

Indicators Assessment- Unitary States

Country Name: Morocco

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This Indicators Assessment report offers a country assessment of 4 composite indicators: (1) state-religious institutions relations, (2) status of religious minority groups, (3) religious radicalisation level, and (4) radicalisation prevention measures. It is part of a series covering 23 countries (listed below) on four continents. This assessment report was produced by GREASE, an EU-funded research project investigating religious diversity, secularism and religiously inspired radicalisation.

Countries covered in this series:

Albania, Australia, Belgium, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Egypt, France, Germany, Greece, Italy, Hungary, India, Indonesia, Lebanon, Lithuania, Malaysia, Morocco, Russia, Slovakia, Spain, Tunisia, Turkey and the United Kingdom.

<https://www.grease.eui.eu>



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The EU-Funded GREASE project looks to Asia for insights on governing religious diversity and preventing radicalisation.

Involving researchers from Europe, North Africa, the Middle East, Asia and Oceania, GREASE is investigating how religious diversity is governed in over 20 countries. Our work focuses on comparing norms, laws and practices that may (or may not) prove useful in preventing religious radicalisation. Our research also sheds light on how different societies cope with the challenge of integrating religious minorities and migrants. The aim is to deepen our understanding of how religious diversity can be governed successfully, with an emphasis on countering radicalisation trends.

While exploring religious governance models in other parts of the world, GREASE also attempts to unravel the European paradox of religious radicalisation despite growing secularisation. We consider the claim that migrant integration in Europe has failed because second generation youth have become marginalised and radicalised, with some turning to jihadist terrorism networks. The researchers aim to deliver innovative academic thinking on secularisation and radicalisation while offering insights for governance of religious diversity.

The project is being coordinated by Professor Anna Triandafyllidou from The European University Institute (EUI) in Italy. Other consortium members include Professor Tariq Modood from The University of Bristol (UK); Dr. H. A. Hellyer from the Royal United Services Institute (RUSI) (UK); Dr. Mila Mancheva from The Centre for the Study of Democracy (Bulgaria); Dr. Egdunas Raciunas from Vytautas Magnus University (Lithuania); Mr. Terry Martin from the research communications agency SPIA (Germany); Professor Mehdi Lahlou from Mohammed V University of Rabat (Morocco); Professor Haldun Gulalp of The Turkish Economic and Social Studies Foundation (Turkey); Professor Pradana Boy of Universitas Muhammadiyah Malang (Indonesia); Professor Zawawi Ibrahim of The Strategic Information and Research Development Centre (Malaysia); Professor Gurpreet Mahajan of Jawaharlal Nehru University (India); and Professor Michele Grossman of Deakin University (Melbourne, Australia). GREASE is scheduled for completion in 2022.

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GREASE - Radicalisation, Secularism and the Governance of Religion: Bringing Together European and Asian Perspectives

Country Assessment Report

Name of Country Assessed: Morocco

I. Composite Indicator 1: State-Religious Institutions Relations

Overall Assessment:

Morocco's constitution proclaims Islam as the state's religion. The same constitution - the one that was adopted in 2011, like the ones before - gives the king, who is the Head of State, all power to rule the religious sphere but certain decisions are, however, taken after consultation with religious institutions. This was for example the case when it came to closing places of worship in Morocco during the health crisis linked to Coronavirus 19.

Globally, the Constitution allows freedom of religion, but this is true in theory only. In fact, no freedom in this regard is recognized for Moroccans who are assumed to have been born Muslims. This represents 99% of the population.

In the field, Islamic law is only applied in the context of personal status. All other laws are based on non-religious texts and sources. However, certain articles of the penal code have for object the respect of certain obligations attached to Islam.

However, some parties ruling the government sometimes base their ideology and some of their practices on Islam.

With respect to the freedom for religious groups/communities to set up and manage educational institutions, it need to be noted that Jewish and Christian religious minorities are empowered to manage their own educational structures.

A notable development regarding the autonomy of religious media, was the 2005 launch of the first religious TV channel in Morocco. The programs of this Qur'anic religious channel are dedicated to promoting the values of Islam according to the Malekite rite.

1. State autonomy from religion	Score	YEAR (Most Recent)
(1a) Legal dimension: The Constitution/Basic law defines the state as secular	Low	2020
(1b) Practical Dimension: Actual level of state political autonomy/independence from religion.	Medium	2020
2. Participation of religious institutions and religious groups in political decision-making and policy-making.	Score	YEAR (Most Recent)
(2a) Legal Dimension: The Constitution/Basic law or other more relevant legislation forbids formal participation of religious institutions and religious groups in formal political decision-making.	Low	2020
(2b) Practical Dimension: In practice, religious institutions and religious groups lack formal participation in political decision-making.	High	2020
3. Religiously-based political parties in political life.	Score	YEAR (Most Recent)

(3a) Legal Dimension: The Constitution/Basic law or other more relevant legislation forbids participation of religiously-based political parties in political life.	High	2020
(3b) Practical Dimension: In practice, religiously-based political parties lack participation in political life.	Very high	2020
4. State non-interference in the regulation of religious matters of religious institutions and religious communities (including regulation of religious courts, councils, religious family laws, etc.).	Score	YEAR (Most Recent)
(4a) Legal Dimension: The Constitution/Basic law or other more relevant legislation enforces state non-interference in the regulation of religious matters of religious institutions and religious communities.	Very low	2020
(4b) Practical Dimension: In practice, there is no state interference in the regulation of religious affairs of religious institutions and religious communities.	Very low	2020
5. State non-interference in the regulation of the administrative matters of religious institutions and religious communities (including personnel and funds).	Score	YEAR (Most Recent)
(5a) Legal dimension: The Constitution/Basic law or other more relevant legislation enforces state non-interference in the regulation (e.g., personnel, financial matters) of the administrative matters of religious institutions and religious communities.	Very low	2020
(5b) Practical Dimension: In practice, there is no state interference in the regulation of the administrative affairs (e.g., personnel, financial, etc.) of religious institutions and religious communities.	Very low	2020
6. State recognition of freedom of religion.	Score	YEAR (Most Recent)
(6a) Legal Dimension: The Constitution/Basic law or other more relevant legislation allows freedom of religion.	Low	2020
(6b) Practical Dimension: In practice, religious groups/communities enjoy freedom of religion.	Medium	2020
7. Freedom for religious groups/communities to set up and manage educational institutions.	Score	YEAR (Most Recent)
(7a) Legal dimension: The Constitution/Basic law or other more relevant religious legislation allows religious groups/communities to set up and manage educational institutions.	Medium	2020
(7b) Practical Dimension: Religious groups/communities set up and manage educational institutions.	Medium	2020
8. Autonomy of religious media	Score	YEAR (Most Recent)

(8a) Legal dimension: The Constitution/Basic law or other more relevant legislation recognises and allows religious media.	Low	2020
(8b) Practical Dimension: In practice, religious media practice their activity.	Low	2020

II. Composite Indicator 2: Status of Religious Minority Groups

Overall Assessment:

The Moroccan population, which counts 36 million people in 2020, is presented as almost totally Muslim.

Otherwise, at the level of population stratification on the basis of belonging to a given religion / belief, there is no census, and there have never been any field surveys in Morocco on ethnic or religious background. But, the most commonly held estimates suggest that about 99% of Moroccans are supposed to be "Sunni Muslims" religiously or culturally. The numbers of the Jewish minority has decreased significantly since the creation of the State of Israel in Palestine, in 1948. Today there are about 3,000 Moroccan Jews inside the country. There is also a small, but apparently, growing minority of Moroccan Christians made of local Moroccan converts. There is a small community of "Shiaa" Muslim converts and Bahaïs, but of unknown numbers. All this means that, overall, Morocco is considered to be a country which is primarily Muslim, with no other significant religious presence. From there, the question of the management of the religious sphere by Moroccan authorities arises more in terms of administration of (and control over) the affairs of the same kind of the majority of its population than in accompanying or protecting Jewish or Christian minorities.

No other status than that of being Muslim is explicitly recognized by the Moroccan constitution. However, the article 3 which states that " Islam is the religion of the State, which guarantees to all the free exercise of beliefs", implicitly concerns the Jewish and Christian communities. These two communities have complete freedom to exercise their cults and beliefs. No other religious minority has such freedom. Moroccans supposedly of Muslim faith also do not in fact have such a freedom.

1. Legal status of religious minority groups.	Score	YEAR (Most Recent)
(1a) Legal dimension: The Constitution/Basic law or other more relevant religious legislation recognises religious minority groups.	High	2020
(1b) Practical Dimension: In practice, religious minority groups enjoy legal registration status recognised by the government.	High	2020
2. Religious minority group participation in political life.	Score	YEAR (Most Recent)
(2a) Legal Dimension: Constitution/Basic law or other more relevant religious legislation grants religious minority groups rights to participate in the political life of the state.	Insufficient information	2020
(2b) Practical Dimension: Religious minority groups participate in political life.	Very low	2020
3. Special social security status of religious minority groups.	Score	YEAR (Most Recent)

(3a) Legal Dimension: The Constitution/Basic law or other more relevant religious legislation grants religious minority groups rights to special social security benefits.	Insufficient information	2020
(3b) Practical Dimension: In practice, religious minority groups have special access to social security benefits.	Very low	2020
4. Access of religious minority groups to public spaces.	Score	YEAR (Most Recent)
(4a) Legal Dimension: The Constitution/Basic law or other more relevant religious legislation grants religious minority groups right of access to public spaces.	Insufficient information	2020
(4b) Practical Dimension: Religious minority groups enjoy access to public spaces.	Very low	2020
5. Access to public funds for initiatives/activities of religious minority groups.	Score	YEAR (Most Recent)
(5a) Legal dimension: The Constitution/Basic law or other more relevant religious legislation grants religious minority groups right of access to public funds for their own initiatives/activities.	Insufficient information	2020
(5b) Practical Dimension: Religious minority groups have access to public funds for their own initiatives/activities.	Very low	2020
6. Public accommodation of cultural practices specific to religious minority groups.	Score	YEAR (Most Recent)
(6a) Legal Dimension: The Constitution/Basic law or other more relevant religious legislation allows public accommodation of cultural practices specific to religious minority groups.	Medium	2020
(6b) Practical Dimension: Religious minority groups express their cultural practices publicly.	High	2020
7. Ownership of houses of worship.	Score	YEAR (Most Recent)
(7a) Legal dimension: The Constitution/Basic law or other more relevant religious legislation grants religious minority groups rights to own their houses of worship.	Not applicable	2020
(7b) Practical Dimension: Religious minority groups own houses of worship.	High	2020

III. **Composite Indicator 3: Radicalization Levels**

Overall assessment:

Morocco will know, from the end of the 1970s and the beginning of the 1980s, a rise of conservatism and a process of radicalization of a part, more and more visible, of its (young) population in connection with a set of international events, and in parallel with domestic economic, social and political developments.

Among the major challenges posed by the structure of the Moroccan population, that is to say mainly its youth, there is unemployment, in addition to the low level of national income and the high level of illiteracy among adults.

The available socio-economic data show that Morocco, and its population, can be considered in a situation of relative poverty, including within the Arab world.

Indeed, with a total Gross Domestic Product (GDP) of 103.61 billion US\$ (estimate 2018), the income per capita equals 2,832 US\$. Considering the Index of human development (IHD), Morocco has been ranked 123rd in the UNDP 2018 report among 189 countries, down from 122 in 2016. Thus, Morocco is ranked “medium” in human development group with an HDI of 0.667 out of 1 (0.598 for women and 0.713 for men) after Egypt (ranked 115), or even Palestine (ranked 119) or Iraq (ranked 120).

This ranking also takes into account the fact that the rate of illiteracy in Morocco continues to be high, since it still reaches nearly 32% of the adult population, one of the highest rate in the Arab world. When it comes to the situation on the labor market in Morocco, the highest unemployment rates are still the lot of young people, women and graduates persons, living in urban areas, according to the High Planning Commission.

The level of protection of human rights in 2020 is lower than it was in 2006 and the level of group grievances in 2020 is high, which is due in particular to the way the public authorities have managed certain social protests, notably the so-called *Hirak* movement, which started in northern Morocco in 2016.

In a more positive development, the presence of significant violent extremist actors/networks and the level of social hostilities based on religion remain low in 2020.

1. Structural factors/environment	Score/Level/Percentage	YEAR (Most Recent)
(1a) Level of Freedom	Level: Partly free Freedom score: 37	2020
(1b) Level of adherence to rule of law	Overall rank: 79 Overall score: 0.5	2020
(1c) Level of religious-related government restrictions	Score: 7 Level: Very high	2020
(1d) Level of state legitimacy	Score: 6.8 Level: Low	2017
(1e) Level of protection of human rights	Score: 5.9 Level: Moderate	2020
(1f) Level of group grievances	Score: 8.8 Level: High	2020
(1g) Uneven economic development	Score: 5.1 Level: Moderate	2018
(1h) Wealth disparity (top 10% possessing above average percentage of the total income share)	Percentage: Insufficient information	2013

2. Perception-based indicators (social grievances)	Percentage (%)	YEAR (Most Recent)
(2a) Distrust in national institutions	Parliament: 57.5 % Government: 67.8 % Other: Justice: 41%; Police: 22% Army: 16.7%	2019
(2b) Political discontent	Dissatisfaction with country direction: 15.7% Dissatisfaction with overall situation: NA Dissatisfaction with democracy/government performance: 27.9 % Other: NA	2018 2018
(2c) Economic discontent	Dissatisfaction own financial situation: 37.3% Dissatisfaction national economy: 55% Economic situation is the most serious problem: NA Other: NA	2020 2019
(2d) Discrimination	Discrimination is widespread: NA Opposing diversity: NA. Discomfort with minorities: 32.9 % Dislike neighbors from minority groups: NA Experienced discrimination: NA Other: NA	2020 2018
(2e) Views on violent extremism	VE is a serious problem/threat: Insufficient Information. Endorsement of VE actions/ actors: Other:	

3. Incidence-based indicators (religious violence and conflict)	Score/Level/Number	YEAR (Most Recent)
(3a) State-based armed conflict	No	2020
(3b) Level of social hostilities involving religion	Level: Low	2020
(3c) Incidence and impact of terrorism	Score: GTI: 1.125 Number of Incidents: 0	2020
(3d) Violent extremist incidents	Number: 0	2020
(3e) Significant violent extremist actors/networks	Level: Very	2020

IV. **Composite Indicator 4: Radicalization Prevention Measures**

In May 2003, Morocco will undergo the first large-scale terrorist attack on its territory. 45 people then died in Casablanca as a result of attacks committed in hotels and places of worship.

No national strategic plan existed before 2014.

This strategy was not discussed in parliament, but rather was presented by the Moroccan Minister for Islamic Affairs to the United Nations Security Council in 2014 during a debate on terrorism.

Security services remain predominant at this level, but a presentation of some of most parts of this strategy has been done within Moroccan case report.

There is no significant room for human rights when it comes to the application of such a strategy. This mainly because the most Human Rights Association in Morocco, the AMDH, considered by the government to be hostile, is rarely involved by the government in political or security matters. The National Human Rights Council, an official structure enshrined in the constitution since 2011, is consulted from time to time on subjects relating to the strategy followed by the authorities in matters of religion and the fight against terrorism, but, considered as a not independent body from the State, this council lacks credibility in public opinion.

Relevant initiatives aimed at women started around 2010, in mosques, as part of the policy to reduce illiteracy. They have continued since 2014/2015 through the policy of managing the religious space. One of the most interesting grassroots initiatives related to countering violent extremism is led by a Moroccan association called Center for People's Rights. It acts in particular in prisons with people convicted of terrorist acts. Its activities include the organization of music, theater and painting sessions, as well as training in civic education and human rights.

1. Comprehensive strategic approach	Score	YEAR (Most Recent)
(1a) Legislative foundation for adoption of PVE action plan	Yes	2020
(1b) Existence of PVE strategy and a national action plan	Yes	2020
(1c) Presence of comprehensive monitoring mechanisms of strategy / action plan implementation.	Yes	2020
(1d) Presence of dedicated body tasked with PVE strategy development and coordination	Yes	2020
(1e) Compliance of strategy and action plan with human rights standards and the principles of rule of law	Insufficient information	2020
(1f) Participation of a wide range of government actors in development and implementation of PVE strategy and action plan.	Yes	2020
(1g) Participation of non-government actors in development and implementation of PVE strategy and action plan.	Very limited participation	2020
(1h) Reference to FTFs and related measures in PVE strategy/action plan.	Insufficient information	2020
(1i) Reference to terrorism financing and related measures in PVE strategy and action plan	Insufficient information	2020

(1j) Reference to communication counter- or alternative narrative campaigns in PVE strategy/action plan

Insufficient information

2020

2. Comprehensiveness of measures - areas of action, actors and projects	Score	YEAR (Most Recent)
(2a) Development and implementation of programmes for support of victims of terrorism and violent extremism	No	2020
(2b) Training for frontline practitioners	Insufficient information	2020
(2c) Initiatives to improve the preparedness of security forces, law enforcement and justice institutions to deal with radicalisation.	Insufficient information	2020
(2d) Development and implementation of P/CVE-specific education initiatives for youth	Insufficient information	2020
(2e) Development and implementation of P/CVE education initiatives and projects for women.	Yes	2020
(2f) Platforms for intra and interfaith dialogue between the state and religious leaders.	Insufficient information	2020
(2g) Networks for civil society, religious leaders, youth and women's organisations for dialogue, cooperation and best practices.	Insufficient information	2020
(2h) Grassroots initiatives by civil society actors focussed on prevention;	Moderate level	2020
(2i) Counter- and alternative- narrative campaigns	No	2020
(2j) Multi-agency cooperation and/or referral mechanisms at local level identifying and supporting at-risk persons.	Insufficient information	2020
(2k) State-commissioned research on religiously-inspired radicalisation and violent extremism.	No	2020
(2l) programs and measures to prevent radicalisation into violent extremism in prison and probation settings.	Yes	2020

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