

Morocco

Demographics for Morocco

Population:	32,725,847 (July 2005 est.)
GDP (by PPP method):	US\$139.5 billion
Currency (inc code):	Moroccan dirham (MAD)
Language(s):	Arabic (official), Berber dialects, French
Internet country code:	.ma

The system of education in Morocco is composed of pre-school, primary, secondary and tertiary education. This overview introduces the main characteristics of different components of the educational system in Morocco with a specific emphasis on tertiary education and especially training in business and management.

Pre-school

This stage of education is open to children from four to six years old. The majority of the provision is private and concentrated in urban areas.

Primary and secondary education

Primary and collegial education (the first three years of high school) is compulsory for children aged up to 15. The duration of primary education is six years for children of six-12 years old. This stage of study is conducted in two cycles. The first one targets the six-eight year olds. It socializes them and teaches them to understand written and oral expression. The second cycle consolidates the acquisitions and knowledge gathered before, develops it and initiates children to new technologies of information and communication. In

2004, the number of children in primary education attained 4.07 million (Ministère de l'Éducation Nationale, 2004).

The first three years of high school, are open to students who complete primary school. In 2003-2004, 1.89 million children registered for collegial studies (Ministère de l'Éducation Nationale, 2004). After three years of study, the student receives a certificate of collegial studies. This qualifies them for continuation into the last stages of high school.

Secondary studies offer different choices of cycles (general, technical or professional). The professional qualification cycle trains for the necessary basic competencies needed for jobs. General education is another track that provides students with scientific, humanities, economic or social education, preparing them for higher education. The professional and technical education field prepares students for professional life and for higher education and trains them to be technicians with scientific competencies. In 2003-2004, the number of students registered for secondary education reached 603,397 (Ministère de l'Éducation Nationale, 2004).

Tertiary education

The higher education system in Morocco is composed of public and private institutions. There are 247 public schools according to the Ministry of National Education:

- 80 institutions related to 14 universities are established.
- 59 institutions that are not related to universities but are regulated by ministries other than the Ministry of Education.
- 35 training centers for primary school teachers.
- 73 institutions related to the professional training of candidates possessing the “baccalaureate” degree.

According to the “Aperçu sur le système éducatif Marocain”, there are 203 institutions in private higher education with a total of 23,966 students (2003-2004). The majority of these institutions are established in the major Moroccan cities.

According to the same source the total number of students in higher education reached 345,261 in 2003-2004, while 335,755 students were enrolled in 2002-2003 (Unesco, n.d.). Of these, 80 percent of registered students apply to public higher education, 8 percent join the institutions for professional training, 7 percent register in post-baccalaureate professional training institutions and 5 percent apply to the private higher education institutions. Admission to public universities except in medicine and pharmaceutical studies, requires only the “baccalaureate” (Ministère de l'Éducation Nationale, 2004). Admission to the other public institutions of higher education requires competitive special tests and special training before the exams (most engineering schools) (Table I).

	1998-1999	1999-2000	2000-2001	2001-2002	2002-2003	2003-2004 ^a						
Number of enrolled	273	183	276	375	310	258	315	343	335	755	345	261

Sources: ^aMinistère de l'Education Nationale (2004); <http://stats.uis.unesco.org/TableView/TableView.aspx>

Table I. *Enrollment in tertiary education – Morocco 1998-2004*

Structure of education in business and management schools

Business and management education is provided by both public and private schools.

New public schools such as the School of Business Administration at Al Akhawayn University, Ecole Nationale de Commerce et de Gestion (ENCG) of Settat, Tangiers and Agadir, and the majority of the 14 public universities that offer some business and management undergraduate degrees (“licences appliqués”). According to the Ministry of Education, enrollment in Business and Management increased by 3.1 percent in 2003-2004 from the preceding year, 2002-2003 (Statistiques Universitaires, 2003-2004).

According to the Moroccan Association of Private Education, Management and Business schools accounted for 80 percent of the overall number of private schools but enrolled less than 10 percent of students during 2003-2004 (Statistiques AMEP, n.d.).

The number of private Business and Management institutions stood at 162 in 2004. The number of students enrolled reached 19,173 in 2003-2004, up from 6,800 in 1997-1998.

Degrees provided

Undergraduate degrees cover “Licence”, Bachelor’s or school degrees that require four years after the “Baccalaureat”. Under the Licence/Master/Doctorat (LMD) system, the requirement will be reduced to three years. Graduate degrees include “Diplômes de 3 è cycle”, Master’s and other school degrees that require at least two years after the Licence or similar degrees (that is, a total of six years after the Baccalaureat). Under the LMD system, graduate degrees will be obtained five years after the Baccalaureat. There are currently few institutions that are providing doctoral degrees in the area of business administration. Some doctoral degrees are proposed by public universities and by some public schools. Under the LMD system, the doctoral work will require a further three years after completion of the Master’s.

Curricula

Most business and management schools’ programs have a general common core followed by a Major in business with or without specialization depending on the institution. Generally, an undergraduate degree takes four years with variations throughout the different educational systems pursued by each school. Two years

is the average required for a Master's. In addition, most schools require professional training. This last requirement is a necessary step where students establish a functional contact and working relationship with real businesses. In addition, some schools (Al Akhawayn University) have introduced another mandatory internship focusing on social and human development.

Partnerships and joint degrees

Some Moroccan education institutions have developed partnerships with international schools and provide joint degrees. Different European, Canadian and US Engineering and Business schools have delocalized to provide special degrees in different schools and universities in Morocco. These degrees include mainly Master's and executive Master's in a diversity of areas:

- Business administration.
- Public management.
- Logistics.
- Finance.
- Operation management with applications to specific fields.

Other institutions in Europe and Canada have developed other types of partnerships at both undergraduate and graduate levels in:

- Management information systems.
- Business administration.
- Logistics and operations.
- Others.

Other formulae have been developed also in order to attract students to programs directly involving foreign institutions with little or no involvement of local partners. New forms of specific partnership are also being developed (Euromed and others); and there are also franchising networks of private institutions from within Morocco. Other institutions are created by consortia of businesses who accept the students as trainees or future employees.

Continuing and executive education

Continuing and executive education in the area of business and management is a growing sector. Enterprises in Morocco have access to different incentives that support the involvement of their human resources in continuing and executive education. At the level of training at the executive Master of Business Administration, there are mainly three institutions that are providing training in English (Ecole Hassania des Travaux Publics, Al Akhawayn University and "Ecole des Mines de Rabat"). Other academic institutions located mainly in Spain, France and the USA contribute to providing special degrees and non-

degree training through their direct involvement with enterprises operating in Morocco. The Office of Professional Training and Employment Promotion focus mainly on the social priorities indicated by government and the training needs of employees (Abaroudi, 2000).

Most important issues facing business schools in Morocco

Enrollment in private schools is still low compared to that in public institutions. The student population in private higher education is less than 3.5 percent of the overall population of university students in the country, in spite of the relatively high number of private institutions. This is mainly because of the levels of tuition fees that are set by private schools, which are perceived to be high in comparison with public schools. Private business schools also sometimes suffer from insufficient numbers of faculty and administrative staff. Employers tend to differentiate between students coming from the private sector and those coming from the public sector and to favor the latter.

In order to enhance their image and perception among potential students, most private business schools have developed international partnerships as well as joint degrees with the participation of faculty from partner institutions. They have also promoted further relationships with local and international businesses in order to develop higher job expectations for their students.

As the business environment changes rapidly, most business and management schools need to update and adjust their programs very quickly. This challenge is faced by most schools even if they have developed large and efficient partnerships with international institutions. Most schools of business are required to pursue local research for development and invest in more localized case studies in order to keep up with the provision of training that emphasizes global and local knowledge in the area of business and management. Besides that, linkages with engineering schools are important for the development of innovative businesses and enterprise models. Omission of social and human factors from the curricula may result in the exclusion of large segments of the population from important business projects.

In addition, businesses make a relatively low contribution to the education process compared with the number of students and institutions. Schools of business and management need experienced faculty to perform major tasks aside from teaching. Faculty is expected to conduct research, develop business-related activities in the Moroccan context, and advise students. Besides the existence and the strengthening of the mechanisms for national accreditation, international accreditation is increasingly becoming necessary for comparisons of performances and for the promotion and sustainability of quality in teaching, applied research and development.

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Further reading

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