nationale en faveur des Marocains du Monde) in 2014. The strategy was developed in the context of the new Migration and Asylum Policy, initiated in September 2013 by King Mohammed VI and adopted in 2014. The strategy has three strategic objectives: Preserving the identity of MLAs, protecting the rights and interests of MLAs, and encouraging MLA contributions to the development of the country. It focuses on mobilising the skills of MLAs, attracting their investment and improving their access to public services.

Overview of the policy and legislative framework

2011

- **Revised Constitution** sets out various provisions recognising Moroccans Living Abroad, including the following.

  - **Article 16** – Recognises dual citizenship of Moroccans Living Abroad
  - **Article 17** – Moroccans Living Abroad enjoy full rights as citizens, including the right to vote in elections (however there is no voting from abroad).
  - **Article 18** – The Moroccan government commits to consulting Moroccans abroad on governance issues.
  - **Article 30** – Permits Moroccans abroad to return to the country to participate in elections.
  - **Article 163** – Stipulates that the Council of Moroccans Living Abroad should publish advice on policies enabling Moroccans Living Abroad to maintain their links with their Moroccan identity, guarantee their rights, and to contribute to the sustainable and human development of their fatherland.

Trends & achievements

Morocco has undergone a shift in policy from a guest workers & remittances-focused approach in the 2000s to a transnational policy based on skills-mobilisation that forms the broad focus of Moroccan diaspora governance today. Whereas the Moroccan state previously sought to control both outward emigration and diaspora interactions with the homeland, this position changed (in part at least) due to the declining importance of remittance flows from the 2000s onwards. The Moroccan government shifted therefore to trying to ‘court’ its diaspora with increased civic and political rights (such as recognising the dual identity of the diaspora), as well as dedicated diaspora engagement policies and programmes. This has been further demonstrated by both the revised constitution of 2011 and the 2014 National Strategy.
for Moroccans Living Abroad.\textsuperscript{10}

Although Morocco has become less dependent on remittances than a generation ago, remittances continue to play a role in providing hard currency and reducing poverty. However, it is increasingly acknowledged by the government (and the wider public) that Moroccans residing abroad bring other forms of beneficial transfers to their country of origin, in the shape of technological, managerial, and entrepreneurial skills and expertise.\textsuperscript{11}

The Moroccan diaspora are therefore now increasingly seen as drivers of innovation, employment, and economic growth.\textsuperscript{12} Some strategic partnerships with incubators play a role in channelling people and bridging Morocco with its diaspora, although accessing start-up funds continues to be a barrier to expanding this.\textsuperscript{13} There is an increasing trend for diaspora entrepreneurs to return to Morocco to set up businesses, but their return tends to be on a circular, rather than permanent, basis.\textsuperscript{14}

Morocco has fairly well-developed institutions and capacities in terms of diaspora engagement, in comparison to other African states.\textsuperscript{15} Morocco has been the recipient of significant capacity-building support in this regard from a range of international partners, including the EC, EU member states, and IOM.\textsuperscript{16}

Morocco has also invested in the creation of institutions and programmes to engage with its diaspora more effectively. However, there remain concerns about implementation of diaspora engagement plans and programmes, as well as the extent to which the policy framework is predicated on permanent, rather than circular, diaspora return.\textsuperscript{17}

Another shift in diaspora governance in Morocco is the acknowledgment of the fact that Moroccans have settled in their countries of residence and have adopted other nationalities. This has challenged the traditional concept of the nation, and required a greater appreciation of this dual identity, a process that is arguably still ongoing.\textsuperscript{18} Recognition of second and third generations of Moroccan emigrants with other nationalities as Moroccan diaspora has also increased the numbers of those considered as Moroccans abroad.\textsuperscript{19}

\begin{itemize}
\item However, this is challenged by Gabrielli and Franco-Guillén (2018), Transnational Diaspora Entrepreneurship: The case of Moroccans in Catalonia, GRITIM-UPF, who argue that most Moroccan diaspora enterprises in Catalonia are too small to have significant impacts on innovation and job creation in Morocco.
\item Personal communication, Start-up Maroc, 2019
\item Personal communication, MMRE 2019
\item C.f. Hanafi L & Hites D (2017)
\end{itemize}
Obstacles

- **Lack of economic opportunities**: especially for high-skilled migrants, poses a barrier to returning migrants and continues to drive emigration of professionals from the country.

- **Perceived utilitarian approach**: Some Moroccans in the diaspora are sceptical about the government’s focus on harnessing diaspora resources and talent, which they perceive as transactional.

- **Lack of voting abroad**: Some diaspora members are concerned that voting abroad is still not permitted, affecting their position as citizens, and they argue that the government simply presents excuses to avoid introducing voting from abroad.

- **Mistrust of government bureaucracy** among the diaspora is widespread; government bureaucracy is perceived as intrusive and a barrier to greater engagement.

**SPOTLIGHT: Effective practices**

**Maison des Marocains du Monde**

The Maison des Marocains du Monde network provides the main point of access and services for MLAs. It provides on a network of cultural centres in several countries of residence which organise activities to promote Moroccan culture and build links between the diaspora (especially the 2nd and 3rd generations), such as Moroccan Arabic language courses or ‘summer universities’. [https://marocainsdumonde.gov.ma](https://marocainsdumonde.gov.ma)

**Programmes supporting diaspora entrepreneurs**

Examples of programmes to support diaspora enterprise include Maroc Entrepreneurs, a non-profit organisation created in 1999, and Start-up Maroc, which work to promote economic development through three main strands: encouraging Moroccans Living Abroad to start their own businesses in Morocco; sharing information about business start-ups and investment opportunities; and establishing synergies between companies based in Morocco and the expertise of Moroccans in the diaspora.²⁰

**Guide for Moroccans Living Abroad**

In 2015, the Moroccan government issued a guide for Moroccans living abroad.²¹ This guide explains the priorities of the Moroccan government towards the diaspora. It includes social programmes for Moroccans abroad such as professional training as well as financial help for Moroccan children living in Côte d’Ivoire or Algeria to attend school, for university bursaries and for the repatriation of corpses.²²

**Deutsch-Marokkanische Kompetenznetzwerk e.V. (DMK) Medical Missions to Morocco**

The German-Moroccan Competence Network (DMK eV) and the Medical Competencies of Moroccans Abroad (C3M) organized medical campaigns in 2016 in southeast Morocco.²³ These included ongoing professional training in gynaecology and other capacity building activities targeted at local medical professionals.²⁴

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²⁰ See: [https://www.startupmaroc.org](https://www.startupmaroc.org) ; [https://marocentrepreneurs.com](https://marocentrepreneurs.com)
²¹ MCMREAM, Guide des Marocains Résidant à l’Etranger
²² Circulaire n°430 du 9 juin 2014.
²³ [https://www.dmk-online.org/medizinische-aktionen/](https://www.dmk-online.org/medizinische-aktionen/)
Annex:
List of Actors

Diaspora related institutions

- At regional level

African Union Citizens and Diaspora Directorate (AU CIDO)

Morocco re-joined the African Union in 2017 and nominates a diaspora focal point to represent Morocco as part of the African Union Citizens and Diaspora Directorate (AU CIDO) Continental Meetings. It has also held discussions about joining ECOWAS, which have so far proved inconclusive. [https://au.int/en/cido](https://au.int/en/cido)

Arab League, Arab Maghreb Union, Union of the Mediterranean

Morocco is a member of all three organisations. [http://www.leagueofarabstates.net/ar/Pages/default.aspx](http://www.leagueofarabstates.net/ar/Pages/default.aspx) (Arabic; English version under construction) [https://www.uneca.org/oria/pages/amu-arab-maghreb-union](https://www.uneca.org/oria/pages/amu-arab-maghreb-union) [https://ufmsecretariat.org/](https://ufmsecretariat.org/)

- National institutions
  - At ministerial level

Ministry for Moroccans residing abroad (Ministère des Marocains résidants à l’étranger)
[https://marocainsdumonde.gov.ma/attributions-mcmre/](https://marocainsdumonde.gov.ma/attributions-mcmre/)

In 1990 the Ministry was created alongside the Hassan II Foundation for Moroccans Residing Abroad (Fondation Hassan II pour les Marocains Résidant à l’étranger, see below) to strengthen the links between Moroccans abroad and Morocco.

This Ministry, delegated to the Minister of Foreign Affairs, African Cooperation and Moroccans Abroad since 2013, prepares and implements government policy concerning Moroccans residing abroad, in coordination with the relevant ministries and the institutions inside and outside Morocco. In 2013, the inter-ministerial committee of Moroccans living abroad was created coordinating the new strategy for emigration.

  - At sub-ministerial level

Hassan II Foundation [http://www.fh2mre.ma/](http://www.fh2mre.ma/)

The Foundation was founded in 1990 with the purpose of ensuring that the Moroccan diaspora maintains ties with their country of origin through religion, education, cultural and linguistic means. It supports and informs Moroccans abroad on different topics such as investment opportunities in Morocco, organises summer camps or summer schools for Moroccan children living abroad and finances Arabic teachers abroad to teach the language to Moroccan children.25

Council for the Moroccan Community Abroad (Conseil de la Communauté Marocaine à l’Étranger, CCME) was created https://www.ccme.org.ma/en/

CCME was created in 2007 and is composed of Moroccan emigrants. It advises the Moroccan government on how to protect Moroccan interests abroad and encourage the development of the country of origin. The CCME mainly assesses public policies towards MLAs, advises the government and commissions research studies.

National Social Security Fund http://www.cnss.ma/

The NSSF manages international social security conventions with countries of residence of Moroccan nationals. Morocco has signed social security agreements with 17 countries (Algeria, Egypt, France, Belgium, the Netherlands, Spain, Germany, Portugal, Denmark, Sweden, Romania, Tunisia, Libya, Mauritania, Canada, Quebec and Luxembourg).


A network of regional and local offices was established in Morocco to ensure reception, orientation, and communication with MLAs during their stay in Morocco. They facilitate coordination with local authorities and services in different sectors to respond to their needs, especially administrative or legal.

Diaspora organisations in Europe

Association des Marocains de France (AMF) http://www.amf-federation.com/

Development activities

Created in January 1961, AMF is one of the oldest immigration associations in France. It has gone through all the stages of the integration of migrant populations. Its socioeconomic line has always been adapted to the requirements of the historical evolution of Moroccan immigration to France. It has conducted several co-development training and education and exchange initiatives in Morocco.

Deutsch-Marokkanische Kompetenznetzwerk e.V. (DMK) Germany https://www.dmk-online.org/

Development activities

A Moroccan diaspora professionals and skills transfer network based in Germany, DMK has its headquarters in Munich and was founded in 2009. It sees itself as an intermediary between Germany and Morocco. The aim of the network is to promote sustainable development in Morocco and to support the integration of Moroccan citizens in Germany.

26 Hein de Haas, Morocco: Setting the Stage for Becoming a Migration Transition Country?, Migration Policy Institute, 19 March 2014 http://www.migrationpolicy.org/article/morocco-setting-stage-becoming-migration-transition-country
FÉDÉRATION DES AMIS DE FIGUIG France http://faf-figuig.org/

Development activities

A network of Moroccan diaspora organisations in France, FAF implement education, training, volunteering, and agriculture programmes in the local region of Figuig oasis in Morocco.

Forum des Organisations de Solidarité Internationale issues des Migrations (FORIM) France www.forim.net

Development activities

FORIM is a leading African diaspora network based in France. Although not primarily a Moroccan diaspora group, its members include many Moroccan organisations in France and they have funded and co-delivered a range of educational, enterprise, WASH, and other development projects in Morocco over the last decade.

Les Bourgeois de l’Atlas France

Development activities

The organisation provides relief materials to children and vulnerable women in the villages of the Eastern High Atlas Mountains as well as literacy and social development programmes.

Migrations et Développement France https://www.migdev.org/

Development activities

The organisation was created in 1986 by Moroccan migrants to carry out development actions in the villages of their region of origin, the Moroccan Atlas and Anti-Atlas, struck by a severe drought since the mid-1970s. With the support of French volunteer experts, the first actions focused on infrastructure: electrification of villages, hillside reservoirs and irrigation, schools and dispensaries, drinking water supply etc. Gradually, an integrated rural development programme was developed in participation with local populations and migrants. This program was supported by researchers, donors from the North and Moroccan local and national authorities.