

Zugänge, Barrieren und Potentiale für die internationale Mobilität von Wissenschaftlerinnen

Länderbericht Marokko

Country dossier Morocco

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The Centre for Higher Education and Equity Research is located within the Department of Education in Essex House on the University of Sussex campus. The University is situated on a modern campus on the edge of the South Downs National Park near the lively seaside city of Brighton. London is one hour away by train, and there is easy access to Gatwick and Heathrow airports.

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About the project

This project is a study of the potential of internationally mobile women scientists.

The study aims to explore the reasons for the low female participation among grantees of the Humboldt Foundation. The Foundation wishes to receive recommendations for how it can attract more excellent women scientists to the Humboldt Network. To this end, the study combines a needs analysis with a deficit analysis:

The needs analysis will examine the potential for qualified female academics on the demand side and analyse the requirements for the international mobility of female academics and their needs.

The mobility culture and specific aspects of the scientific careers of women scientists will be addressed for some key countries, some of which will be analysed in more detail. For the deficit analysis on the supply side, gender-specific aspects of the Humboldt Programmes will be examined using three selected programmes as examples. By combining the two analyses, the desired impulses for changes that the Foundation could initiate will be identified.

In order to be able to determine the potential of qualified women scientists who could be recruited for a research stay in Germany and their needs, knowledge of gender-specific qualification and career structures, exclusion mechanisms and patterns of international mobility in the individual countries from which the scientists are invited to Germany is necessary in addition to statistical data.

This results in the following focal points for a potential analysis:

- 1. Context analysis of the higher education and research system:** key figures on the size and importance of research and development and on participation in tertiary education, basic characteristics, qualification and career structures
- 2. Gender participation in tertiary education and academic careers:** including indicators on degrees and doctorates and on academic staff
- 3. Gender-specific aspects of scientific careers:** social, cultural and institutional context; horizontal and vertical segregation; whereabouts and drop-outs in science; possible exclusion mechanisms; further gender-specific differentiations, e.g. according to type of university, teaching and research, science sectors, prestige or regional distribution
- 4. Gender and international mobility:** Gender-specific data on international mobility, access to (international) networks, significance of international mobility for an academic career, Germany as a target country, needs for funding and changes.

Further intersectional categories, such as social background, ethnic origin or racialised characteristics, family situation or region are included, as far as they are relevant for the respective country and data are available.

1 Overview

Morocco gained its independence from France (and from Spain) in 1956. The State religion is the Malachite branch of Sunni Islam. Classical Arabic and Tamazight (Berber) are the official languages. French is the second language of communication (Boutieri, 2012).

The latest population count neared 37 million in 2020 (UNFPA, 2020). Morocco is considered a young nation, with youth constituting the largest portion of its population. Morocco has the highest illiteracy rate in North Africa - 36.5 percent (females 47.6 percent and males 25.3 percent) in 2017.

[In terms of gender equality, Morocco ranked 144 globally out of 153 countries in the 2020 Global Gender Gap Index \(World Economic Forum, WEF, 2021\).](#)

State feminism, which includes the government's official policy for the emancipation of women, developed in Morocco post-independence (Ennaji, 2016).

The 2009–2011 Governmental Agenda for Equality proposed equitable access for girls and boys to all domains, including education. The Moroccan Constitution (July 2011) highlights the notion of equality and an end to all forms of discrimination against women (e.g. article 19) (Worlds of Education, 2018).

The National Plan (ICRAM 1&2) is a multi-sectoral governmental plan on gender equality to support the implementation of the commitments expressed in the Government Policy Programme for the period between 2017 and 2021. The Plans provide a platform for mainstreaming women's rights across the Moroccan public sector.

Women in Morocco have legal autonomy in terms of mobility, marriage, and entering into contractual agreements either for employment or trade. Yet, gender inequality is evident in areas such as economic empowerment and political participation.

[Moroccan women's share in the labour market remains one of the lowest in the region.](#)

The female labour force is reported as 23.4 percent and the male rate 74.9 percent; female part-time work is 47.14 percent compared with 11.85 percent for males. Agriculture remains the sector with the largest share of women employees (WEF, 2021: 285).

Early marriage and household caring responsibilities remain key obstacles facing women's transition to higher education. According to Article 20 of the family code (Moudawana), the legal age for marriage is 18 years for both men and women. However, a UNICEF report (2017) shows an increase in the rate of child marriage cases, and the proportion of registered marriages that involve minors has increased by family from 7.0 percent in 2004 to 11.5 percent in 2013. The United Nations Population Fund suggest that the percentage increased to 14 percent in 2019 (UNFPA, 2020).

[Unemployment affects women more than men, with rates reaching 13.5 percent and 7.8 percent, respectively.](#)

Unemployment is higher in urban areas than in rural regions, with 21.8 percent of women and 10.3 percent of men residing in cities unemployed (Hatim, 2020a). A gender gap in wages

is estimated, with Moroccan women earning \$3,295 per annum – one third of that earned by men \$12,471\$ (WEF, 2020).

Gender-based violence is a barrier to girls' and women's access to education, employment and mobility in Morocco. While the law criminalises sexual harassment in employment, intimate-partner violence and other forms of domestic violence are often overlooked by the law (UN Women, 2017).

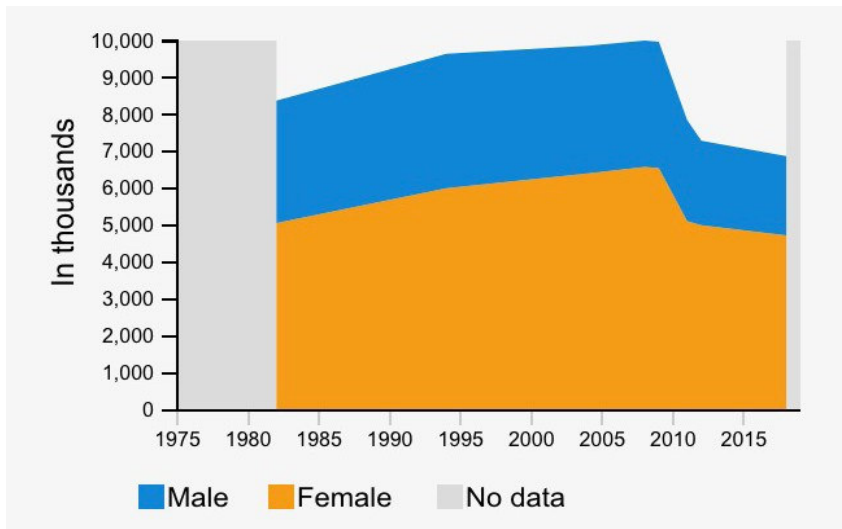
2 Gender and education

As with many emerging economies, the emphasis has traditionally been on getting more girls into primary and secondary education. Morocco ranks 116th globally in terms of equality in educational attainment (WEF, 2021). This signals a slight improvement from rank 117 in 2018 (WEF, 2018). Bozic (2018) identifies some factors that impede girls' education:

- a. Gender gap in literacy – Between 2008 and 2012, 74 percent of women ages 15-24 were literate, compared to 88 percent of men.
- b. Girls' education is less accessible in rural areas – Only 26 percent of girls in rural locations are enrolled in primary school, compared to 79 percent of boys.
- c. The language barrier –While the language of instruction at public schools is Arabic, many rural families only speak the Berber language.
- d. Cultural barriers still hold girls back – A traditional patriarchal society places value on girls' roles in the home.

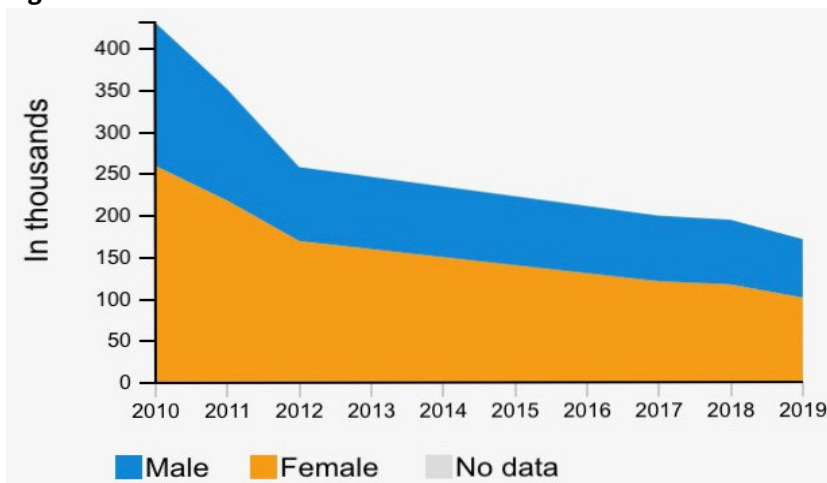
There are many obstacles to female education, including poverty, tradition, and patriarchy favouring investment in boys' education. There are also issues about resource allocation, and neglect of rural and human development (Auletto, 2017; Ennaji, 2018).

Figure 1: Illiterate population aged 15 and older



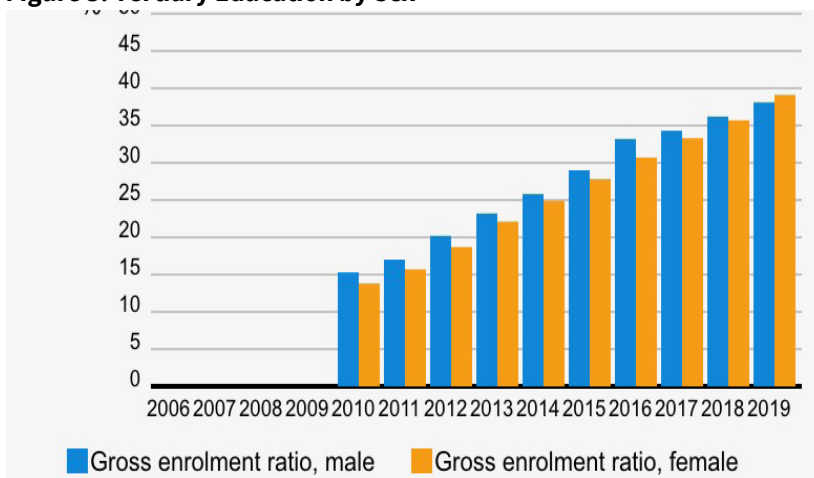
Source : UNESCO Institute for Statistics (UIS), n.d. 2020

Figure 2: Number of out-of-school adolescents



Source: UNESCO Institute for Statistics (UIS) , n.d.

Figure 3: Tertiary Education by Sex



Source: UIS, n.d.

2.1 Higher Education

State higher education is free for both nationals and foreigners.

All holders of the baccalaureate have the right to a place at university, and grants are awarded to students in need. Higher education in Morocco is the responsibility of the State based on the LMD (Licence/Bachelor's, Master's, Doctorate) degree structure (Buckner, 2011). Prior to the 20th century, the higher education system was mainly religious and based around the Al Quaraouiyine University in Fez, one of the world's oldest universities, founded in the year 859 by a woman – Fatima bint Muhammad Al-Fihriya Al-Qurashiya – and the Ben Youssef University in Marrakech.

Post-colonial investment in higher education grew from 1957, when the state reorganised the two institutes of higher education in science and the arts in the capital, Rabat, to create the Mohammed V University. This was followed by the development of universities in Fez, Tetouan, Kenitra, Tangiers, and Casablanca. With the merger of universities from September 2015, Morocco now has 12 public universities, 5 institutes of scientific research (Instituts de Recherche Scientifique), and 31 Cités et Internats Universitaires.

Student numbers in Morocco have almost trebled over the past eight years

The student population increased from 308,000 in 2009-10 to 822,000 in 2017-18 (Grove, 2018). The latest count of students enrolled in higher education reached 913,713 in the academic year 2018-19. The public sector enrolls over 93 percent of the total number of students (Bougroum & Ibourk, 2011).

The gross enrolment ratio in tertiary education (this includes all education for people above school age, including college, university, and vocational courses) in Morocco is still under 40 percent. While there is gender parity in terms of access, the total enrolment ratio remains relatively low compared to other countries globally.

The rural areas have no institutions of higher education. However, e-learning is being rapidly developed in Morocco (Bouroumi & Fajr, 2014; Riyami et al, 2017). This has been especially important in the context of the 2020 global pandemic (Sawahel, 2020a).

Strategies to reform higher education post-2011 focus on links with the labour market and internationalisation (Cohen, 2014). Quality, governance (Ayad et al, 2020), and student retention (Mansouri & El Amine Moumine, 2017) are challenges. Public universities are facing a large influx of students accompanied by shortages in infrastructure, funding, equipment, and human resources (El Kirat El Allame, 2019).

No Moroccan university appeared in the Shanghai 2020 Academic Ranking of World Universities (ARWU).

The ARWU ranking includes the top 1,000 universities in the world. In September 2019, the Times Higher Education included four Moroccan universities in its World University Rankings 2020. However, none of them were in the top 500 on the 1,400-institution list. Sidi Mohamed Ben Abdellah University in Fez ranked first on the national level. Internationally, however, the university ranked in the 601-800 section.

Morocco followed a programme of Arabisation post-independence, and the language issue continues to cause controversy. One of the nation's senior university leaders – Wail Benjelloun, a former head of Morocco's Conference of University Presidents and current leader of the Mediterranean Universities Union, which represents 84 universities across 21 Mediterranean countries – has argued that Morocco's seemingly intractable graduate unemployment problem could be eased if fewer university courses were taught in Arabic.

In an interview with Times Higher Education at its Emerging Economies Summit in Rabat in 2018 (Grove, 2018), he said wanted to see more non-science courses taught in French, Spanish and English, reflecting the country's proximity to Europe.

Others have questioned whether too many students are taking humanities and social science degrees taught primarily in Arabic, with 75 percent of undergraduates enrolled on such courses. In contrast, only 22 percent of students take science subjects, which are taught in French – a language spoken fluently by only about 15 percent of Morocco's 37 million citizens (Grove, 2018).

Graduate unemployment is a serious challenge.

In the post-independence era, university graduates were guaranteed prestigious public sector positions (Buckner, 2018). In 2015, 24.4 percent of graduates were unemployed, compared with just 6 percent in 1984, while the current national unemployment rate is about 10 per cent – prompting some to ask whether Morocco's labour market can support so many graduates (Grove, 2018).

Table 1: Numbers of newly enrolled students in public universities by academic year and discipline

Discipline	2017-2018		2018-2019		Increase %	
	Total	Women	Total	Women	Total	Women
Legal, Economic and Social Sciences	110 505	53 062	124 381	61 298	12.56	15.52
Human Sciences	50 750	26 209	56 515	30 089	11.36	14.80
Sciences	26 917	13 345	31 548	15 936	17.20	19.42
Total (Open access)	188 172	92 616	212 444	107 323	12.90	15.88
Science and technology	7 005	3 949	8 415	5 108	20.13	29.35
Medicine	2 364	1 354	2 655	1 556	12.31	14.92
Dentistry Medicine	107	84	281	155	162.62	84.52
Engineering	254	152	3 362	1 621	1223.62	966.45
Business and management	2 531	1 199	3 268	1 957	29.12	63.22
Technology	2 842	1 694	7 510	4 142	164.25	144.51
Education	6 344	3361	1 943	1402	-69.37	-58.29
Paramedical (nursing)	730	536	134	106	-81.64	-80.22
Sports Sciences	83	68	140	47	68.67	-30.88
Total (Regulated access)	22 260	12 397	27 708	16 094	24.47	29.82
Total	210 432	105 013	240 152	123 417	14.12	17.53

Source: Ministry of National Education, Vocational Training, Higher Education and Scientific Research, 2018-2019

Table 2: Total number of students in public universities for academic year 2018/2019

Level of study/ Discipline	Bachelor	Master	Doctorate	Total	Women	Women's Share %
Open access (social sciences)	701 134	36 639	26 559	764 332	371 412	48.5 %
Regulated access (sciences)	93 784	7 967	9 922	111 673	60 896	54%
Total	794 918	44 606	36 481	876 005	432 308	49%

Source: Ministry of National Education, Vocational Education, Higher Education and Scientific Research, 2018-2019

2.2 Private higher education

In 1993, a privately-run public university, the Al Akhawyin University, was established based on an American model, with English as the language of instruction. The regulatory framework for private institutions was passed in 2011, and by 2014, five private universities had opened in major cities – Rabat, Casablanca, Marrakech, and Agadir – with two others receiving Ministry approval (Buckner, 2018). In 2015, Morocco’s Ministry of National Education, Vocational Training, Higher Education and Scientific Research recognised the degrees of eight private universities.

As with many emerging economies, demand for higher education often outstrips supply, and those with material advantages are able to buy access to private providers.

Morocco is a class- bound society, with an elite who are able to afford private education and international universities (Errazzouki, 2014).

Table 3: Total number of students in private universities for academic year 2018/2019

Discipline	Total	Women	Women’s Share %
Business and Management	23 322	11 192	47%
Medicine and Health	6 875	4 615	67%
Science and Technology	19 087	7 289	38%
Total	49 284	23 096	46%

Source : Ministry of National Education, Vocational Training, Higher Education and Scientific Research, 2018-2019

2.3 Research Capacity

A concern for Moroccan higher education is the need to build research capacity. Cohen (2014) suggested that state investment in higher education during a period of nationalism and modernisation provided the material resources and cultural and ideological impetus for critical academic research and analysis.

After a peak attained in 2000, the output of Moroccan researchers stagnated or even declined (Medina, 2015). One explanation is the lack of partnerships for knowledge creation.

Rhassate et al (2018) suggested that there is a lack of communication and collaboration between universities in neighbouring countries or sometimes between the universities of the same country. Morocco and Tunisia have recently unveiled a US\$2.16 million plan to set up joint laboratories, enhance networking between universities in the two countries, mutually recognise degrees aimed at enhancing student and academic mobility and encourage doctoral theses emanating from joint supervision by the partner institutions (Sawahel, 2020b).

Figure 4: Researchers by sector of employment in FTE

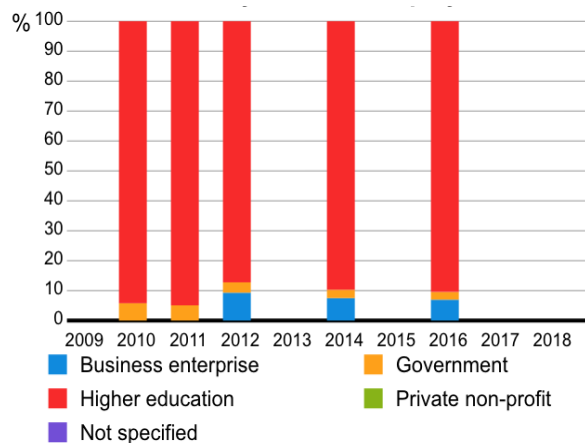


Figure 5: Researchers by sector of employment in HC

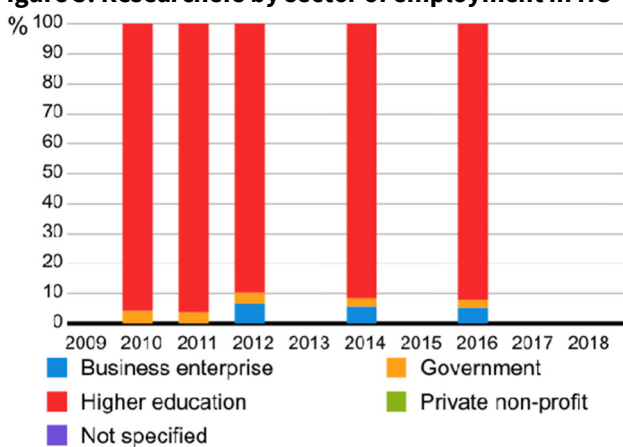
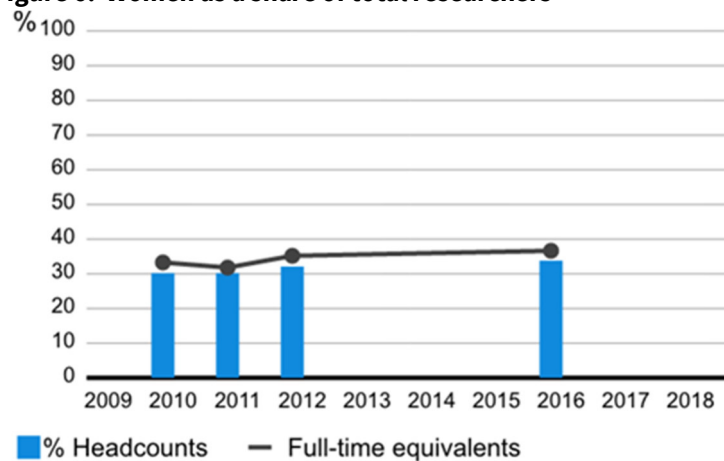


Figure 6: Women as a share of total researchers



Source 4,5,6: UNESCO Institute for Statistics (UIS) 2020

- FTE: Full-time equivalent
- HC: Headcount

Table 4: Research and Development Inputs¹

Research and Development Inputs	Value
GERD (% of GDP)	15.9
GERD per researcher (constant '000 PPP\$)	13.5
Researchers per thousand labour force (HC)	19.9
Graduates from STEM programmes, tertiary (%)	21.3
High-technology net imports (% of total trade)	25.5
Inputs of Innovation in Production	22.8
GERD performed by business enterprises (% of GDP)	5.6
GERD financed by business enterprises (%)	38.2
Researchers (HC) in business enterprise (%)	7.3
FDI and technology transfer	62.5
Outputs of Innovation in Production	26.3
Intellectual property receipts (% of total trade)	4.3
Industrial design applications (per billion PPP\$ GDP)	69.2
Production process sophistication	36.1
Extent of marketing	62.5

¹ The data do not stem from UIS or OECD statistics but rather from the Global Knowledge Index and are not comparable with data from other countries.

Source: Global Knowledge Index 2019

2.4 Women's Academic Careers

More girls are now passing the baccalaureate than are boys.

More young women are enrolled in higher education (at the Bachelor's degree level) than young men. However, the number of women enrolled in Masters' and doctoral courses is far lower. For example, while there were 402 men registered at PhD level in the field of economic law and social sciences in the academic year 2017–2018, there were only 160 women. No comprehensive study has been conducted to understand the reasons why female graduates are discouraged from pursuing doctoral studies (Boutkhil, 2020).

While there has been an increase in women's enrolment in STEM subjects as students, this increase has not been translated into progress in academic careers (Bettachy et al, 2009, 2015). However, there have been some notable Moroccan women scientists, including Merieme Chadid, the astronomer who was awarded the Arab Woman of the Year title in 2015 (Abdessalam Zerbaoui, 2020).

The SHEMERA (2014) report stated that the research population is also male-dominated. In 2010, just 32 percent of all researchers in higher education were women, and this meant a decrease compared with 2004, when women accounted for 35 percent of researchers.

Women are also under-represented in academia and leadership.

As Figure 6 demonstrates, women still constitute less than 40 percent of researchers. Currently, out of more than 20 universities in Morocco, only two are governed by women: the Université Hassan Premier Settat is headed by Khadija Essafi, and the Université Hassan II Casablanca is headed by Aawatef Hayar (Llorent-Bedmar et al, 2017; Hallward & Stewart, 2018).

A recent study called upon the government to align strategies towards gender equality at all levels of higher education management (Boutkhil, 2020).

Boutkhil (2020) further recommended the introduction of a mandatory quota system in university governing bodies, the formation of the university's general budget in a gender-sensitive manner, the creation of safe campuses for women, and the establishment of a national coalition of women in academia in Morocco.

The issue of safe campuses – e.g. lighting, security arrangements etc. – is fundamental in challenging gender-based violence and is often an essential part of gender mainstreaming activities.

Boutkhil's study raises questions about whether the increasing number of women in higher education – and those who enter academia – have robust longer-term career opportunities. The study indicated that Moroccan universities lack female representation at all levels. The study added that the low proportion of entry-level assistant professor positions, which is a mere 21.36 percent of faculty members nationwide, highlights the unequal consideration that female applicants receive from hiring committees. Boutkhil (2020) also reported that female faculty members were rarely called on to lead thesis defence juries or to

appointment commissions, and are not elected as members of their institutions' scientific committees (see also Sawahel, 2020c).

Higher education has a serious gender gap in academic staffing.

In an effort to highlight and challenge the injustices faced by female faculty members in Morocco, a group of academics created the Association of Women University Professors in 2016 at Université Mohammed Premier in Oujda. The Association's objective is to promote the contribution that female faculty make to academia and to seek greater representation of women in university decision-making positions (Boutkhal, 2020).

Table 5: Number of academics by grade for year 2018/2019

Grade	Total	Women	Women's Share %
Professor (Professeur de l'Enseignement Supérieur PES)	6 580	1 427	21%
Lecturer (Professeur Habilité PH)	2 487	649	26%
(Associate Professor) Professeur Agrégé (Pag)	236	92	38%
(Assistant Professor) Professeur Assistant (PA)	4 399	1 377	31%

Source: Ministry of National Education, Vocational Training, Higher Education and Scientific Research 2018-2019

3 Internationalisation in Higher Education

Since the 1990s, Morocco has introduced a wave of reforms aimed at aligning Moroccan higher education to the European degree structure (Buckner, 2018), with a view to becoming a partner in the European Higher Education Area (EHEA) (Kohstall, 2015).

Morocco has opened itself up internationally, particularly to the EU, via a range of strategies:

- 1. The adoption of the LMD system** in 2003, and the process underway to establish the ECTS system, aligns the higher education curricula with European models and permits the mobility of qualifications and labour cross-nationally.
- 2. The establishment of a quality assurance** system to international standards
- 3. The involvement of universities** throughout the world in calls for international projects launched by Morocco
- 4. The active involvement of universities** in the Tempus, Erasmus Mundus and Erasmus+ cooperation programmes
- 5. The merger of universities** with a view to creating poles of excellence in teaching and research and pooling resources in order to develop scientific output and consequently ensure greater visibility internationally

6. **The consolidation and development** of the international component of the Moroccan higher education system through the creation of international outward-looking universities and institutions such as the Al Akhawayn University in Ifrane, the Rabat International University, the Fèz Euro-Mediterranean University, the Mohammed VI Polytechnic University at Benguérir, the International INSA, the Central School of Casablanca, the IUT International and the Mediterranean Logistics and Transport Institute in Tétouan, the Higher Institute for Lifelong Learning
7. **The creation of renowned higher education institutions** in the context of international cooperation, including:
 - The Central School of Casablanca
 - International INSA at Fèz
 - The International IUT at Oujda
 - The Tangier-Tétouan Mediterranean
 - Institute for Logistics and Transport
 - The School of Architecture at the International University of Rabat
 - The Higher Institute for Lifelong Learning

Morocco is the first French-speaking African country to welcome African students, and the second overall after South Africa.

More than 75 percent of students come from sub-Saharan African countries, and there were more than 12,000 sub-Saharan students enrolled at Moroccan universities in the year 2019-2020, from 47 different African countries (Abdellatif, 2020). Foreign students are almost all Moroccan government grant holders. More than 30 percent of students are following a Master's or doctoral course. The pathways of excellence (Medicine, Engineering, Business and Management, Sciences) account for half of this figure. Like their Moroccan counterparts, these students benefit from free education and university welfare services.

Moroccan students participate in a range of short or long-term courses overseas. These are organised by the Ministry in the context of partnerships with other countries or international bodies, or organised in the context of partnerships between Moroccan universities and international universities or bodies. Through the former Tempus and current Erasmus+ programmes, a significant proportion of academic staff have been able to participate in activities alongside their European counterparts. However, there is a growing trend now of travelling to the Americas and Asia.

3.1 Patterns of Mobility

The total number of outbound internationally mobile students in 2019 was 52,500 (UNESCO Institute for Statistics, UIS, n.d.).

France hosts the highest share of Moroccan students abroad, with 28,431 students studying there.

Germany comes in at the third place, with 3,789 Moroccan students. Of the challenges facing the internationalisation of higher education in Morocco, the language issue is prominent. Until recently, the debate concerned the language of instruction of sciences. The Arabisation

process involved the adoption of Modern Standard Arabic as the language of instruction instead of French. It has been argued that the fact of not generalising Arabisation to higher education has created a divide between pre-secondary education and higher education, and put a heavy burden on the latter.

In France, where Moroccan students account for over 40 percent of international students, there was a 17 percent increase between 2011-2016 and 2016-2017. The numbers of Moroccan students enrolled at UK universities increased by 13 percent between the 2014/15 and 2017/18 school years (Morocco World News, 2019). A large majority are studying business – the most common field of study for international students to pursue.

Questions have been posed about how gender relates to opportunities and experiences of internationalisation (Morley et al, 2019, 2020).

Mobility is seen as vital in an academic's career because it provides scholars with opportunities for interaction with other scholars internationally and for further professional development. Opportunities for outward mobility can be highly gendered – especially in Africa (Prozesky & Beaudry, 2019). Internationalisation makes visible the patriarchal premium (Bhandari, 2017; Jöns, 2011; Matus & Talburt, 2009; Myers & Griffin, 2018; Rosner, 2015). Lee-mann (2010) suggested that mobility is viewed not as a social experience whose value is neutral, but as something that has value precisely because it can be drawn into fields of asymmetrical gendered relations.

Opportunities for outward mobility can be highly gendered – especially in Africa

She argued that women academics are less geographically mobile than their male counterparts, and that greater geographic immobility can put women at a disadvantage with regard to tenure.

There have been a number of transnational initiatives.

For example, the UK's Coventry University has recently opened a branch campus in Morocco. This has been facilitated via the UK-Morocco Higher Education Commission, which aims to strengthen strategic partnerships between the Moroccan and British education sectors, particularly in the areas of student mobility and internationalisation, research and innovation, quality assurance and governance, reform in teaching methods and the use of science and technology.

The Moroccan campus will provide programmes in teacher training, business, and science and technology. The institutions will also explore opportunities for joint research and teaching as well as mobility for staff and students between the new site and Coventry's UK campuses (Bothwell, 2020).

Other UK modern universities also have a presence in Morocco, including Cardiff Metropolitan University (CMU), which offers undergraduate and postgraduate degrees at SIST in Casablanca, Rabat and Tangier. No data are available on gendered participation patterns. The Institute for Higher Studies in Social Communications (IHECS) in Brussels, Belgium, has signed partnerships with a number of Moroccan higher education institutions, including the International University of Rabat (UIR) (Hatim, 2020b).

The partnership will allow the exchange of students, teachers, and educational materials between the UIR and IHECS. It also provides for the organisation of joint research projects, conferences, and seminars on several subjects and disciplines.

4 Key findings

4.1 Study Limitations

Gender and Research

Available statistical data on Moroccan higher education in general are patchy and uneven, e.g. on attainment or international mobility. Gender is frequently absent from research studies and reports on Moroccan higher education. Some key documents on higher education exclude any consideration of gender (e.g. European Commission, 2017); and gender is not a variable in studies on student retention (Mansouri & El Amine Moumine, 2017)

Scholarly Attention

As with many middle-income emerging economies, gender has traditionally been the focus for school-based education, rather than higher education. While this is slowly changing, there is a noticeable lack of scholarly attention to the topic in research studies.

Intersectionality

It is rare for studies to intersect gender with other structures of inequality, e.g. social class. Hence, research, when it does include consideration of women and higher education, tends to focus on elite communities. Or, rural communities are mentioned as a homogenous and often Orientalised bloc.

Changing Landscape

The higher education landscape is changing rapidly in Morocco, e.g. the rise of private higher education. Different reports and studies offer different statistics e.g. higher education enrolment figures. Higher education reform and expansion means that the number of universities – especially from the private sector – is growing more rapidly than can be recorded.

4.2 Key findings and recommendations

Academic Career Development



Women are not thriving as academics, researchers, or leaders in Moroccan universities.

Initiatives women's academic, research, and leadership careers (e.g. see the UK's *Aurora* and *Athena Swan* Programmes) and strategic links could be made between the Humboldt Foundation and the Association of Women University Professors in Morocco.

Language



Arabic is the dominant language of education (Zouhir, 2013). French has traditionally been the second language in Morocco. However, the language of global mobility (outside Francophone regions) tends to be English, e.g. STEM collaborations, publications, taught programmes of study etc. (El Kirat El Allame, 2019).



Policy Recommendation

Women entering Humboldt programmes from Morocco are likely to require language support in English.

Internationalisation



Morocco has attracted international students – mainly from sub-Saharan Africa. Moroccan students have traditionally chosen Francophone universities overseas, but many are now selecting Anglophone universities.



Policy Recommendation

A publicity campaign will be important to communicate the benefits of studying/ working/ researching in Germany to Moroccan women, e.g. relevant research topics and partnership.

Quota Systems



Women from rural and marginalised communities still face challenges in terms of access, retention and outward mobility.



Policy Recommendation

Humboldt programmes could introduce quota systems to encourage participation of Moroccan women scientists from socio-economically disadvantaged backgrounds.

Gender and Education



Gender and Education has traditionally been concerned with school-level access and retention. However, more women are now enrolling in universities as students, but are under-represented at postgraduate level, and in academic, research, and leadership roles. While gender equality and mainstreaming are policy discourses, we found little evidence of these processes applied to higher education in terms of employment, career progression, and subject choice.



Policy Recommendation

Partnerships could be formed between Morocco and universities and organisations internationally to undertake gender mainstreaming, e.g. The Swedish Secretariat for Gender Research, Gothenburg University, Sweden.

Availability of Data



There are major data gaps in relation to gender and higher education, e.g. lack of gender-disaggregated data. There are also few qualitative studies that consider in any detail how gender interacts with higher education opportunities, experiences and outcomes.



Policy Recommendation

Scholarship and data collection on these topics need strengthening and facilitating.

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