



CSM / ICYE MOROCCO



MOROCCO NATIONAL PROFILE



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GENERAL PRESENTATION

Morocco, located in North Africa, is a country with a rich tapestry of history, diverse landscapes, and a unique blend of cultural influences. From its ancient Berber roots to the Islamic era, colonial past, and modern developments, Morocco offers a captivating mix of tradition and progress.

Morocco has a rich history shaped by various civilizations, including the Berbers, Phoenicians, Romans, Arabs, and French and Spanish colonial powers. It became a center for trade and culture under different dynasties, such as the Almoravids and Almohads. In 1956, Morocco gained independence from French and Spanish protectorates.



Geography:

Morocco's geographical diversity is striking. It boasts a varied landscape that includes the Atlas Mountains, fertile plains, the vast Sahara Desert, and a picturesque coastline along the Atlantic Ocean and the Mediterranean Sea. This diversity contributes to Morocco's appeal, offering both historic cities and natural wonders.

Morocco covers an area of about 446,550 square kilometers.

Capital and Major Cities:

The capital of Morocco is Rabat, a city known for its historical significance and modern development. Other major cities include Casablanca, a bustling economic hub; Marrakech, famous for its vibrant markets and architecture; and Fes, known for its well-preserved medieval medina.



Language and Religion:

Arabic is the official language of Morocco, while Amazigh (Berber) is also recognized. Islam is the predominant religion, with Sunni Muslims comprising the majority of the population. Mosques, such as the iconic Hassan II Mosque in Casablanca, stand as architectural marvels and spiritual landmarks.



Economy:

Morocco has a diverse economy with sectors like agriculture, mining, and tourism playing crucial roles. The country has made efforts to attract foreign investment, implement economic reforms, and promote sustainable development. Casablanca, as an economic and financial center, reflects Morocco's ambitions for growth.

Political Landscape:

Morocco is a constitutional monarchy with a parliamentary system. The king holds a central role in the political structure, and the country has seen a degree of political stability compared to some of its regional counterparts. Ongoing efforts for political and social reforms are shaping the nation's future.

Other information's :



Language Skills:



The official languages of Morocco are Arabic and Amazigh (Berber). Arabic is used in government, education, and official communications. Amazigh, spoken by the Berber population, is also recognized as an official language and has gained more prominence in recent years with efforts to preserve and promote Berber culture.

Additionally, French is widely used in various sectors, such as administration, business, and education. It holds a significant role in diplomatic and economic contexts. Many Moroccans are bilingual in Arabic and French.

In urban areas and among the educated population, English is becoming more prevalent, especially in business and the tourism industry. However, proficiency in English may vary across different regions and demographic groups. Overall, Morocco's linguistic landscape reflects its historical and cultural diversity.

Safety in Morocco:



Morocco, in general, is considered a relatively safe destination for tourists. However, like any other country, it's important for visitors to be aware of their surroundings and take certain precautions to ensure their safety. Here are some considerations regarding safety in Moroccan streets:

Low Crime Rates: Morocco has a reputation for having relatively low crime rates, especially violent crime. However, like in any destination, petty crimes such as pickpocketing can occur, particularly in crowded tourist areas.

Tourist Areas: Popular tourist areas, like the medinas in cities such as Marrakech and Fes, can be bustling and crowded. Visitors should be vigilant in these areas, keep a close eye on their belongings, and be cautious of pickpockets.

Street Etiquette: Respect local customs and traditions. Dress modestly, particularly in more conservative areas, and be mindful of local etiquette. This can contribute to a positive and respectful experience.

Transport

- All our project is located in the capital of Morocco Rabat, so it is accessible via Taxi, Tram or Train.
- To get to the Rabat Ville Train Station from the airport you can take the bus right outside the gate for 20 dirhams; it will leave you in front of the train station. With a taxi, it should cost you about 200 dirhams (price negotiable).
- If you arrive in any other airport of the country, you will be able to reach Rabat by train. Check the timetable and connections on www.oncf.ma
- Once you have your flights details please pass them by e-mail to your interlocutor so you can arrange with him/her the meeting point.
- The info sheet will be sent to you by e-mail 3 weeks' prior departure.



Visa Requirements

Please note that according to the new Visa Regulations, volunteers coming from Europe to Morocco don't need a visa but they are allowed to stay only 90 days.

Exit and Re-entry: If volunteers need to extend their stay beyond 90 days, leaving the country and re-entering, as described, might be a way to reset the 90-day clock. However, the specific details, requirements, and any potential restrictions should be confirmed with Moroccan immigration authorities.

ICYE Morocco

Chantiers Sociaux Marocains has its main office in Rabat. The organization the ICYE Federation as associate member in 2001. Voluntary service placements are mainly in education, health and development projects working with children, women and the local community at large.

We are a network of 45 sections and we are part of:

- UMAC, Moroccan union of work camps association
- Association's space
- UMAV, Maghreb union of volunteering action
- ICYE, International Cultural youth exchange
- Alliance of workcamps associations
- Foundation Anna Lindh

Our general aim is to promote peace, tolerance, solidarity and self-determination in Morocco. The main objectives of the organization are to contribute to the strengthening the civil society, developing human rights, democracy, peace and solidarity in Morocco. We work for the awareness of the importance of volunteering and the need to its recognition and reinforce the values of citizenship and strengthen the capacity of the population to contribute to sustainable development.

Very useful advices

Women should avoid provocative clothing (short pants or skirts and uncovered shoulders are considered provocative)

- Don't smoke, drink and eat in public during the day in the month of Ramadan
- Never disturb someone in prayer

- Avoid criticizing politics or religion!
- Don't touch any illegal drugs other cultural advices could be:
- You should take of your shoes before entering a room with a carpet.
- Don't eat or greet people with your left hand as Moroccans use that hand for toilet
- Never refuse if you are invited by locals to drink tea
- It is a tradition and a pleasure to bargain on the price.