

## Morocco



### Introduction Morocco

**Background:** In 788, about a century after the Arab conquest of North Africa, successive Moorish dynasties began to rule in Morocco. In the 16th century, the Sa'adi monarchy, particularly under Ahmad AL-MANSUR (1578-1603), repelled foreign invaders and inaugurated a golden age. In 1860, Spain occupied northern Morocco and ushered in a half century of trade rivalry among European powers that saw Morocco's sovereignty steadily erode; in 1912, the French imposed a protectorate over the country. A protracted independence struggle with France ended successfully in 1956. The internationalized city of Tangier and most Spanish possessions were turned over to the new country that same year. Morocco virtually annexed Western Sahara during the late 1970s, but final resolution on the status of the territory remains unresolved. Gradual political reforms in the 1990s resulted in the establishment of a bicameral legislature, which first met in 1997. Lower house elections were last held in September 2002 and upper house elections were last held in September 2006.

### Geography Morocco

**Location:** Northern Africa, bordering the North Atlantic Ocean and the Mediterranean Sea, between Algeria and Western Sahara

**Geographic coordinates:** 32 00 N, 5 00 W

**Map references:** Africa

**Area:** *total:* 446,550 sq km  
*land:* 446,300 sq km  
*water:* 250 sq km

**Area - comparative:** slightly larger than California

**Land boundaries:** *total:* 2,017.9 km  
*border countries:* Algeria 1,559 km, Western Sahara 443 km, Spain (Ceuta) 6.3 km, Spain (Melilla) 9.6 km

**Coastline:** 1,835 km

**Maritime claims:** *territorial sea:* 12 nm  
*contiguous zone:* 24 nm  
*exclusive economic zone:* 200 nm  
*continental shelf:* 200-m depth or to the depth of exploitation

**Climate:** Mediterranean, becoming more extreme in the interior

**Terrain:** northern coast and interior are mountainous with large areas of bordering plateaus, intermontane valleys, and rich coastal plains

**Elevation extremes:** *lowest point:* Sebkhah Tah -55 m  
*highest point:* Jebel Toubkal 4,165 m

**Natural resources:** phosphates, iron ore, manganese, lead, zinc, fish, salt

**Land use:** *arable land:* 19%  
*permanent crops:* 2%  
*other:* 79% (2005)

**Irrigated land:** 14,450 sq km (2003)

**Natural hazards:** northern mountains geologically unstable and subject to earthquakes; periodic droughts

**Environment - current issues:** land degradation/desertification (soil erosion resulting from farming of marginal areas, overgrazing, destruction of vegetation); water supplies contaminated by raw sewage; siltation of reservoirs; oil pollution of coastal waters

**Environment - international:** *party to:* Biodiversity, Climate Change, Climate Change-Kyoto Protocol, Desertification, Endangered Species, Hazardous Wastes, Marine Dumping, Ozone Layer

**agreements:** Protection, Ship Pollution, Wetlands, Whaling  
*signed, but not ratified:* Environmental Modification, Law  
of the Sea

**Geography -  
note:** strategic location along Strait of Gibraltar

| People                                   | Morocco  |
|--|--|
| <b>Population:</b>                       | 33,241,259 (July 2006 est.)  |
| <b>Age structure:</b>                    | <i>0-14 years:</i> 31.6% (male 5,343,976/female 5,145,019)<br><i>15-64 years:</i> 63.4% (male 10,505,018/female 10,580,599)<br><i>65 years and over:</i> 5% (male 725,116/female 941,531) (2006 est.)                                      |
| <b>Median age:</b>                       | <i>total:</i> 23.9 years<br><i>male:</i> 23.4 years<br><i>female:</i> 24.5 years (2006 est.)   |
| <b>Population growth rate:</b>           | 1.55% (2006 est.)  |
| <b>Birth rate:</b>                       | 21.98 births/1,000 population (2006 est.)  |
| <b>Death rate:</b>                       | 5.58 deaths/1,000 population (2006 est.)   |
| <b>Net migration rate:</b>               | -0.87 migrant(s)/1,000 population (2006 est.)  |
| <b>Sex ratio:</b>                        | <i>at birth:</i> 1.05 male(s)/female<br><i>under 15 years:</i> 1.04 male(s)/female<br><i>15-64 years:</i> 0.99 male(s)/female<br><i>65 years and over:</i> 0.77 male(s)/female<br><i>total population:</i> 0.99 male(s)/female (2006 est.) |
| <b>Infant mortality rate:</b>            | <i>total:</i> 40.24 deaths/1,000 live births<br><i>male:</i> 43.99 deaths/1,000 live births<br><i>female:</i> 36.3 deaths/1,000 live births (2006 est.)  |
| <b>Life expectancy at birth:</b>         | <i>total population:</i> 70.94 years<br><i>male:</i> 68.62 years<br><i>female:</i> 73.37 years (2006 est.)   |
| <b>Total fertility rate:</b>             | 2.68 children born/woman (2006 est.)   |
| <b>HIV/AIDS - adult prevalence rate:</b> | 0.1% (2001 est.)   |
| <b>HIV/AIDS - people</b>                 | 15,000 (2001 est.)   |

**living with  
HIV/AIDS:**

**HIV/AIDS -  
deaths:** NA

**Major  
infectious  
diseases:** *degree of risk:* intermediate  
*food or waterborne diseases:* bacterial diarrhea, and hepatitis  
A  
*vectorborne diseases:* may be a significant risk in some  
locations during the transmission season (typically April  
through November) (2005)

**Nationality:** *noun:* Moroccan(s)  
*adjective:* Moroccan

**Ethnic  
groups:** Arab-Berber 99.1%, other 0.7%, Jewish 0.2%

**Religions:** Muslim 98.7%, Christian 1.1%, Jewish 0.2%

**Languages:** Arabic (official), Berber dialects, French often the language  
of business, government, and diplomacy

**Literacy:** *definition:* age 15 and over can read and write  
*total population:* 51.7%  
*male:* 64.1%  
*female:* 39.4% (2003 est.)

| Government | Morocco |
|------------|---------|
|------------|---------|

**Country name:** *conventional long form:* Kingdom of Morocco  
*conventional short form:* Morocco  
*local long form:* Al Mamlakah al Maghribiyah  
*local short form:* Al Maghrib

**Government  
type:** constitutional monarchy

**Capital:** *name:* Rabat  
*geographic coordinates:* 34 02 N, 6 51 W  
*time difference:* UTC 0 (5 hours ahead of Washington, DC  
during Standard Time)

**Administrative  
divisions:** 15 regions; Grand Casablanca, Chaouia-Ouardigha,  
Doukkala-Abda, Fes-Boulemane, Gharb-Chrarda-Beni  
Hssen, Guelmim-Es Smara, Laayoune-Boujdour-Sakia El  
Hamra, Marrakech-Tensift-Al Haouz, Meknes-Tafilalet,  
Oriental, Rabat-Sale-Zemmour-Zaer, Souss-Massa-Draa,  
Tadla-Azilal, Tanger-Tetouan, Taza-Al Hoceima-  
Taounate  
*note:* Morocco claims the territory of Western Sahara, the  
political status of which is considered undetermined by the

US Government; portions of the regions Guelmim-Es Smara and Laayoune-Boujdour-Sakia El Hamra as claimed by Morocco lie within Western Sahara; Morocco claims another region, Oued Eddahab-Lagouira, which falls entirely within Western Sahara

**Independence:** 2 March 1956 (from France)

**National holiday:** Throne Day (accession of King MOHAMED VI to the throne), 30 July (1999)

**Constitution:** 10 March 1972; revised 4 September 1992, amended (to create bicameral legislature) September 1996

**Legal system:** based on Islamic law and French and Spanish civil law system; judicial review of legislative acts in Constitutional Chamber of Supreme Court

**Suffrage:** 18 years of age; universal (as of January 2003)

**Executive branch:** *chief of state:* King MOHAMED VI (since 30 July 1999)  
*head of government:* Prime Minister Driss JETTOU (since 9 October 2002)  
*cabinet:* Council of Ministers appointed by the monarch  
*elections:* none; the monarch is hereditary; prime minister appointed by the monarch following legislative elections

**Legislative branch:** bicameral Parliament consists of an upper house or Chamber of Counselors (270 seats; members elected indirectly by local councils, professional organizations, and labor syndicates for nine-year terms; one-third of the members are renewed every three years) and a lower house or Chamber of Representatives (325 seats; 295 by multi-seat constituencies and 30 from national lists of women; members elected by popular vote for five-year terms)  
*elections:* Chamber of Counselors - last held 6 October 2003 (next to be held in 2006); Chamber of Representatives - last held 27 September 2002 (next to be held in 2007)  
*election results:* Chamber of Counselors - percent of vote by party - NA; seats by party - RNI 42, MDS 33, UC 28, MP 27, PND 21, PI 21, USFP 16, MNP 15, PA 13, FFD 12, other 42; Chamber of Representatives - percent of vote by party - NA; seats by party - USFP 50, PI 48, PJD 42, RNI 41, MP 27, MNP 18, UC 16, PND 12, PPS 11, UD 10, other 50

**Judicial branch:** Supreme Court (judges are appointed on the recommendation of the Supreme Council of the Judiciary, presided over by the monarch)

**Political** Action Party or PA [Muhammad EL IDRISSE]; Alliance

**parties and leaders:** of Liberties or ADL [Ali BELHAJ]; Annahj Addimocrati or Annahj [Abdellah EL HARIF]; Avant Garde Social Democratic Party or PADS [Ahmed BENJELLOUN]; Citizen Forces or FC [Abderrahman LAHJOUJI]; Citizen's Initiatives for Development [Mohamed BENHAMOU]; Constitutional Union or UC [Mohamed ABIED (interim)]; Democratic and Independence Party or PDI [Abdelwahed MAACH]; Democratic and Social Movement or MDS [Mahmoud ARCHANE]; Democratic Socialist Party or PSD [Aissa OUARDIGHI]; Democratic Union or UD [Bouazza IKKEN]; Environment and Development Party or PED [Ahmed EL ALAMI]; Front of Democratic Forces or FFD [Thami EL KHYARI]; Istiqlal Party (Independence Party) or PI [Abbas El FASSI]; Justice and Development Party or PJD [Saad Eddine El OTHMANI]; Moroccan Liberal Party or PML [Mohamed ZIANE]; National Democratic Party or PND [Abdallah KADIRI]; National Ittihadi Congress Party or CNI [Abdelmajid BOUZOUBAA]; National Popular Movement or MNP [Mahjoubi AHERDANE]; National Rally of Independents or RNI [Ahmed OSMAN]; National Union of Popular Forces or UNFP [Abdellah IBRAHIM]; Parti Al Ahd or Al Ahd [Najib EL OUAZZANI, chairman]; Party of Progress and Socialism or PPS [Ismail ALAOUI]; Party of Renewal and Equity or PRE [Chakir ACHABAR]; Party of the Unified Socialist Left or GSU [Mohamed Ben Said AIT IDDER]; Popular Movement Union or UMP [Mohamed LAENSER]; Reform and Development Party or PRD [Abderrahmane EL KOUHEN]; Social Center Party or PSC [Lahcen MADIH]; Socialist Union of Popular Forces or USFP [Mohammed EL-YAZGHI]

**Political pressure groups and leaders:** Democratic Confederation of Labor or CDT [Noubir AMAOUI]; General Union of Moroccan Workers or UGTM [Abderrazzak AFILAL]; Moroccan Employers Association or CGEM [Hassan CHAMI]; National Labor Union of Morocco or UNMT [Abdelislam MAATI]; Union of Moroccan Workers or UMT [Mahjoub BENSEDDIK]

**International organization participation:** ABEDA, ACCT, AfDB, AFESD, AMF, AMU, EBRD, FAO, G-77, IAEA, IBRD, ICAO, ICC, ICCt (signatory), ICRM, IDA, IDB, IFAD, IFC, IFRCs, IHO, ILO, IMF, IMO, Interpol, IOC, IOM, IPU, ISO, ITU, ITUC, LAS, MIGA, MINUSTAH, MONUC, NAM, OAS (observer), OIC, OIF, OPCW, OSCE (partner), PCA, UN, UNCTAD, UNESCO, UNHCR, UNIDO, UNITAR, UNOCI, UNWTO, UPU, WCL, WCO, WHO, WIPO, WMO, WTO

**Diplomatic representation** *chief of mission:* Ambassador Aziz MEKOUAR

**in the US:** *chancery:* 1601 21st Street NW, Washington, DC 20009  
*telephone:* [1] (202) 462-7979  
*FAX:* [1] (202) 265-0161  
*consulate(s) general:* New York

**Diplomatic representation from the US:** *chief of mission:* Ambassador Thomas T. RILEY  
*embassy:* 2 Avenue de Mohamed El Fassi, Rabat  
*mailing address:* PSC 74, Box 021, APO AE 09718  
*telephone:* [212] (37) 76 22 65  
*FAX:* [212] (37) 76 56 61  
*consulate(s) general:* Casablanca

**Flag description:** red with a green pentacle (five-pointed, linear star) known as Sulayman's (Solomon's) seal in the center of the flag; red and green are traditional colors in Arab flags, although the use of red is more commonly associated with the Arab states of the Persian gulf; design dates to 1912

| Economy | Morocco |
|---------|---------|
|---------|---------|

**Economy - overview:** Moroccan economic policies brought macroeconomic stability to the country in the early 1990s but have not spurred growth sufficient to reduce unemployment that nears 20% in urban areas. Poverty has increased due to the volatile nature of GDP, Morocco's continued dependence on foreign energy, and its inability to promote the growth of small and medium size enterprises. However, GDP growth rebounded to 6.7% in 2006 due to high rainfall, which resulted in a strong second harvest. Despite structural adjustment programs supported by the IMF, the World Bank, and the Paris Club, the dirham is only fully convertible for current account transactions and Morocco's financial sector is rudimentary. Moroccan authorities understand that reducing poverty and providing jobs is key to domestic security and development. In 2004, Moroccan authorities instituted measures to boost foreign direct investment and trade by signing a free trade agreement with the US, which entered into force in January 2006, and sold government shares in the state telecommunications company and in the largest state-owned bank. Long-term challenges include preparing the economy for freer trade with the US and European Union, improving education and job prospects for Morocco's youth, and raising living standards, which the government hopes to achieve by increasing tourist arrivals and boosting competitiveness in textiles.

**GDP (purchasing power parity):** \$147 billion (2006 est.)

|   |  |
|---|--|
| <b>GDP (official exchange rate):</b>                        | \$56.72 billion (2006 est.)  |
| <b>GDP - real growth rate:</b>                              | 6.7% (2006 est.)   |
| <b>GDP - per capita (PPP):</b>                              | \$4,400 (2006 est.)  |
| <b>GDP - composition by sector:</b>                         | <i>agriculture: 13.3%</i><br><i>industry: 31.2%</i><br><i>services: 55.5%</i> (2006 est.)  |
| <b>Labor force:</b>   | 11.25 million (2006 est.)  |
| <b>Labor force - by occupation:</b>                         | <i>agriculture: 40%</i><br><i>industry: 15%</i><br><i>services: 45%</i> (2003 est.)  |
| <b>Unemployment rate:</b>                                   | 7.7% (2006 est.)   |
| <b>Population below poverty line:</b>                       | 19% (2005 est.)  |
| <b>Household income or consumption by percentage share:</b> | <i>lowest 10%: 2.6%</i><br><i>highest 10%: 30.9%</i> (1998-99)   |
| <b>Distribution of family income - Gini index:</b>          | 40 (2005 est.)   |
| <b>Inflation rate (consumer prices):</b>                    | 2.8% (2006 est.)   |
| <b>Investment (gross fixed):</b>                            | 21.7% of GDP (2006 est.)   |
| <b>Budget:</b>  | <i>revenues: \$15.85 billion</i><br><i>expenditures: \$20.39 billion; including capital expenditures of \$2.19 billion</i> (2006 est.) |
| <b>Public debt:</b>   | 70.9% of GDP (2006 est.)   |
| <b>Agriculture - products:</b>                              | barley, wheat, citrus, wine, vegetables, olives; livestock   |
| <b>Industries:</b>  | phosphate rock mining and processing, food processing, leather goods, textiles, construction, tourism                                  |

**Industrial production growth rate:** 4% (2004 est.)

**Electricity - production:** 18.48 billion kWh (2004)

**Electricity - production by source:** *fossil fuel:* 95.4%  
*hydro:* 4.6%  
*nuclear:* 0%  
*other:* 0% (2001)

**Electricity - consumption:** 18.89 billion kWh (2004)

**Electricity - exports:** 0 kWh (2004)

**Electricity - imports:** 1.7 billion kWh (2004)

**Oil - production:** 300 bbl/day (2005 est.)

**Oil - consumption:** 170,000 bbl/day (2004 est.)

**Oil - exports:** 0 bbl/day (2000 est.)

**Oil - imports:** 147,800 bbl/day (2000 est.)

**Oil - proved reserves:** 100 million bbl (2006 est.)

**Natural gas - production:** 50 million cu m (2004 est.)

**Natural gas - consumption:** 50 million cu m (2004 est.)

**Natural gas - exports:** 0 cu m

**Natural gas - imports:** 0 cu m

**Natural gas - proved reserves:** 1.218 billion cu m (1 January 2005 est.)

**Current account balance:** \$389 million (2006 est.)

**Exports:** \$11.72 billion f.o.b. (2006 est.)

**Exports -** clothing, fish, inorganic chemicals, transistors, crude

**commodities:** minerals, fertilizers (including phosphates), petroleum products, fruits, vegetables

**Exports - partners:** France 30.3%, Spain 18%, UK 6.2%, Italy 5.2%, India 4.1% (2005)

**Imports:** \$21.22 billion f.o.b. (2006 est.)

**Imports - commodities:** crude petroleum, textile fabric, telecommunications equipment, wheat, gas and electricity, transistors, plastics

**Imports - partners:** France 18.2%, Spain 11%, Saudi Arabia 6.8%, Russia 6.8%, Italy 6.1%, China 5.2%, Germany 4.7% (2005)

**Reserves of foreign exchange and gold:** \$18.21 billion (2006 est.)

**Debt - external:** \$17.9 billion (2006 est.)

**Economic aid - recipient:** ODA, \$706 million (2004)

**Currency (code):** Moroccan dirham (MAD)

**Currency code:** MAD

**Exchange rates:** Moroccan dirhams per US dollar - 8.77508 (2006), 8.865 (2005), 8.868 (2004), 9.574 (2003), 11.021 (2002)

**Fiscal year:** calendar year

## Communications Morocco

**Telephones - main lines in use:** 1,341,200 (2005)

**Telephones - mobile cellular:** 12.393 million (2005)

**Telephone system:** *general assessment:* modern system with all important capabilities; however, density is low with only 4 main lines available for each 100 persons  
*domestic:* good system composed of open-wire lines, cables, and microwave radio relay links; Internet available but expensive; principal switching centers are Casablanca and Rabat; national network nearly 100% digital using fiber-optic links; improved rural service employs microwave radio relay  
*international:* country code - 212; 7 submarine cables;

satellite earth stations - 2 Intelsat (Atlantic Ocean) and 1 Arabsat; microwave radio relay to Gibraltar, Spain, and Western Sahara; coaxial cable and microwave radio relay to Algeria; participant in Medarabtel; fiber-optic cable link from Agadir to Algeria and Tunisia (1998)

**Radio broadcast stations:** AM 27, FM 25, shortwave 6 (1998)

**Radios:** 6.64 million (1997)

**Television broadcast stations:** 35 (plus 66 repeaters) (1995)

**Televisions:** 3.1 million (1997)

**Internet country code:** .ma

**Internet hosts:** 3,218 (2006)

**Internet Service Providers (ISPs):** 8 (2000)

**Internet users:** 4.6 million (2005)

## Transportation Morocco

**Airports:** 60 (2006)

**Airports - with paved runways:** *total:* 26  
*over 3,047 m:* 11  
*2,438 to 3,047 m:* 5  
*1,524 to 2,437 m:* 7  
*914 to 1,523 m:* 1  
*under 914 m:* 2 (2006)

**Airports - with unpaved runways:** *total:* 34  
*2,438 to 3,047 m:* 2  
*1,524 to 2,437 m:* 9  
*914 to 1,523 m:* 12  
*under 914 m:* 11 (2006)

**Heliports:** 1 (2006)

**Pipelines:** gas 715 km; oil 285 km (2006)

**Railways:** *total:* 1,907 km

*standard gauge*: 1,907 km 1.435-m gauge (1,003 km electrified) (2005)

**Roadways:** *total*: 57,493 km  
*paved*: 32,716 km (including 507 km of expressways)  
*unpaved*: 24,777 km (2004)

**Merchant marine:** *total*: 41 ships (1000 GRT or over) 382,781 GRT/285,435 DWT  
*by type*: cargo 5, chemical tanker 6, container 9, passenger/cargo 13, petroleum tanker 1, refrigerated cargo 2, roll on/roll off 5  
*foreign-owned*: 5 (France 1, Germany 2, Switzerland 1, UK 1)  
*registered in other countries*: 1 (Panama 1) (2006)

**Ports and terminals:** Agadir, Casablanca, Mohammedia, Nador, Safi, Tangier

| Military  | Morocco  |
|---|--|
| <b>Military branches:</b>                               | Royal Armed Forces (Forces Armees Royales, FAR): Royal Moroccan Army (includes Air Defense), Navy (includes Marines), Royal Moroccan Air Force (Force Aerieenne Royale Marocaine) (2006) |
| <b>Military service age and obligation:</b>             | 18 years of age for compulsory and voluntary military service; conscript service obligation - 18 months (2004)   |
| <b>Manpower available for military service:</b>         | <i>males age 18-49</i> : 7,908,864<br><i>females age 18-49</i> : 7,882,879 (2005 est.)   |
| <b>Manpower fit for military service:</b>               | <i>males age 18-49</i> : 6,484,787<br><i>females age 18-49</i> : 6,675,729 (2005 est.)   |
| <b>Manpower reaching military service age annually:</b> | <i>males age 18-49</i> : 353,377<br><i>females age 18-49</i> : 341,677 (2005 est.)   |
| <b>Military expenditures - dollar figure:</b>           | \$2.31 billion (2003 est.)   |
| <b>Military expenditures - percent of</b>               | 5% (2003 est.)   |

**GDP:**

**Transnational  
Issues**

**Morocco**

- Disputes - international:** claims and administers Western Sahara whose sovereignty remains unresolved - UN-administered cease-fire has remained in effect since September 1991, but attempts to hold a referendum have failed and parties thus far have rejected all brokered proposals; Morocco protests Spain's control over the coastal enclaves of Ceuta, Melilla, and Penon de Velez de la Gomera, the islands of Penon de Alhucemas and Islas Chafarinas, and surrounding waters; discussions have not progressed on a comprehensive maritime delimitation setting limits on exploration and refugee interdiction since Morocco's 2002 rejection of Spain's unilateral designation of a median line from the Canary Islands; Morocco serves as one of the primary launching areas of illegal migration into Spain from North Africa
- Illicit drugs:** illicit producer of hashish; shipments of hashish mostly directed to Western Europe; transit point for cocaine from South America destined for Western Europe