

KEY POLICY DEVELOPMENTS IN EDUCATION, TRAINING AND EMPLOYMENT – MOROCCO 2023

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Reports assessing the education system in Morocco all indicate that, while the country is making moderate progress, the education system continues to fail the country's most vulnerable people. World Bank data shows that an average of 64% of Moroccan children aged 10 cannot read or comprehend a simple text.

Although nearly every Moroccan child enrolls in elementary school today, just one-third reach the minimum proficiency level in reading by the time they leave. These challenges persist despite high levels of public funding. In 2021, 16.9% of all government spending went towards education, well above the world (14.8%) and OECD (12.4%) averages.

Prior to the COVID-19 crisis, the skills and labour sector received renewed interest from the highest levels of the government, and practical actions visibly impacted its development. For example, the drop-out rate from education (particularly at primary level) has been in steep decline for almost a decade, while the literacy rate has been increasing, all in a context where the Moroccan economy has been either stable or growing for the same period. However, apart from an increase in the number of children attending school every year, government policies have done little to address the systemic deficiencies in the sector.

The earthquake of 8 September 2023 that affected several provinces in the high Atlas mountains has not only caused considerable human and material losses, but has also exacerbated the socio-economic inequalities that already existed in these vulnerable regions. The government, together with the international donor community are making adjustments to their development programmes in order to provide the specific support that is needed to help elderly people, children, women and those with disabilities.

A new Education Reform Plan for 2022-2026 was presented in November 2022 to address the weaknesses in the education system. The new reform aims to improve governance, boost the level of engagement among the different stakeholders in the reform process, and rethink the sector's funding. It contains 12 specific commitments. In contrast to previous national strategy documents relating to education, this particular roadmap emphasises and insists on the need for 'measurable' change. The main objectives aim at improving educational quality and coverage, but also at increasing extra-curricular activities and doing more to prevent drop-outs.

In 2023, the government continued to roll out employment programmes aiming at ensuring that the economic rebound is harnessed to increase employment rates; this has been done with numerous operational successes, which are described in this document. Another key development includes the drawing up of a draft law to reform the VET sector, especially in the way it is governed and financed.

1. KEY POLITICAL, DEMOGRAPHIC, ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL CHARACTERISTICS

Political developments

Given its good geographical location and comparatively sound infrastructure, Morocco aims to position itself strategically as an economic and financial nexus between Europe and Africa. To this end, the country has initiated a strategic South-South partnership, founded on co-development and closer cooperation with most of its southern and regional neighbours to make the most of its geographical location and its historical relations with its European and Mediterranean trading partners. This includes exchanges among peers and of expertise to address skills development and climate actions (Hekking, 2020).

The party previously in power, the PJD (*Parti pour la justice et du développement*, often compared to a moderate version of the Muslim Brotherhood in the region), lost most of its parliamentary seats in the 2021 general election. The Prime Minister, billionaire businessman Aziz Akhannouch, announced that he would change from the policy of the previous government and put greater focus on reducing poverty. The Economist Intelligence Unit classifies Morocco as a 'hybrid democracy' and its democracy index has been increasing steadily over the last 15 years.

In recent years, Morocco has made considerable efforts to consolidate foreign policy advances. It has rejoined the African Union, signed bilateral agreements with the Gulf Cooperation Council and improved its relations with the European Union in order to obtain 'advanced status'. Morocco was the first country in the region to be granted advanced status, in 2008, making it a pioneer with regard to the European Neighbourhood Policy.

Demographics

Although both fertility and mortality rates in Morocco are continuing to decrease, the population is gradually growing, by approximately half a million people every year. It grew from just over 32 million in 2012 to 37 million in 2021 (HCP, 2021b). The increase in the Moroccan population is projected to continue for over a decade (CERED, 2017).

Age distribution is also changing, with the pre-school and school-age populations projected to decrease and the active population expected to grow until 2050. This implies that the demographic trend in Morocco – like those of its regional neighbours and following on from the 'youth bulge' of the 2000s – is one of an increasingly urban (64.6%), ageing population, which is likely to result in a shift in pressure from the school system towards the labour market and social security systems (Engelhardt-Wölfli et al., 2018). The latter will be particularly affected by the growth of the senior cohort (aged 60+), which is expected to double over the next three decades, rising to 23.2% of the total population in 2050, compared with just 9.4% in 2014. The current share of young Moroccans (15 to 24 years old) in the population is 25%, which is also the SEMED (southern and eastern Mediterranean) average (ETF, 2021a).

Morocco has a long history of emigration, with 8.6% of Moroccans living outside Morocco (ETF, 2021a). Moroccan migrants have historically had low to medium skill levels, but in 2019, over a third of them had a third-level education (HCP, 2021b). For this reason, a possible brain drain is now given more consideration in human capital development policies. The substantial number of outward migrants mostly comprises men seeking employment abroad. Women are more likely to move from rural to urban areas, in most cases as a result of their spouses' departure. The annual number of working migrants has increased continuously, from 53 000 in 2000 to 98 600 in 2019 (UNDESA, 2019). The majority of migrant workers move to the EU (70.7% to France and 24.4% to Spain), but some make their way to the United Arab Emirates (3% – MTIP, 2017). The main driver behind this is work, which accounted for 47.4% of migrants in 2019 (ETF, 2021a).

Key economic developments

Global shocks together with drought slowed the Moroccan economy in 2022, and inflation increased substantially (8% in the third quarter of 2022 – HCP, 2022). In 2023, inflation has halved between February and August 2023, but food inflation remains high (1.8%) and continues to affect poorer households (World Bank 2023).

After a 6.3% contraction in growth in 2020, the economy posted a 7.4% growth in real GDP during 2021, boosted by an agricultural rebound following abundant rainfall. (World Bank, 2022).

According to the World Bank's economic monitor (November 2023), the economy has suffered from a serious deceleration in 2022, caused by various overlapping commodity and climate shocks with a real GDP of 1.1% in 2022 compared to 7.9% in 2021. Economic growth is set to increase to 2.8% in 2023, thanks to a partial recovery of the agriculture, services and net exports. This recovery is expected to continue in the medium term, and real GDP growth is projected to reach 3.1% in 2024, 3.3% in 2025, and 3.5% in 2026 (World Bank 2023). This is evidence that Morocco has the capacity to respond effectively to shocks, also proven by how they recovered from the Covid-19 pandemic in 2020 and from the earthquake in 2023.

SMEs make up 99.7% of Moroccan businesses, create 37.8% of the added value, and represent 73.7% of declared employment, according to the 2021 yearly report by *l'Observatoire Marocain de la TPME* (OMTPME, 2021).

The reforms identified in the SME Policy Index (OECD/EU/ETF, 2018) suggest that Morocco could inspire other economies in the region to improve their policies towards SMEs. For example, since 2002 it has had an operational SME law (*Charte de la petite et moyenne entreprise*), which determines the most important policy principles, including the establishment and responsibilities of an SME agency, the recognition of associations for the support of SMEs at local, regional and national levels, and support for mechanisms. However, many challenges remain, such as reliance on low value-added activities, the informal economy, under-employment and unemployment. The assessment also observes that regional development efforts need to be strengthened with regard to creating conditions in which entrepreneurs can prosper.

Morocco has the most stable investment climate and diversified economy in the region. In 2019, 57% of the value added was produced by the services sector, which is a major contributor to the economy. Tourism accounted for 12% of GDP and 12.9% of total employment, according to the World Travel & Tourism Council, and has been a major source of growth. It is currently unclear whether this sector can fully recover from the pandemic (AfDB, 2021).

Foreign direct investment remains strong and is more and more directed towards the manufacturing sector. The creation of modern industrial niches that are well connected to global value chains has made it possible for the country to maintain its access to international capital markets, and this despite the ongoing tightening of global financial conditions (World Bank 2023).

Based on the enterprise survey of 2020, small, medium and large businesses have identified the following three main obstacles as hindering factors in doing business: corruption, tax rates and tax administration (World Bank, 2020). A continued investment in optimising the business environment remains a priority for the government in order for businesses to grow and to remain competitive. The government initiated the rollout of the economic roadmap announced by King Mohammed VI in July 2020.

In February 2021, the government reformed laws to strengthen social protection and public health outreach to the entire population, and established the Mohammed VI Fund, which supports these services and SMEs through public-private partnerships (PPPs).

An ILO publication (2018), which is the only source of statistics for the informal economy in Morocco and is based on 2017 data, claims that almost 80% of employment is in the informal economy.

The economy depends on sectors – agriculture, fisheries and tourism – that are highly sensitive to climate change. Morocco is a water-scarce country with agriculture consuming around 80% of its

water resources, as most land is in arid and semi-arid areas. The Green Generation Strategy 2020-2030 aims to increase agricultural resilience to climate change, including through skills development.

In May 2021, a New Development Model was unveiled, prioritising the following: (i) structural reforms to boost competitiveness and private sector development; (ii) improving the quality of education and health services to boost human capital; (iii) accelerating the decentralisation process; and (iv) preserving natural resources. Notably, it aims to double GDP in 12 years and includes the targets of doubling the number of women in employment (from 22% in 2019) and increasing the percentage of 15-year-old students who have basic reading, mathematics and science skills, from 27% to 75% by 2035.

1 January 2021, marked the launch of the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA), a free trade agreement that includes 54 African countries and aims to accelerate economic integration and expand intra-continental trade.

Morocco is the second-largest recipient of remittances among developing countries in the region. Despite the concentration of Moroccan expatriates in Europe, the United States leads the list of countries from which remittances are sent (14%), followed by Saudi Arabia (12%) and France (10%) (KNOMAD, 2021).

Key social issues

Prior to the COVID-19 crisis, the skills and labour sector received renewed interest from the highest levels of government, and practical actions visibly impacted on its development. For example, the drop-out rate from education (particularly at primary level) has been in steep decline for almost a decade and the literacy rate has been increasing, both over a period when the Moroccan economy has been either stable or in growth.

Monetary poverty at the national level has decreased significantly, from 14.2% in 2004, to 4.8% in 2014, and again to 1.7% in 2020. Due to the disastrous effects of the earthquake in September 2023, the poverty levels in the six effected provinces have increased, varying considerably from province to province. Over the entire area affected by the earthquake, the average poverty rate reaches 18.5%, which is significantly higher than Morocco's national rate. Similarly, the average vulnerability rate for the disaster area is 21.5%, also exceeding the national rate of 12.6%. The provinces effected by the earthquake (Azilal, Al Haouz, Chichaoua, Marrakech, Taroudannt and Ouarzazate) are in a more precarious socio-economic situation compared to the national average. Necessary support measures are put in place that specifically target the most vulnerable people (HCP, 2023). People with disabilities, who represent 6.8% of the Moroccan population (2.3 million), fall within the most vulnerable groups in the country (MSFFDS, 2014), particularly affected in the time of crisis. It is estimated that two thirds of disabled people do not have access to any social protection and, of those who do, a large majority are affiliated to RAMED (Moroccan Medical Assistance Scheme for the most vulnerable families) (MEFRA, 2020).

Social inequality (measured through the Gini index) saw a decrease of one point between 2014 and 2020 (39.5 to 38.5 at national level and 317 to 30.2 in rural areas) (HCP, 2020b).

Although the country's score on the Human Development Index (HDI) rose from 0.608 in 2009 to 0.686 in 2019, Morocco was ranked 121st out of 189 countries and territories, thus positioning the country in the medium development category. Morocco's score on the Gender Inequality Index was 0.454, ranking it 111th out of 162 countries. Only 18.4% of parliamentary seats are held by women, and only 21% of women are active in the labour market, compared to 70% of Moroccan men (Bertelsmann Stiftung, 2022).

2. EDUCATION AND TRAINING

2.1 Trends and challenges

Education strategy and legal framework for education

The most recent overarching national strategy addition is the very ambitious 'New Development Model', which complements the previous set of national strategies and policies and aims at elevating Morocco into the top third of the various global rankings by 2035 and strengthening its ambition to be a regional role model. Objectives include doubling per capita GDP by 2035, ensuring that more than 90% of pupils master elementary skills and competencies by the end of primary school, double the share of formal jobs in the total number of jobs, boosting the participation rate of women from 22% in 2019 up to 45%, and achieving a satisfaction rate of over 80% among citizens with respect to the administration and public services.

Moreover, the Ministry of Education has launched an ambitious reform programme to improve the sector's overall performance, in line with the Education Sector Vision 2015-2030, which lays the ground for a 'new Moroccan school'. The 2015-2030 reform of the education sector has set as objectives more equitable access to education across the nation, focusing on the inclusion of girls, and equal opportunities to raise the level of education in the country.

The corresponding 2022-2026 roadmap covers three areas of interest and lists 12 specific commitments. It aims at improving governance, boosting the level of engagement of the different stakeholders in the reform process, and rethinking the sector's funding.

In April 2022, the Minister for Education presented yet another roadmap entitled 'Quality Education for All', to further reform the sector. In the field of tertiary education, 2022 also saw the start of the implementation of the '*Plan d'accélération de la transformation de l'écosystème de l'enseignement supérieur, de la recherche scientifique et de l'innovation* (Pacte ESRI 2030)'.

The EU funded programme, PIAFE: "*Programme Intégré d'Appui à la Formation et à l'Education*", providing a total of EUR 150 million, aims at reforming the education and training system by putting the learner at the centre of the reforms. The programme is in its full implementation phase and will run until 2026.

During the reporting period, an EIB loan of EUR 102.5 million was committed to help finance the construction and fitting out of 150 community schools in several Regional Education and Training Academies. This operation has a budget of EUR 23.3 million, financed by the EU, including an investment grant of EUR 14 million and technical assistance of EUR 9.3 million to support the project's implementation.

Education expenditure

The education expenditure as a percentage of GDP has continuously increased over the last few years for which data is available (4.6% in 2015, 5.9% in 2019 and 6.8% in 2020). When measured as a percentage of total public expenditure, the latest figures are 15.5% in 2019, 14.8% in 2020 and 16.9% in 2021 (World Bank World Development Indicators database).

Access, participation and early school leaving

Since 2018, Morocco has been implementing a large-scale programme to broaden access to quality pre-school education. In just a few years, the country has significantly increased the pre-school enrolment rate, from 50.89% in 2018 to 59.87% in 2021. During that period, 13 594 new pre-school classrooms were created throughout the country (UNESCO, 2022).

Net secondary school enrolment has been increasing for over a decade. From a rate of 50% in 2010, it reached 68.5% in 2020, and is slightly higher for girls, at 69.3%. Similarly, the tertiary education enrolment rate has continuously increased since the early 2000s (UNESCO, 2021).

According to data released by the World Bank, an average of 70% of children under the age of 10 are unable to read a simple text in the North Africa and Middle East region. In Morocco, despite the commendable advances mentioned above, the average stands at 64.9% (World Bank, 2022).

The Higher Council for Education, Training, and Scientific Research (CSEFRS) published alarming figures exposing the rate of school dropouts in Morocco. 431 876 students dropped out of public schools in 2018 without obtaining a school certificate. This number represents 78% of students who had studied at primary and lower-secondary schools, where children should remain until the age of 15 at least (CSEFRS, 2019). The report does not differentiate between VET paths.

PISA results

The PISA test reveals insights into how well education systems are preparing students for real life challenges and future success. PISA 2018, implemented in Morocco, indicates that in reading, 15-year-olds in Morocco score 359 points compared to an average of 487 points in OECD countries. On average, 15-year-olds score 368 points in mathematics compared to an average of 489 points in OECD countries. The average performance in science was 377 points, compared to an average of 489 points in OECD countries. The average difference between advantaged and disadvantaged students in reading is 51 points, compared to an average of 89 in OECD countries. However, 13% of disadvantaged students are academically resilient, compared to the OECD average of 11% (OECD, 2018).

Morocco participated in PISA 2022 and results for Morocco were released on 5 December 2023 (available at [Morocco | Factsheets | OECD PISA 2022 results](#)). For mathematics, the results are quite similar to those from 2018, however for reading and science the results are lower than in 2018. There is a positive trend regarding the expansion of secondary education towards previously marginalised populations. This suggests that secondary school enrolment has increased, and it may explain the results that show a decline in reading and science, due to the integration of the 15-year-olds from marginalised populations, while the results for the more-advantaged students remained stable.

Young people not in employment, education or training (NEET)

The latest available data on the proportion of people aged 15–24 not in employment, education or training (NEET) refers to 2020 and should therefore be interpreted with caution, as this was the year of the pandemic-related lockdown. That year, the national rate of people not in employment, education or training was 26.6%. Disaggregated by gender, the rate was 39.7% for women and 13.9% for men. Although these figures are some of the highest in the world, the rate has been steadily decreasing annually since 2015.

2.2 Initial VET and adult learning

Strategic and legal framework for initial VET and adult learning

Government policy is contextualised in the Strategic Vision for Reform 2015-2030, with its four major objectives: equity and equality of opportunities, quality for all, promotion of the individual and society, and efficient leadership and renewed attainment of change.

The main focuses of the Strategic Vision for Reform 2015-2030 (i.e. integration and consolidation of the VET centre network) have been translated into the Framework Law on Education, Training and Scientific Research (Framework Law No 51-17) adopted in 2019. This law safeguards the integrity of the Strategic Vision from political and institutional risks, constitutes a national pact that is binding for all parties, and provides a legal basis for further development and implementation. This was then further supplemented by the roadmap dedicated to improving VET.

As explained above, the most recent overarching national strategy addition is the very ambitious 'New Development Model', which complements the previous policy corpus and aims to elevate Morocco to the top third of the various global rankings by 2035, enabling it to further strengthen its ambition to be a regional role model. Objectives include doubling per capita GDP by 2035, ensuring that more than 90% of pupils master elementary skills and competencies by the end of primary school, bringing the informal employment rate down to 20%, boosting the participation rate of women from 22% in 2019 up to 45%, and achieving a satisfaction rate of over 80% among citizens with respect to administration and public services.

In terms of performance review, the Strategic Vision for Reform 2015-2030 has led to the development of a national assessment framework to be utilised regularly to record progress related to the reform's objectives. This is now being followed up by evaluations at regional level (CSEFRS, 2021a). For this purpose, the Education Council, which is responsible for monitoring the reform, has drawn up a 'regional index for education development'. The composite index brings together 157 indicators organised into three dimensions corresponding to the reform's objectives, i.e. equity, quality and promotion.

The Strategy on Vocational Education and Training for 2021 (Stratégie Nationale de la Formation Professionnelle) brings together all partners to a shared and modern vision of skills development, centred on employability, more efficient governance, and use of resources.

The VET Strategy 2021 aims at continuously increasing the number of VET graduates (public, private, youth and adults included) and the quality of their learning, with a target of reaching over 2 million graduates per year, compared to just over half a million in 2015. At the time of drafting this document, it was not yet possible to confirm whether this milestone has been achieved, due to lack of data.

VET governance and financing arrangements

As of 2020, there were over 2 000 VET centres in the country; almost a quarter are in Casablanca and 72% are operated by the private sector (this proportion has been increasing for a number of years). The share of VET students in secondary education has consistently increased over the past decade. In the 2019-2020 academic year, nearly 400 000 learners attended VET courses throughout the country (DFP, 2020). This represents 15% of secondary level students and is therefore still comparatively low. The figure was just over 300 000 in 2015 (DFP, 2015).

Public VET is mainly funded by the private sector, corresponding to 1.6% of its salary expenditure, which amounts to over MAD 2.4 billion per year (equivalent to EUR 218 million). These resources are collected by the CNSS (*Caisse Nationale de Sécurité Sociale*). This amount is mostly spent on initial training, with 30% going towards adult education.

As mentioned previously, one of the objectives of the 2021 VET strategy is to increase efficiency in governance. As a result, the government has launched a new programme with the development of new, decentralised "Cités des Métiers et des Compétences" (CMC) in each of the 12 regions. The CMCs are expected to represent a major change in how training services are offered and will be implemented through institutions that are multifunctional and cover the priority sector of each specific region. The centres will be driven by partnerships with local businesses and local or regional public bodies. At the time of writing, three CMCs have been established, eight centres are under construction and work is due to start on one other.

Qualifications, validation and recognition

Morocco's National Qualifications Framework (NQF) is comprehensive, covering all types of education and training qualifications, and is structured in eight levels. It features elements of a modern qualification system, including outcome approaches, while systematic quality assurance measures are established. The 2019 Education Law refers to the NQF, which is also included in various pieces of education and training legislation.

Although there is awareness among stakeholders, economic sectors and education providers, the NQF is not yet fully operational. In order to make it operational, the NQF would need to be populated

with qualifications under the responsibilities of different bodies into a national database of qualifications, linking all qualifications and making them more accessible and understandable.

The NQF Steering Committee and the NQF Permanent Committee were entrusted with strategic guidance and coordination for NQF implementation respectively. The daily management and the governance and coordination of the qualifications system should also be strengthened. This is particularly important considering that the responsibilities for compulsory education, higher education, vocational training and adult learning are spread throughout different ministries. In conclusion, Morocco's NQF is still at the adoption stage and has not moved to the activation stage.

In order to support lifelong learning, initiatives to validate non-formal and informal learning, and a credit system, should be reinforced.

Quality and quality assurance

Both higher education institutions and their programmes must obtain official approval, although the process differs slightly between public and private institutions. The National Agency for Evaluation and Quality Assurance of Higher Education and Scientific Research (*Agence Nationale d'Évaluation et d'Assurance Qualité de l'Enseignement Supérieur et de la Recherche Scientifique*, <https://www.aneaq.ma>) is responsible for the accreditation process. The ANEAQ evaluates applications to create new public and private universities and other higher education institutions, as well as applications for the accreditation of academic programmes. It issues [summary reports](#), which inform the accreditation deliberations of the National Commission for Higher Education and Coordination (*Commission Nationale de Coordination de l'Enseignement Supérieur*, [CNCES](#)), a regulatory body composed of both public- and private-sector stakeholders. On the basis of CNCES's recommendation, the Ministry for Higher Education, Scientific Research and Innovation (ENSSUP) publishes final accreditation and authorisation decisions in official ministerial notes.

The ANEAQ assesses academic programmes on the basis of [national teaching standards](#) established for different fields and qualifications. Programmes meeting these standards are granted accreditation for 5 years (Sanga, 2022).

The Ministry's Department for Vocational Training has sole responsibility for quality assurance of the training system, from designing quality assurance measures to implementing them in close collaboration with all concerned stakeholders. The education roadmap and the Framework Law on Education provide for the establishment of a strengthened quality assurance system with procedures that will be set out in the implementing legislation currently being drawn up. Moreover, training programmes are being developed using a competence-based approach.

At vocational training institutions, quality assurance is conducted using a range of mechanisms:

ISO certification of the management processes of certain establishments falls under the responsibility of the *Office de la formation professionnelle et de la promotion du travail* (OFPPT). A self-assessment system was established by the Department for Vocational Training in 2019. This covers a range of areas of assessment to help decision-makers at schools take corrective measures based on regular performance updates. The system is gradually being rolled out to all VET centres throughout the country. Since 2019, the National Qualifications Framework has been checking the quality of qualifications through the governance and operationalisation bodies. The qualifications forming part of the National Qualifications Framework are subject to a predefined quality assurance process. Nevertheless, the quality of learning in public schools has been deteriorating for years, with private establishments continuously increasing their share of the market (World Bank, 2022). The new strategy provides for various measures to address this inequality. For example, starting from September 2022, candidates for primary and secondary school teachers' posts must have at least a bachelor's degree and have completed a 1-year 'specialisation' training course. This is to ensure the quality of teachers' training and commitment.

Work-based learning arrangements

VET is offering three modalities of training: residential training, apprenticeship vocational training, and dual training:

- Residential training (*formation résidentielle*): delivered in both public and private institutions and includes an internship period as part of the training. The internship training is for one to two months during the year. This is the principal mode of training in terms of the total number of trainees enrolled.
- Apprenticeship vocational training (*formation par apprentissage*): an apprenticeship-based training programme where students/trainees typically spend four-fifths or 80 percent of their training in a company or on work placement (practical training). The remainder of the time is spent in training at a vocational training centre, where students learn the theory and concepts needed for their training.
- Dual training (*formation alternée*): involves spending 50 percent of the training time in a company and at least a third of the training time at a vocational training institute.

Appropriate laws and administrative frameworks provide for national, regional and local governance arrangements required to optimise work-based learning (WBL) experiences and secure their benefits. These frameworks demonstrate government leadership and can provide mechanisms to engage social partners, workplaces, and students and their parents. They can also be used to establish and support working relations to allow VET institutions to engage with the local community (e.g. advisory committees) and to provide relevant technical vocational education and training (TVET), including accessible and productive work-based learning (WBL) arrangements (UNESCO, 2021).

However, despite these commendable institutional achievements, in practice, apprenticeships still lag behind in terms of uptake. For example, of the 191 122 public VET students who graduated in 2019, only 22 072 had served an apprenticeship. Morocco spends little on WBL compared to OECD averages; moreover, WBL in Morocco includes both WBL and sandwich courses¹, and each path is governed by a different law and set of by-laws (Law 12.00 and Law 36.90 respectively – GIZ, 2020). This split hinders harmonisation and broad reform efforts. Furthermore, WBL is mostly funded by the state, whereas sandwich courses are mostly funded through the tax levy (1.6% from total salaries). In both cases, the OFPPT manages the funds and the implementation, with transparency and coordination having been questioned. Finally, the legal texts exempt three sectors from contributing to the tax levy (agriculture, crafts and mining). These sectors employ a sizeable proportion of the labour force and mainly produce exports. Other hindering factors relate to insufficient private-sector engagement and limited career guidance.

Digital education and skills

Morocco's internet penetration rate stood at 84.1% of the total population at the start of 2022. In other words, these figures reveal that 5.96 million people in Morocco did not use the internet at the start of 2022, meaning that 15.9% of the population remained offline at the beginning of the year.

Maroc Numeric 2013 and Maroc Digital 2020 are the two comprehensive strategies currently in place that are aiming to strengthen the digital economy in Morocco.

A new digital transition strategy called "Maroc Digital" 2030 has been drafted in 2023 and is undergoing an adoption process. The objective of this strategy is to make digital technology a lever for the socio-economic development of the kingdom, thus meeting the needs of citizens. The strategy addresses several areas, including digital administration, governance, legal framework, data, change management, digital skills and infrastructure. As part of this strategy, the goal is to achieve digital inclusion for a large part of society.

Despite many initiatives (systematically presented by Khalfi, 2021) to integrate digital skills in schools, the domestic evaluation of progress with regard to ICT skills acquisition by students remains poor

¹ A training course with alternate periods of formal instruction and practical experience.

(ILO, 2021), and teachers' professional development has not improved substantially (CSEFRS, 2014). Structural obstacles were identified and addressed within the education and training system, as were the policies that govern the subject. Nearly all universities are adequately equipped, but the cultural barrier related to the perceived roles of learners and teachers, and not making full use of the available tools, have proven to be a major impediment.

Notable interventions include that by ANAPEC (Morocco's National Agency for the Promotion of Employment and Skills), which has developed a digital strategy around web-based, telephone and digital media tools to increase the quality of services and the number of young users. Moreover, MARWAN (the Moroccan wide area network) seeks to interconnect all Moroccan universities and educational establishments. The project is dedicated to education, training and research. Its latest version offers universities access to high-speed internet (between 2 and 100 Mbps), thanks to its connection to the 'GEANT' network, which is reserved for academic traffic.

Statistics on education and training

The *Haut Commissariat au Plan* (High Commission for Planning) is the national statistical office. Its website provides data on most dimensions of the social, work, education and health status of its population. Other reliable national sources include the *Conseil Supérieur de l'Éducation, de la Formation et de la Recherche Scientifique* (CSEFRS), and international sources like UNESCO and the World Bank.

For example, through CSEFRS, as part of the *Programme National d'Évaluation des Acquis* (PNEA_2024), in the second quarter of 2022 the National Council for Education piloted a methodology and assessed the competences of 11 000 students in the first class of secondary school and 14 000 students in the last class of secondary school throughout 700 schools. The objective was to evaluate the educational effects of the newly established management models and whether the ongoing reform was already bearing fruit. The results of the report have been published on the CSEFRS website.

3. LABOUR MARKET AND EMPLOYMENT

3.1 Trends and challenges

Labour market characteristics

Although employee income doubled between 2000 and 2018, new job generation has not been sustained, and inactivity is a continued obstacle to a thriving society. The Moroccan labour market is characterised by three key challenges: lack of inclusion (women and young people are less integrated into the labour market than adult men), slow job growth, and the prevalence of low-quality and low-skilled jobs. Despite the existence of numerous public policies relating to employment, economic growth has not translated into the creation of decent jobs. According to the World Bank, only 129 000 jobs are created annually, while the working-age population is increasing by 300 000 each year (Díaz-Cassou et al., 2021). These historical trends were aggravated by the COVID-19 lockdowns and the current responses are being impeded by the growing inflation this year relating to the Russia-Ukraine conflict.

Moreover, the very diverse employment profile presents significant challenges for labour policy. Morocco's economic structure includes some large, formal firms, along with a range of very different workplaces, including small firms operating partly or fully informally, self-employment, domestic work, and unpaid family work. Over a third of the employed labour force is engaged in agriculture. This context is challenging for labour-policy makers since diverse rules and institutions would be needed to reflect the range of realities (Lopez-Acevedo, 2021).

At the end of 2022, the unemployment rate had decreased slightly to 11.4% nationally, from 12.3% in 2021. It also fell by 1 percentage point in urban areas (down to 15%) and remained at 5.2% in rural settings. An increase in the employment rate for women (17.8% at the end of 2022) and for youths between 15 and 24 years old (31.7%) were some of the positive developments this year. However, 2022 also recorded a decrease in the graduate employment rate (now 17.7%) (HCPa, 2022).

Statistics on and labour market and employment

The ETF observes that much more information has recently been made available on the *Haut Commissariat au Plan* (the national statistics office) website, including statistics from the previous year. This is a significant improvement.

After a slow launch of activities, the National Labour Market Observatory is now fully operational, with a multidisciplinary team of 25 staff, a dedicated budget and its own premises. It is contributing to the ongoing construction of an integrated observation system for the labour market, with a network of observatories at central, sectoral and regional levels. The observatory publishes regular reports on the labour market, themed monthly newsletters, bulletins and technical papers. The online content has continually increased, and the platform is now the main source of employment data and analysis for Morocco.

The EU PIAFE (Integrated Programme for Supporting Training and Education) cooperation programme includes a substantial technical assistance component. One of its ongoing activities is to support the Ministry of Economic Inclusion, Small Business, Employment and Skills in strengthening its data management capability and establishing an information management system that makes it possible to track learners and graduates and their integration into the labour market.

3.2 Employment policy and institutional settings

Strategy and legal framework in the employment policy field

The National Employment Strategy aims to create at least 200 000 jobs per year between 2015 and 2025, with an emphasis on young people and women. It was developed by the Ministry of Economic Inclusion, Small Business, Employment and Skills and was adopted by the government in 2015.

The National Employment Strategy was reviewed in 2021 and now includes a government programme and a national action plan, which both run until 2026 and will be reviewed in 2025. The current version proposes making progress on human capital development (including increasing WBL and language skills), labour market governance, job creation and improving activation programmes.

The Strategy's programme had achieved 55% of its objectives by 2020 (with over 200 000 jobs having been created) before the COVID-19 pandemic disrupted all planned actions. However, the lack of a performance-based evaluation system makes it difficult to assess effectiveness over time (ONMT, 2020). In 2022 for example, 133 000 new jobs were created – a gain of 285 000 jobs in urban areas and a loss of 152 000 in rural areas.

Initiatives to boost employment

Over the last three decades, an increasing number of initiatives have been rolled out to boost employment in Morocco, primarily to address the country's inability to deploy its labour force in a growing economy. However there have been only a limited number of evaluations of these policies and measures. Despite Morocco introducing the principles of public policy evaluation into its constitution in 2011, institutional progress has not been translated into the establishment of a systematic assessment ecosystem (Chatri and Ragbi, 2021).

The current policy landscape for this sector is composed of the following strategies:

The National Employment Strategy promotes decent employment through growth and productive and quality jobs, increasing the participation of young people and women in the labour market and strengthening equality in employment, alongside access to jobs and the reduction of employment disparities between different areas of the country. It targets all economic players in a broad approach that considers the economy, while also considering finances and institutional capacity-building.

The corresponding action plan for 2021 supports job creation in diverse ways, such as tax exemptions for investors if they recruit local youth, public investments being screened for their labour market impact before approval, skill-forecasting mechanisms being strengthened, and support for self-employment and civil society organisations. The action plan also aims at improving the skills match on the labour market by deploying specific VET training modules on self-employment and on navigating the labour market, increasing foreign language learning and WBL, and training at least 50 000 new VET graduates in the 2021-2022 academic year. The action plan also foresees the strengthening of active labour market policies. For example, the Ministry of Economic Inclusion, Small Business, Employment and Skills is establishing a 'skills passport' to support young graduates in acquiring all required skills and to speed up their transition to work. It also foresees the establishment of a number of WBL methods to ensure that all population segments can benefit from it, particularly NEETs. This is in addition to investments aimed at supporting entrepreneurial skills and start-ups. With regard to improving labour market efficiency, actions include improving the legislation governing the right to strike, social protection of employees and labour inspections. It is also taking measures to simplify employment contract termination and is studying legal change requirements to ensure that Morocco can benefit from new forms of work (e.g. platform work).

In 2022, as part of the 2021-2026 government programme, Prime Minister Aziz Akhannouch launched another new economic programme entitled 'Awrach'. It created 104 000 jobs by end of 2023. The programme is led through a strategic committee that is chaired by the prime minister himself. The plan is provided with a financial contribution of MAD 2.5 billion and aims to gradually restore employment

following the lockdown-related economic downturn. The other programme, entitled 'Forsa', aims to support youth entry into the labour market through individual support and entrepreneurial training.

In order to initiate the development of a new strategic framework for economic inclusion and employment that is in line with the 2021-2026 government programme, the government has partnered with the ILO to review recent progress (mid-term evaluation) of the employment strategy (SNE) as well as the national plan to promote employment (PNPE). The findings are expected during 2023.

A new EU assistance package of EUR 624 million was launched in March 2023. It aims to support Morocco's transition to green energy, enhance cooperation on addressing irregular migration management and support Morocco's ambitious reform plans in key areas such as social protection, climate policy, reform of the public administration and the judiciary systems.

One of the programmes is "Terre Verte" (EUR 115 million), which will support Morocco in the green transition as well as improving decent employment, 'green' entrepreneurship, and the social security coverage of workers.

With regard to international cooperation, the bulk of the support programmes are designed and implemented with the OFPPT (public VET provider) and the National Agency for the Promotion of Employment and Competencies (ANAPEC), which mediates between employers and jobseekers (Deau, 2021). In 2022, a significant reorganisation of ANAPEC was approved by its line ministry.

ANAPEC is an active public service intermediary in the labour market and at the present time mainly implements several active labour market policies (ALMPs): the Taehil programme aims to increase employability through training; the Idmaj programme supports the transition of young people from school to work through placements in companies; the Ana Moukawil programme supports self-employment through the creation of micro and small enterprises; and the Tahfiz programme aims to promote employment through incentives to enterprises and newly created associations.

The establishment of the Professional Sector Observatory in October 2017, funded mainly by the VET tax, has been an opportunity to foster collaboration with the private sector. It largely operates as a sector-specific skills council and helps identify skills needs in priority economic sectors, with a focus on local needs. Since its founding, dozens of initiatives have been deployed each year, with the observatory supporting skills sectors through methodological tools and technical assistance in reviewing trends in skills requirements in their respective sectors.

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Morocco: Statistical Annex

The Annex includes annual data from 2010, 2015, 2019, 2020, 2021 and 2022 or the last available year.

	Indicator	2010	2015	2019	2020	2021	2022	
1	Total Population (in thousands) ⁽¹⁾	32464.9	34680.5	36304.4	36688.8	37076.6	37458.0	
2	Relative size of youth population (age group 15-24 and denominator age 15-64, %) ^{(1)c}	29.5	26.5	24.6	24.4	24.2	24.1	
3	GDP growth rate (%)	3.5	4.3	2.9	-7.2	7.9	1.1	
4	Gross value added by sector (%)	Agriculture	12.0	11.8	10.8	10.7	12.0	10.7
		Industry	23.7	25.6	25.2	26.0	26.1	27.2
		Services	47.2	52.2	53.5	53.2	51.6	52.3
5	Public expenditure on education (as % of GDP)	M.D.	4.6	5.9	6.8	M.D.	M.D.	
6	Public expenditure on education (as % of total public expenditure)	M.D.	M.D. ⁽²⁾	15.5	14.8	16.9	M.D.	
7	Adult Literacy (%) ^c	M.D.	75.6 ⁽³⁾	73.8 ⁽⁴⁾	M.D.	75.9	M.D.	
8	Educational attainment of total population (aged 15+) (%)	Low	M.D.	M.D.	M.D.	M.D.	M.D.	
		Medium	M.D.	M.D.	M.D.	M.D.	M.D.	
		High	M.D.	M.D.	M.D.	M.D.	M.D.	
9	Early leavers from education and training (aged 18-24) (%)	Total	M.D.	M.D.	M.D.	M.D.	M.D.	
		Male	M.D.	M.D.	M.D.	M.D.	M.D.	
		Female	M.D.	M.D.	M.D.	M.D.	M.D.	
10	Net enrolment rates in secondary education (ISCED level 2-3) (%)	M.D.	M.D.	66.2	68.5	71.4	M.D.	
11	Proportion of VET students in upper secondary education (ISCED level 3) (%)	12.2	M.D.	16.0	15.1	11.3	M.D.	
12	Low achievement in reading, mathematics and science – PISA (%)	Reading	N.A.	N.A.	73.3 ⁽⁴⁾	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.
		Mathematics	N.A.	N.A.	75.6 ⁽⁴⁾	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.
		Science	N.A.	N.A.	69.4 ⁽⁴⁾	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.
13	Activity rate (aged 15+) (%)	Total	49.6	47.4	45.8	44.8	45.3	44.3
		Male	74.7	71.5	71.0	70.4	70.4	69.6

	Indicator		2010	2015	2019	2020	2021	2022
		Female	25.9	24.8	21.5	19.9	20.9	19.8
14	Inactivity rate (aged 15+) (%) ^{(5) C}	Total	50.4	52.6	54.2	55.2	54.7	55.7
		Male	25.3	28.5	29.0	29.6	29.6	30.4
		Female	74.1	75.2	78.5	80.1	79.1	80.2
15	Employment rate (aged 15+) (%)	Total	45.1	42.8	41.6	39.4	39.7	39.1
		Male	68.0	64.8	65.5	62.9	M.D.	M.D.
		Female	23.4	22.2	18.6	16.7	M.D.	M.D.
16	Employment rate by educational attainment (aged 15+) (%) ⁽⁷⁾	Low	47.7	M.D.	M.D.	M.D.	M.D.	M.D.
		Medium	59.6	M.D.	M.D.	M.D.	M.D.	M.D.
		High	69.2	M.D.	M.D.	M.D.	M.D.	M.D.
17	Employment by sector (%)	Agriculture	40.3	39.0	32.5	31.3	31.2	29.3
		Industry	22.1	20.6	22.5	22.9	22.9	23.2
		Services	37.5	40.4	44.9	45.7	45.8	47.4
18	Incidence of self-employment (%) ^{(5) C}		53.8	51.0	47.3	46.6	48.1	47.4 ⁽⁸⁾
19	Incidence of vulnerable employment (%) ^{(5) C}		51.0	48.8	44.9	44.6	43.7	M.D.
20	Unemployment rate (aged 15+) (%)	Total	9.1	9.7	9.2	11.9	12.3	11.8
		Male	8.9	9.4	7.8	10.7	10.9	10.3
		Female	9.6	10.5	13.5	16.2	16.8	17.2
21	Unemployment rate by educational attainment (aged 15+) (%) ⁽⁷⁾	Low	4.5	4.1	3.1	5.6	4.6	4.2
		Medium	16.0	15.6	12.4	15.5	15.9	14.1
		High	18.1	21.2	21.6	23.9	25.9	25.8
22	Unemployment rate (aged 15-24) (%)	Total	17.6	20.8	24.9	31.2	31.8	32.7
		Male	18.1	20.6	22.0	28.0	28.4	28.7
		Female	16.1	21.4	33.4	41.2	41.9	44.4
23	Proportion of people aged 15–24 not in employment, education or training (NEETs) (%) ^{(5) C}	Total	31.4	27.9	26.5	26.6	M.D.	M.D.
		Male	M.D.	11.4	11.6	13.9	M.D.	M.D.
		Female	M.D.	45.1	41.7	39.7	M.D.	M.D.
24	Participation in training/lifelong learning (% aged 15+) ⁽⁶⁾	Total	M.D.	1.0	M.D.	M.D.	M.D.	M.D.
		Male	M.D.	1.0	M.D.	M.D.	M.D.	M.D.

	Indicator	2010	2015	2019	2020	2021	2022
	Female	M.D.	0.9	M.D.	M.D.	M.D.	M.D.
25	Human Development Index	0.603	0.654	0.682	0.679	0.683	M.D.

Last update: 11/09/2023

Sources:

Indicators 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7: The World Bank, World Development Indicators database

Indicators 7, 10, 11: UNESCO, Institute for Statistics

Indicators 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21 (2019-2021), 22, 23, 24: Haut Commissariat au Plan

Indicator 12 - OECD PISA 2018 Results (Volume I) Annex B1

Indicator 21 (2010, 2015) – Eurostat

Indicator 25 – UNDP

Notes:

(1) Estimation.

(2) The value depicted in the World Bank Database for 2015 most likely refers to public expenditure on education (as % of GDP), not to public expenditure on education (as % of total public expenditure). It was therefore excluded from the table.

(3) applies to 2014

(4) applies to 2018

(5) ETF calculations on HCP data

(6) Age range differs from 25-64; data refers to the employed population that has benefited from training, organised by the employer, in the previous 12 months.

(7) Low: Sans diplôme; Medium: Ayant un diplôme: Niveau moyen; High: Ayant un diplôme: Niveau supérieur

(8) 2022: sum of HCP categories “auto-emploi” and “emploi non-rémunéré”

Legend:

C = ETF calculations

N.A. = Not Applicable

M.D. = Missing Data

Annex: definitions of Indicators

	Description	Definition
1	Total population ('000)	The total population is estimated as the number of people having their usual residence in a country on 1 January of the respective year. When information on the normally resident population is not available, countries may report legal or registered residents.
2	Relative size of youth population (age group 15–24) (%)	This is the ratio of the youth population (aged 15–24) to the working-age population, usually aged 15–64 (or 15–74 or 15+).
3	GDP growth rate (%)	Annual percentage growth rate of GDP at market prices based on constant local currency. Aggregates are based on constant 2010 U.S. dollars. GDP is the sum of gross value added by all resident producers in the economy plus any product taxes and minus any subsidies not included in the value of the products. It is calculated without making deductions for depreciation of fabricated assets or for depletion and degradation of natural resources.
4	Gross value added by sector (%)	The share of value added from Agriculture, Industry and Services. Agriculture corresponds to ISIC divisions 1–5 and includes forestry, hunting, and fishing, as well as cultivation of crops and livestock production. Value added is the net output of a sector after adding up all outputs and subtracting intermediate inputs. It is calculated without making deductions for depreciation of fabricated assets or depletion and degradation of natural resources. The origin of value added is determined by the International Standard Industrial Classification (ISIC), revision 3 or 4. Industry corresponds to the International Standard Industrial Classification (ISIC) tabulation categories C-F (revision 3) or tabulation categories B-F (revision 4), and includes mining and quarrying (including oil production), manufacturing, construction, and public utilities (electricity, gas, and water). Services correspond to ISIC divisions 50-99 and they include value added in wholesale and retail trade (including hotels and restaurants), transport, and government, financial, professional, and personal services such as education, health care, and real estate services. Also included are imputed bank service charges, import duties, and any statistical discrepancies noted by national compilers as well as discrepancies arising from rescaling.
5	Public expenditure on education (as % of GDP)	Public expenditure on education expressed as a percentage of GDP. Generally, the public sector funds education either by directly bearing the current and capital expenses of educational institutions, or by supporting students and their families with scholarships and public loans, as well as by transferring public subsidies for educational activities to private firms or non-profit organisations (transfer to private households and enterprises). Both types of transactions together are reported as total public expenditure on education.
6	Public expenditure on education (as % of total public expenditure)	Public expenditure on education expressed as a percentage of total public expenditure. Generally, the public sector funds education either by directly bearing the current and capital expenses of educational institutions, or by supporting students and their families with scholarships and public loans as well as by transferring public subsidies for educational activities to private firms or non-profit organisations (transfer to private households and enterprises). Both types of transactions together are reported as total public expenditure on education.
7	Adult literacy (%)	Adult literacy is the percentage of the population aged 15 years and over who can both read and write a short simple statement on his/her everyday life, and understand it. Generally, 'literacy' also encompasses 'numeracy' – the ability to make simple arithmetic calculations.

	Description	Definition
8	Educational attainment of total population (aged 15+) (%)	Educational attainment refers to the highest educational level achieved by individuals expressed as a percentage of all persons in that age group. This is usually measured in terms of the highest educational programme successfully completed, which is typically certified by a recognised qualification. Recognised intermediate qualifications are classified at a lower level than the programme itself.
9	Early leavers from education and training (aged 18-24) (%)	Early leavers from education and training are defined as the percentage of the population aged 18–24 with at best lower secondary education who were not in further education or training during the four weeks preceding the survey. Lower secondary education refers to ISCED 1997 levels 0–2 and 3C short (i.e. programmes lasting under two years) for data up to 2013 and to ISCED 2011 levels 0–2 for data from 2014 onwards.
10	Net enrolment rates in secondary education (ISCED level 2-3) (%)	This indicator covers the enrolments in a given level of education of children/youths belonging to the official age group corresponding to the given level of education.
11	Share of VET students in upper secondary education (ISCED level 3) (%)	The total number of students enrolled in vocational programmes at a given level of education (in this case, upper secondary), expressed as a percentage of the total number of students enrolled in all programmes (vocational and general) at that level.
12	Low achievement in reading, maths and science – PISA (%)	Low achievers are the 15-year-olds who fail to reach level 2 on the PISA scale for reading, mathematics and science.
13	Activity rate (aged 15+) (%)	The activity rate is calculated by dividing the active population by the population of the same age group. The active population (also called 'labour force') is defined as the sum of employed and unemployed people. The inactive population consists of all people who are classified as neither employed nor unemployed.
14	Inactivity rate (aged 15+) (%) (5) c	The inactivity/out of the labour force rate is calculated by dividing the inactive population by the population of the same age group. The inactive population consists of all people who are classified as neither employed nor unemployed.
15	Employment rate (aged 15+) (%)	The employment rate is calculated by dividing the number of employed people by the population of the same age group. Employed people are all people who worked at least one hour for pay or profit during the reference period or were temporarily absent from such work. If a different age group is used, this should be indicated.
16	Employment rate by educational attainment (aged 15+) (%)	The employment rate is calculated by dividing the number of employed persons by the population of the same age group. Employed persons are all persons who worked at least one hour for pay or profit during the reference period or were temporarily absent from such work. If a different age group is used, this should be indicated. Educational levels refer to the highest educational level successfully completed. Three levels are considered: Low (ISCED level 0–2), Medium (ISCED level 3–4) and High (ISCED 1997 level 5–6, and ISCED 2011 level 5–8).
17	Employment by sector (%)	This indicator provides information on the relative importance of different economic activities with regard to employment. Data are presented by broad branches of economic activity (i.e. Agriculture/Industry/Services) based on the International Standard Industrial Classification of All Economic Activities (ISIC). In Europe, the NACE classification is consistent with ISIC.
18	Incidence of self-employment (%)	The incidence of self-employment is expressed by the self-employed (i.e. employers + own-account workers + contributing family workers) as a proportion of the total employed.

	Description	Definition
19	Incidence of vulnerable employment (%)	The incidence of vulnerable employment is expressed by the own-account workers and contributing family workers as a proportion of the total employed.
20	Unemployment rate (aged 15+) (%)	The unemployment rate represents unemployed people as a percentage of the labour force. The labour force is the total number of people who are employed or unemployed. Unemployed people comprise those aged 15–64 or 15+ who were without work during the reference week; are currently available for work (were available for paid employment or self-employment before the end of the two weeks following the reference week); are actively seeking work, i.e. had taken specific steps in the four-week period ending with the reference week to seek paid employment or self-employment, or had found a job to start later (within a period of, at most, three months).
21	Unemployment rate by educational attainment (aged 15+) (%)	The unemployment rate represents unemployed people as a percentage of the labour force. The labour force is the total number of people who are employed or unemployed. Unemployed people comprise those aged 15–64 or 15+ who were without work during the reference week; are currently available for work (were available for paid employment or self-employment before the end of the two weeks following the reference week); are actively seeking work (had taken specific steps in the four-week period ending with the reference week to seek paid employment or self-employment, or had found a job to start later (within a period of, at most, three months)). Educational levels refer to the highest educational level successfully completed. Three levels are considered: low (ISCED level 0–2), medium (ISCED level 3–4) and high (ISCED 1997 level 5–6, and ISCED 2011 level 5–8).
22	Unemployment rate (aged 15–24) (%)	The unemployment rate represents unemployed people as a percentage of the labour force. The labour force is the total number of people who are employed or unemployed. Unemployed people comprise those aged 15–24 who were without work during the reference week; are currently available for work (were available for paid employment or self-employment before the end of the two weeks following the reference week); are actively seeking work, i.e. had taken specific steps in the four-week period ending with the reference week to seek paid employment or self-employment, or had found a job to start later (within a period of, at most, three months).
23	Proportion of people aged 15–24 not in employment, education or training (NEETs) (%) (5) C	The indicator provides information on young people aged 15–24 who meet the following two conditions: first, they are not employed (i.e. unemployed or inactive according to the ILO definition); and second, they have not received any education or training in the four weeks preceding the survey. Data are expressed as a percentage of the total population of the same age group and gender, excluding the respondents who have not answered the question on participation in education and training.
24	Participation in training/lifelong learning (% aged 15+) (6)	Participants in lifelong learning refers to persons aged 25–64 who stated that they received education or training in the four weeks preceding the survey (numerator). The denominator is the total population of the same age group, excluding those who did not answer the question on participation in education and training. The information collected relates to all education or training, whether or not it is relevant to the respondent's current or possible future job. If a different reference period is used, this should be indicated.
25	Human Development Index	The index is a summary measure of average achievement in key dimensions of human development: a long and healthy life, being knowledgeable and have a decent standard of living.

KEY DONOR PROJECTS IN EDUCATION, TRAINING AND EMPLOYMENT

The table below provides an overview of current projects in the field of education, training and employment. Please note that this list is not exhaustive.

Promotor	Name of the project	Purpose and main partners
AFD Agence Française de Développement	Employment and Skills Development project Vocational Education and Training projects	Construction of 25 vocational training centres in high-potential economic sectors. Ensure a better match between market needs and the skills of Moroccans. Promote job creation: supporting the development of Moroccan companies (microenterprises and SMEs), in particular in the agricultural sector.
IsDB Islamic Development Bank	Literacy and Skills Development Programme	Development of (i) basic literacy; (ii) apprenticeship training; and (iii) microfinance VET department of the Ministry of Economic Inclusion, Small Business, Employment and Skills
Cooperation Canada	Canada's international development programme in Morocco aims to reduce inequality and poverty among the most vulnerable people, especially women and girls.	The international development programme focuses on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • enterprise development and livelihood support with a focus on the inclusion of women in agricultural value chains; • improving the quality of education and vocational training, particularly among young people in order to increase their employability and meet the needs of the labour market; • economic empowerment of women through open markets and green economy; • human dignity by improving the sexual and reproductive health of women and girls, in addition to gender awareness and the fight against gender-based violence.
GIZ	Tamheen II Development of Vocational Training at the Workplace	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support for regulatory reform and strengthening public-private governance structures • Development of pedagogical tools and training of trainers • Expansion of vocational training at the workplace in six regions • Improving access for young people, especially girls, to vocational training VET department of the Ministry of Economic Inclusion, Small Business, Employment and Skills OFPPT, CGEM, associations
GIZ	CESAR Creation of Employment Opportunities in the Water and Sanitation Sectors	Improving employability and vocational training in the water and sanitation sector. Ministry of Interior, OFPPT, IFMERE-OUJDA, universities, ANAPEC
Korea International Cooperation Agency (KOICA)		Creation of a Hub Centre for Moroccan trainers in the automotive sector VET department of the Ministry of Economic Inclusion, Small Business, Employment and Skills IFMIA Casablanca: <i>Institut de Formation aux Métiers de l'Industrie Automobile à Casablanca</i>

Promotor	Name of the project	Purpose and main partners
MCA (Millennium Challenge Account) MCC (Millennium Challenge Corporation)	Charaka Fund	The establishment of a vocational training offer driven by private demand through financial support for the creation or extension of vocational training centres adopting a mode of governance in public-private partnership (PPP). Nine new centres and the conversion of six existing centres covering key sectors in six regions: Casablanca-Settat, Fès-Meknes, Tanger-Tétouan-Al Hoceïma, Oriental, Béni Mellal- Khénifra and Drâa-Tafilalet
MCA Millennium Challenge Account	Employability Compact Programme	The Education and Training for Employability Project is comprised of two activities: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Secondary Education Activity aims at improving the quality of secondary education by piloting a participatory approach to school improvement in 90 schools across three regions of Morocco. The Workforce Development Activity aims at increasing the quality and relevance of technical and vocational education and training (TVET) by supporting private-sector driven governance as well as the construction/rehabilitation of 15 training centres, together with targeted investments in policy reform of the sector. VET department of the Ministry of Economic Inclusion, Small Business, Employment and Skills OFPPT, CGEM, ANAPEC
ILO	Regional Project STED-AMT: 'Skills for trade and economic diversification: Alignment of skills with sector development strategies in Algeria, Morocco and Tunisia'	Improving competitiveness and job creation in Algeria, Morocco and Tunisia through the implementation of effective strategies for the development and use of skills in certain economic sectors. Strengthening of collaboration and mutual learning between participating countries.
EU	Programme FORCAP Support the implementation of the national vocational training strategy	Improving governance, soft skills, social inclusion, Information system, training of trainers, national skills competitions VET department of the Ministry of Economic Inclusion, Small Business, Employment and Skills
EU	PIAFE (<i>Programme Intégré d'Appui à la Formation et Education / Integrated Programme for Supporting Training and Education</i>) Towards Quality Education and Training	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improving the supply of quality education and training and make it accessible to all; To better meet the needs of young people and their career paths; Strengthening social and societal mobilisation around the education and training system; Improving the efficiency and effectiveness of the education and training system Ministry of Economic Inclusion, Small Business, Employment and Skills, Ministry of Education, Ministry of Higher Education, Scientific Research and Innovation
UNICEF	Forsa	Strengthening the quality of education at the secondary level through the integration of citizenship education and life skills in the curriculum and strengthening the guidance system Ministry of Ministry of Economic Inclusion, Small Business, Employment and Skills
USAID	Higher Education Partnership – Morocco	Strengthening the institutional capacities of regional centres for education and training professions (CRMEFs) Ministry of Higher Education, Scientific Research and Innovation

Promotor	Name of the project	Purpose and main partners
USAID	Inclusive Education Teacher Training Activity	Sustainably improving the performance and capacity of Moroccan higher education institutions and regional teacher training centres (CRMEFs) to provide quality teacher training and professional development in the area of inclusive education for young people, targeting students who are deaf or hard of hearing

Sustainable employment and inclusive growth is one of the three priorities of the EU's current support framework for Morocco (the current programme is in the process of being renewed; the previous programme expired in 2022). The indicative total budget for this new round of aid is EUR 1.6 billion. This is one of the key interventions at present.

The ILO has supported the Government in formulating its national employment strategy for 2015-2025, which has involved a wide range of players at both central and local levels, including social partners. The Spanish Agency for International Development Cooperation, the Canadian International Development Agency, the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency and the ILO's Regular Budget Supplementary Account have supported the implementation. The African Development Bank also supports this endeavour, but mostly through credit lines and investments.

The Millennium Challenge Corporation supports the employment sector with a budget of some USD 27 million, with the aim of improving the monitoring of the labour market and promoting inclusive employment. This entails three dimensions: promoting inclusive employment for young people and women who are either unemployed or economically inactive, supporting the impact assessment of employment and labour market policies, and promoting gender equity in the workplace.

The World Bank operates many grants and loans in Morocco. With regard to employability, it promotes job creation in the private sector through the creation of a more efficient environment for business and competitiveness; it increases opportunities for private-sector growth, with a focus on micro-enterprises and SMEs and youth employability; and it improves access to finance.

The European Investment Bank (EIB) provided a loan of EUR 102.5 million (more than MAD 1 billion) to finance the construction and fitting-out of 150 community schools in several Regional Education and Training Academies in the Kingdom of Morocco. This operation has a budget of EUR 23.3 million (MAD 245 million) financed by the European Union, including an investment grant of EUR 14 million and technical assistance of EUR 9.3 million to support the project's implementation.

The table below gives an overview of other interventions with related objectives.

Name	Promoter	Purpose and beneficiary
youth@work	ILO, Cooperation Canada	Strengthening the capacity of the OFPPT and NGOs Ministry of Social Development, OFPPT, ANAPEC
Promotion or productive and decent employment for young people	ILO, Spanish Agency for International Development Cooperation	Technical assistance for regional policies Ministry of Economic Inclusion, Small Business, Employment and Skills
Programme to support suitability of training for employment	AfDB, World Bank, AFD	Budgetary support and technical assistance to increase the employability of young people with degrees Ministry of Economic Inclusion, Small Business, Employment and Skills
Accessing overseas employment opportunities	World Bank	Promotion of overseas careers ANAPEC

Name	Promoter	Purpose and beneficiary
National employment observatory	EU and ILO	Creation of a national job-creation observatory Ministry of Economic Inclusion, Small Business, Employment and Skills
E4E Initiative for Arab youth	EU	Awareness of labour rights and improved inclusion CGEM, ANPME, Ministry of Employment and Vocational Training
World Bank employability and skills programme	World Bank	Improving tourism centre training courses Ministry of Tourism
Supporting vocational training	AFD	Supporting the creation of an apprenticeship training centre in the automotive sector OFPPT, Ministry of Economic Inclusion, Small Business, Employment and Skills
EconoWin	GIZ	Increasing involvement of women in the labour market through training and advocacy Universities and NGOs
FORSATY	USAID	Education, professional integration and boosting the capacity of youth organisations Local NGOs, vocational training centres
Graduate Employability	British Council	Improving the employability of graduates and their competitiveness at international level Delegate Ministry of Higher Education
Connecting classrooms project	British Council	Strengthening of language and teaching skills for English language teachers Ministry of Economic Inclusion, Small Business, Employment and Skills
Increasing income for single mothers	CODESPA Foundation	Hairstylist training for single mothers at the 100% Mamans association in Tangier
Integration for vulnerable persons	CODESPA Foundation	Guiding young people towards non-formal education and apprenticeships Ministry of Economic Inclusion, Small Business, Employment and Skills
Micro-entrepreneurship for disadvantaged young people in the informal sector	World Bank	Awareness and entrepreneurship training for young people aged 15-30 Ministry of Youth and Sports
Entrepreneurship for rural youth	CODESPA Foundation	Support to NGOs training rural youth in entrepreneurship Foundation OCP
SEDPL2	World Bank	Ensuring training is suitable for employment, entrepreneurship and guidance Ministry of Economic Inclusion, Small Business, Employment and Skills, Ministry of Education, Delegate Ministry of Higher Education
Min Ajliki	Belgium	Development of female entrepreneurship in Morocco (awareness leading up to creation and development) ANAPEC, Ministry of Education, NGOs, including AFEM
Results-based financing employment programme	Millennium Challenge Account – Morocco	Development of a performance-based approach to support private intermediation Companies and NGOs

ABBREVIATIONS

AfCFTA	African Continental Free Trade Area
AFD	French Development Agency
AfDB	African Development Bank
ANAPEC	National Agency for the Promotion of Employment and Skills
ANEAQ	National Agency for Evaluation and Quality Assurance of Higher Education and Scientific Research
CMC	Cities of skills and competences
CNSS	National Social Security Fund
CSEFRS	Higher Council for Education, Training, and Scientific Research
DFP	Department for Vocational Education and Training
EIB	European Investment Bank
ESRI	Environmental System Research Institute
ETF	European Training Foundation
EU	European Union
Eurostat	Statistical office of the European Union
FORCAP	Vocational Education and Training reform programme
GDP	Gross domestic product
GIZ	German Cooperation for International Cooperation
HCP	High Commission for Planning
ICT	Information and communication Technology
IsDB	Islamic Development Bank
ILO	International Labour Organization
ISCED	International Standard Classification of Education
ISIC	International Standard Industrial Classification
KNOMAD	Global Knowledge Partnership on Migration and Development
KOICA	Korea International Cooperation Agency
MCA	Millennium Challenge Account
MCC	Millennium Challenge Corporation
NACE	Statistical classification of economic activities in the European Community
NEET	Young people not in Employment, Education or Training
NGO	Non-governmental organisation
NQF	National Qualifications Framework
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
OPFPT	Office of Vocational Training and Work Promotion
OMTPME	Moroccan observatory for micro, small and medium sized enterprises

ONMT	Moroccan National Tourism Office
PIAFE	Integrated Programme for supporting training and education
PISA	Programme for International Student Assessment
PJD	Parti pour la justice et du développement
PNEA	National Programme for the evaluation of learning achievements
PNPE	National plan to promote employment
PPP	Public-private partnership
SEMED	Southern and eastern Mediterranean
SME	Small and medium-sized enterprises
SNE	Simple Network Exchange
STED-AMT	Skills for trade and economic diversification: Alignment of skills with sector development strategies in Algeria, Morocco and Tunisia
TPME	Micro, small and medium-sized enterprises
TVET	Technical vocational education and training
UNDESA	United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
VET	Vocational education and training
WBL	Work-based learning

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