



Migration Governance Profile: Kingdom of Morocco

October 2017

In 2015, the International Organization for Migration (IOM) developed a [Migration Governance Framework \(MiGOF\)](#) to help countries define what “well-managed migration policy” might look like at the national level. The MiGOF was welcomed by IOM member states in the same year. The Migration Governance Indicators (MGI)¹ were developed to assist countries operationalize the MiGOF by using a standard set of approximately 90 indicators which could be applied across six key policy domains.

The MGI is a tool based on policy inputs, which offers insights on policy levers that countries can use to develop their migration governance. The MGI is not intended to function as a measurement of outcomes related to migration policies and institutions. Instead, it operates as an input-based benchmarking framework that offers insights on policy measures that countries can use to strengthen migration governance. The MGI is not meant to rank countries in the assessment of the comprehensiveness of their migration policies, or to identify gaps and areas that could be strengthened. The MGI aims to assist countries while advancing the conversation on migration governance by clarifying what “well-governed migration” might look like in the context of the [Sustainable Development Goal Target 10.7](#), “Facilitate orderly, safe, regular and responsible migration and mobility of people, including through the implementation of planned and well-managed migration policies.”

This country snapshot presents a summary of well-governed areas of the Kingdom of Morocco’s (hereafter referred to as Morocco) migration governance structures, as well as the areas with potential for further development, as assessed by the MGI.

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Key findings

1. Adherence to international standards and fulfilment of migrants' rights

1.1. International conventions ratified

The table below follows a standard format and looks at the ratification of specific international conventions. The list of conventions covered is by no means exhaustive.

Convention	Ratified
International Labour Organization (ILO) Migration for Employment Convention (Revised), 1949 (No. 97)	No
United Nations Convention relating to the Status of Refugees, 1951	Yes (1956)
United Nations Convention relating to the Status of Stateless Persons, 1954	No
United Nations Convention on the Reduction of Statelessness, 1961	No
ILO Migrant Workers (Supplementary Provisions) Convention, 1975 (No. 143)	Yes (2016)
United Nations Convention on the Rights of the child, 1989	Yes (1993)
United Nations International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of all Migrant Workers and Members of their Families, 1990	Yes (1993)

1.2. Migration governance: Examples of well-developed areas

Morocco offers migrants a relatively favourable framework for obtaining long-term resident permits. For the first three years, foreigners have to renew their resident permit every year, but once the three years are over, they can ask for a ten-year permit. On 10 January 2017, the validity of the resident permit was extended to three years as of one year after the migrant's stay in Morocco has been regularized (unless the permit holder has committed a punishable offence). Foreigners who are permanent residents of Morocco can also apply for citizenship after five years, if they are in good health, speak reasonably good Arabic and can prove that they have sufficient means of subsistence. Draft legislation is currently before Parliament to amend the code of nationality with a view to enabling foreign men married to Moroccan women to be naturalized.

There have been two campaigns to regularize irregular migrants. A first exceptional operation in 2014 led to the regularization of 23,096 migrants; subsequently, on 12 December 2016, King Mohammed VI announced the launch of another regularization campaign that ended in December 2017. According to the National Human Rights Council, 26,860 requests for regularization were filed during the second campaign.

In terms of access to public primary, secondary and post-secondary education, migrants holding a resident permit have the same status as Moroccan citizens. Since 2013, a ministerial circular has authorized all child migrants, no matter what their administrative situation, to join the national education system.

Migrant workers have access to public service jobs and may engage in regulated occupations under the same conditions as Moroccans (the only restriction is for the exercise of official authority and safeguarding of the general interests of the State). Since 2014, regularized migrants have not been obliged to obtain the work certificate delivered by the National Agency for the Promotion of Employment and Skills (ANAPEC in French). In addition, the "Taechir" platform, introduced in 2017 to facilitate the process of obtaining work visas, has resulted in the opening of externalized offices to decentralize the process.

In terms of civic participation, Articles 40 and 41 of Law No. 57-11, on general electoral lists, provide for the participation of migrants legally established in Morocco in municipal elections. That practice is in line with the principles set out in Article 30 of Morocco's Constitution, which paved the way for foreigners to vote in municipal elections.

1.3. Areas with potential for further development

Morocco has not ratified the Migration for Employment Convention (Revised), 1949 (No. 97), or either of the conventions on statelessness (1954, 1961).

Migrant labour market participation is limited, partly because of the lack of information shared with potential employers and because migrants and enterprises are unfamiliar with ANAPEC employment assistance services and facilities, which are now available to regularized migrants.

Labour market access is more restricted to the formal private than to the public sector, because the former is subject to the “national preference” system. Indeed, before they can start work, immigrants have to obtain a work permit from ANAPEC and demonstrate that no Moroccan candidate has the skills needed to do the job, except in the case of managerial positions and rare skills.

Access to social security is limited to holders of a resident permit. Foreign workers obtain access through their employers, whereas irregular migrants can receive only emergency treatment and must seek care from civil society organizations. A health insurance system is being set up that will pool the care provided to underprivileged Moroccans who are dependent on the State.

Despite the fact that Section 17 of the 2011 Constitution stipulates that Moroccans living abroad are entitled to vote and to stand in elections, the Moroccan diaspora was unable to participate in the 2016 elections for practical and logistical reasons.

2. Formulates policy using evidence and whole of government approach

2.1. Migration governance: Examples of well-developed areas

Morocco has a series of government structures tasked with formulating and implementing migration policies. The Ministry Delegate to the Minister for Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation, in charge of Moroccans Abroad and Migration Affairs (MDCMREAM in French), is responsible for conceiving and coordinating migration policies, and several ministries participate in the promulgation and implementation of cross-cutting aspects of migration policy (such as the Ministries of the Interior, Employment, Justice, Education, and Foreign Affairs and Cooperation). In addition, the National Human Rights Council is in charge of monitoring the situation of migrants and refugees living in the Kingdom and publishes annual and periodic thematic reports. The Council of the Moroccan Community Abroad is in charge of following up and evaluating the country’s public policies towards its citizens abroad.

The country has a coherent legal framework for migration, based on Law No. 02-03, on the entry and stay of foreigners in the Kingdom of Morocco, on emigration and on irregular immigration. Efforts to revise the law with a view to modernizing it started several years ago. In addition, in December 2014, the Government adopted the first National Immigration and Asylum Strategy, which has 11 priority domains (including education, health, housing, social protection, employment, trafficking in human beings, international cooperation and governance). An earlier strategy on Moroccans living abroad deals with issues relating to the Moroccan diaspora.

Morocco has a clear and transparent set of rules and regulations relating to migration: the list of visa categories is available from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and describes the procedures for obtaining them. It also endeavours to improve horizontal policy coherence, through interministerial coordinating bodies (the ministries concerned are those of the Interior, Foreign Affairs, Youth, Culture, Health, etc.), and to reinforce vertical policy coherence, regularly consulting decentralized governance levels, in particular in the Oriental and Souss-Massa regions. The authorities in fact consider the territorialization of migration policies at the local level to be a major challenge.

2.2. Areas with potential for further development

Data collection is one area in which there is room for improvement. The national census of the population and habitat has included questions on migration for several years, but the information is only occasionally published by the MDCMREAM and the National Human Rights Council. Campaigns to regularize migrants remain the principal source of information on the number of migrants living in the country.

3. Engages with partners to address migration and related issues

3.1. Migration governance: Examples of well-developed areas

Morocco is actively involved in the discussion of migration issues at international level, as a participant in the Global Forum on Migration and Development, of which it was the co-chair, with Germany, during the period 2017–2018. It is a Member State of IOM and has actively participated in a number of IOM-directed initiatives. A platform launched in Morocco in 2006 – the Rabat Process – brings together sixty or so African and European partner countries in order to facilitate political cooperation between the countries concerned by migration routes between Central Africa and Europe, and to promote the development of migration policies.

Morocco plays a prominent role in regional migration governance: since March 2017, it has led on the question of migration for the African Union and participated in the Third Global Consultations of Chairs and Secretariats of Principal Regional Consultative Processes on Migration. In addition, it is engaged in negotiations, discussions and consultations on migration with the European Union (for example, in 2013 it signed a joint declaration with the European Union establishing the Mobility Partnership to better manage regular migration and combat irregular migration).

Morocco has formed several partnerships with civil society organizations on migration-related issues, the most important being the agreement with the Moroccan Red Crescent. The MDCMREAM provides annual subsidies to civil society organizations for the implementation of projects for migrants.

3.2. Areas with potential for further development

Recently, civil society was consulted in connection with the global compact for safe, orderly and regular migration. The Government regularly cooperates with the General Confederation of Moroccan Enterprises on migration matters, but companies could benefit from a more structured application.

4. Advances the socioeconomic well-being of migrants and society

4.1. Migration governance: Examples of well-developed areas

Morocco is a welcoming environment for international students. The number of international students is not subject to a quota and was estimated at 20,121 (from 108 countries) in 2016–2017. International students have access to public higher education establishments, and many sub-Saharan students have received scholarships granted by the Government of Morocco through the Moroccan International Cooperation Agency. The sub-Saharan students account for 54 per cent of residents in university residences.

The Government also actively encourages and formalizes remittances, for example through an investment aid programme launched in 2009 that offers subsidies for projects by Moroccans living abroad.

Morocco has signed formal bilateral agreements on labour contracts with Belgium (1964), France (1987), Germany (1963), Italy (2005), Jordan (1983), Libya (1983), the Netherlands (1969 and 2017), Qatar (1981), Spain (2001 and 2005) and the United Arab Emirates (1981). The MDCMREAM, in partnership with the Ministry of Employment and Vocational Integration and the General Confederation of Moroccan Enterprises, and with IOM support, has published a practical handbook on the recruitment of foreign wage-earners in Morocco and guidelines for the integration of cultural diversity into corporate practice. It has also conducted awareness-raising sessions for labour inspectors, in order to promote the ethical recruitment of migrants to Morocco.

4.2. Areas with potential for further development

The country does not have a system whereby international students can work in Morocco after having obtained their diplomas; post-diploma work permits are issued on a case-by-case basis. Moreover, international students are not authorized by law to work during their studies, although they are authorized to do internships.

The needs of Morocco's economy and migrant skills could be better aligned. Morocco's Higher Planning Commission evaluates the impact of emigration on the national labour market, but no systematic national evaluation is conducted on labour market demand for immigrant workers.

According to the International Labour Organization (ILO), work has been done with the European Training Foundation to build a benchmark qualification system, but Morocco does not participate in any international programmes with shared certification frameworks. There is, however, a system for obtaining recognition of university diplomas (under Decree No. 2-01-333, 2001).

In 2009, the Moroccan Government introduced a financial incentive programme for Moroccans living abroad, with a view to enhancing investment and transfers of funds to Morocco (including remittances by Moroccans abroad). The cost of remittances to Morocco nevertheless remains high.

5. Effectively addresses the mobility dimensions of crises

5.1. Migration governance: Examples of well-developed areas

A number of measures have been introduced to help Moroccan citizens living abroad in time of crisis. Morocco has 91 embassies, 53 general consulates and four permanent missions worldwide. It has methods for repatriating its citizens living abroad who are affected by a crisis, as demonstrated recently with the air bridges and evacuations from Libya in 2011 and 2017. In addition, the MDCMREAM has prepared a draft decree on emergency repatriations that is currently being examined by the authorities. The National Immigration and Asylum Strategy promotes access to humanitarian aid by migrants.

5.2. Areas with potential for further development

The mobility dimensions of crises are not specifically taken into account in Moroccan legislation or operationally. There is no specific strategy for assisting migrants during or after crises, and no emergency plan for managing large-scale population movements during a crisis.

The country does not have a policy for dealing with migration movements caused by the harmful effects of climate change or environmental degradation. What is more, the system for alerting and informing people when a natural or human-induced crisis strikes is relatively new and does not take account of the specific

vulnerabilities of migrants, nor do migrants whose countries of origin are in crisis benefit from any immigration procedure exemptions.

In addition, an interministerial commission has called for improvements to the consular services for Moroccans living outside the country, for example in the form of new training and recruitment in missions abroad; the adoption of an electronic registration system; simplified administrative procedures; a review of the rules relating to the status of migrant; and the launch of a toll-free number for Moroccans living abroad.

6. Ensures that migration takes place in a safe, orderly and regular manner

6.1. Migration governance: Examples of well-developed areas

The Moroccan authorities are currently developing a strategy to facilitate the return of Moroccans living abroad, and several projects have been implemented to that end. For example, the IOM/United Nations Development Programme Joint Migration and Development Initiative, which has received contributions from four agencies (the ILO, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, the United Nations Population Fund and UN Women), worked with 11 communities in Souss-Massa region to introduce orientation offices for retired returning Moroccans. The Sharaka project, which is financed by the European Union, is intended to support authorities and institutions reintegrating returning Moroccans. The MDCMREAM has an economic investment programme to encourage investment in the Kingdom by the diaspora and circular migration. The Council of the Moroccan Community Abroad was established to create initiatives aimed at involving the entire Moroccan diaspora.

The government runs a [website](#) that clearly describes visa options. There is a mixed online/paper system for visas, facilitating access by migrants without Internet access or digital skills. In order to monitor visa overstays, local prefectures, which issue permits, have an electronic database on which migrants applying for permits have to register.

6.2. Areas with potential for further development

Border control is the task of the Ministry of the Interior, which has a dedicated service for migration issues (the Directorate of Migration and Border Control), whereas the Moroccan Auxiliary Forces are in charge of security in the Kingdom's border regions. European Union governments and IOM have engaged in talks to step up the training of Moroccan border personnel. For example, in January 2014, the European Border and Coast Guard Agency (Frontex) and the European Asylum Support Office (EASO) launched a project entitled "Promoting the participation of Jordan in the work of EASO as well as the participation of Tunisia and Morocco in the work of EASO and Frontex", to improve the quality of reception practices at the border.

Although one of the main objectives of the legislation on migration is to combat trafficking in human beings, Morocco does not have an active strategy to that end. Law No. 27-14 of 25 August 2016, on combatting trafficking in human beings, was adopted in 2016, but the committee it provides for has yet to be established. That being said, several related projects are being implemented. In addition, there are no regular publications providing information on anti-trafficking activities.

Key sources

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