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The Maghreb Integration Report 2020

**Economic Partnerships as an
alternative for Political Stalemate**

Dr. Mohammed Masbah

Dr. Rachid Aourraz

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Authors :

Dr. Mohammed Masbah

Dr. Rachid Aourraz

For information please write to :

Moroccan Institute for Policy Analysis No. 5, Apt. 5, Rue Figuig, Hassan, Rabat

<https://mipa.institute>

contact@mipa.institute

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Table des matières

About the authors	6
Acknowledgment	7
Key Findings	8
Introduction	11
Research Methodology	14
Research Findings	17
1. Social relations	18
2. Freedom of movement of individuals	23
3. Attitudes towards Maghreb integration	28
Appendixes	38

About the authors

| **Dr. Mohammed Masbah:** Director of the Moroccan Policy Analysis Institute and associate fellow at MENA programme at the Chatham House. Previously he was as a non-resident scholar at the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace and a fellow at the German Institute for International and Security Affairs in Berlin. He is a researcher in politics and sociology whose work focuses on authoritarianism, youth movements and political Islam, with the focus on North Africa. Dr. Masbah holds a PhD in Sociology from Mohamed V University in Rabat.

| **Dr. Rachid Aourraz:** Senior Fellow at the Moroccan Institute for Policy Analysis, he is a Moroccan economist specializing on the impact of education and institutions on economic development. He is a regular contributor at local and Arab newspapers, and contributed to discussions on Moroccan and Arab channels, as well as contributed to translating a number of publications in recent years. Dr. Aourraz holds a PhD in Applied Economics from Ibn Zohr University in Agadir.

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Key Findings

- There are strong social ties between Moroccans and citizens of the Maghreb countries, where about half of the respondents in the survey said that they have a social relationship with a citizen from the Maghreb region (Algeria, Tunisia, Libya, Mauritania), although the kind and depth of the relationship varies from one case to another. However, it shows that there are deep social ties between the citizens of these countries.
- About 47% of the respondents affirm that they actually have kinships with Maghreb citizens, and the percentage of women in this case is not very different from men, as about 45% of males and about 47% of women said that they have relationships with citizens of the Maghreb countries.
- The respondents showed that they have family relationships mostly with people from Algeria and Tunisia, at 45 and 34% respectively. This reflects the historical relations between Morocco, Algeria and Tunisia, as they are the countries that have historical and cultural ties close to Morocco.
- Only 16% of all respondents have traveled to one of the Maghreb countries, and this percentage varies between the two genders, as about 19% of males expressed that they had previously traveled to one of the Maghreb countries, while the percentage decreased to about 12% for females.
- Tunisia was ranked first on the list of countries visited by the participants in survey, by more than half of them, it was mainly due to the fact that Tunisia is an international touristic destination compared to other countries, as well as its openness in recent years despite some difficulties that its tourism sector has experienced as a result of terrorism from which the country has suffered. Algeria comes second

by virtue of the geographical proximity and family relations that link Moroccan families with Algerian families.

- Moroccan respondents show a clear preference for living in Tunisia, up to 53% of the total respondents, in the event that they were given the opportunity to live in another Maghreb country other than Morocco.
- About 31% of the respondents stated that the reason for traveling is related to meetings in academic seminars, whereas 20% said that the primary reason for the travel is tourism and 18% for business. The rest was either to visit relatives (12%) or friends (10%) or other reasons. It is noticed that the travels for reasons related to business are at the bottom of the list by 3.97%, and this reflects the low economic integration among the countries of the Maghreb.
- It is difficult to predict the future of the Maghreb, which suffers from internal difficulties, however, the results of the study show that most Moroccan citizens are optimistic about the future of the region. 58% of respondents expressed optimism about the future of the Maghreb Union, whereas 42% were not as optimistic.
- 95% of respondents agreed that the economic exchange among Maghreb countries will enhance the Maghreb integration, and 83% of them confirmed that the conflict between Morocco and Algeria is the main obstacle hindering the Maghreb Union project.
- The respondents put “political differences among Maghreb countries” first on the list of factors by up to 48%. Comes second “some countries of the region desire to dominate” by up to 23%, which in turn is a political factor that may explain some of the political differences among Union Countries. This confirms that the respondents attributed the failure of the Union to political factors in the first place. Then comes the third factor which is “fear of economic openness” by 5%, “stereotypes about the people of the Maghreb” by

6% and “the exclusion of the Amazigh culture in the countries of the Maghreb” by 5%.

- 89% of respondents expressed their wish to see the borders between Morocco and Algeria reopened.
- Concerning the cultural commonalities among the countries of the Maghreb, 91% of the respondents indicated that the people of the Maghreb region are culturally close. –
- 95.5% of the older age group (50 years and over) expressed their wish to see the border between Morocco and Algeria open, while this percentage drops to about 85% of the 18-24 age group. All respondents between the ages of 36 and 49 expressed their agreement with enhancing economic exchange as one of the entry points for promoting the Maghreb integration.

Introduction

The Maghreb is one of the least politically and economically integrated regions in the world. The trade exchanges within the region stands at less than 5% of the overall foreign trade exchanges of the Maghreb countries, which is much lower than all other regional trade blocs around the world¹. This has major negative impacts. A 2018 report by the International Monetary Fund indicates that furthering integration among the Maghreb countries does have positive repercussions from an economic point of view. This will make the region more attractive to foreign direct investment, help reduce costs of trade within the region and bolster capital and labor mobility. This will equally increase the efficiency of allocating resources and make the Maghreb more resilient to shocks and market fluctuations².

The end of the 1980th constituted a remarkable opportunity to achieve Maghreb integration, and hopes were placed on the “Arab Maghreb Union” organization to build a Maghreb bloc, but it was a born dead project. The establishment of this organization was merely a response to domestic and external events of that period, especially the economic hardships experienced by the countries of the region and the emergence of extremism. On the other hand, a number of researchers attributed the failure of the Maghreb Union to the tensions between Algeria and Morocco, which constitute the main obstacle³ to achieving any progress in the path of the Maghreb integration, especially because of the Moroccan-Algerian dispute regarding the Western Sahara.

Regardless of the “political” reasons that led to the failure of this project, the cost of integration was high, especially in social terms. This failure has generated frustration among citizens who have an extensive

¹ Alexei Kireyev (and others), Economic Integration in the Maghreb: An Untapped Source of Growth, International Monetary Fund, 2018.

² IBID

³ Yahia H. Zoubir (2012) Tipping the Balance Towards Intra-Maghreb Unity in Light of the Arab Spring, *The International Spectator*, 47:3, 83-99, DOI: 10.1080/03932729.2012.700024

social network and a shared cultural identity. The closure of the borders between Morocco and Algeria since 1994 and the crackdown on the smuggling trade since 2014 have had significant social impacts, especially on the citizens who live in the bordering areas.

Although there is an abundance of studies highlighting the importance of regional integration, they all share a focus on a macro-level approach to integration, i.e., focusing on the political and economic aspects of integration. Despite the relevance of these literature for understanding the economic and political cost of the failed Maghreb integration, there is a lack of research that examines citizens' perceptions of the issue of Maghreb integration⁴.

Therefore, MIPA Institute chose to focus on alternative way to look to the Maghreb Integration by paying attention to the micro-level, especially the social relations and perceptions of citizens on the issue of Maghreb integration. In this regard, this research project was designed by the Moroccan Institute for Policy Analysis to study the perceptions of citizens and the degree of public opinion support for the issue of integration among the Maghreb countries.

In light of the current political deadlock and the persistence of the same obstacles that led to the failure of the Maghreb integration project, this study suggests a micro-level approach that provide a more pragmatic alternative. At the heart of the this approach is the active role of civil society in building cross national networks and also strengthening social relations between Maghreb citizens as a kind of popular diplomacy, an alternative to classical diplomacy that is based on institutional relations between countries.

It may be argued that the reasons that led to the failure of the “Arab Maghreb Union” project still exist, especially the Moroccan-Algerian ri-

⁴ Except for one research on the issue examining citizen representations in Algeria regarding the Maghreb integration which looked into a sample population of 90 respondents. For more information, see: Luis Martinez, *Algeria, the Arab Maghreb Union and Regional Integration*, Euromesco, 2006.

valry, in addition to other newer factors, such as the Libyan revolution which turned into a civil war that affected the Maghreb as a whole. However, there is some light at the end of the tunnel for a potential revival of the Maghreb project, especially in the next few years.

Domestically, a number of Maghreb countries have witnessed remarkable political dynamic, since 2011, which led Tunisia to embark on a democratic transition that is consolidating despite major security and economic challenges. Moreover, Morocco launched a package of political and constitutional reforms in 2011, and also started a new policy towards Africa, which had mixed results on the economic and political levels, especially after Morocco's attempt to join the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) faltered, which may constitute an opportunity for Morocco To favor a return to the Maghreb⁵. Finally, Algeria is drawing its own model of popular protests since February 2019, which have had remarkable results, most notably the deposing of former President Abdelaziz Bouteflika and the entry of the country into a remarkable political dynamic. It is difficult to predict its outcomes, but it is likely to lead decision-makers in Algeria to adopt more political and economic openness, which may include opening the border with Morocco.

⁵ Imru AL Qays Talha Jebri, Morocco-ECOWAS: Good intentions are not enough, Moroccan Institute for Policy Analysis, 13 February 2020 <https://mipa.institute/7323>

Research Methodology

This research was based on a quantitative research method through the use of self-administered online questionnaire method⁶ using the Qualtrics software, which is a program intended for online questionnaires.

The questionnaires were filled out by respondents between October 15 and December 30, 2019, and were sent to registrants in the institute's database (which includes about 1,000 people notably researchers, experts, decision makers and civil society activists), in addition to sharing the survey on social media networks, especially Facebook and Twitter, to ensure a representative geographical distribution of the sample participating in the survey.

The questionnaire included 22 questions, and the survey data indicate that 88% of the respondents took an average of 10 minutes to fill out the form, while the rest took longer. The dropout rate was about 20% for the last question.

The research included a sample of 1,200 people representing the Moroccan population aged 18 years or over. Quota method (gender, age, and geographic region) was chosen to ensure sample balance. The research sought to ensure a broad representation of the population by taking into account the data provided by the general census of the population carried out by the High Planning Commission (RGHP 2014).

A number of precautions have been adopted to ensure the reliability of the answers and the diversity of the respondents. Filling out the survey more than once using the same device or the same e-mail was not allowed. It was also confirmed that the questionnaires were filled out by humans to avoid Bot-generated responses. This issue has already been verified by looking at the IP address of the respondents. Finally, survey participants were asked to (voluntarily) write their email addresses in the event that

⁶ SAQ refers to a questionnaire designed to be filled out directly by the respondent without the researcher's having to intervene.

they wanted to receive report once its published and 720 emails were actually keyed in.

With regard to the distribution of the respondents by sex, half of the participants were female and half were male. As for the age, the average age of the respondents was 30 years. The age group between 18-24 constitutes about a third of the respondents, while 41% of respondents belonged to the 25-35 group, 17% to the 36-49 age group, and 8% to the fifty-years-and-older age group.

Figure 1: Sex

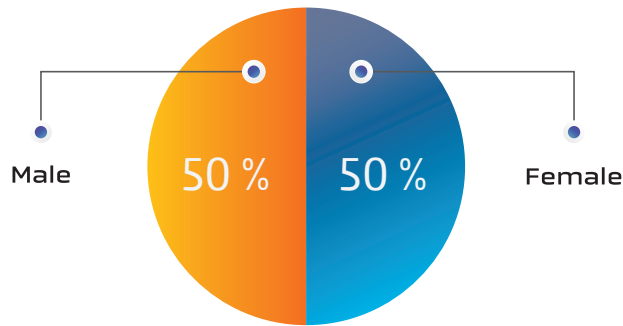
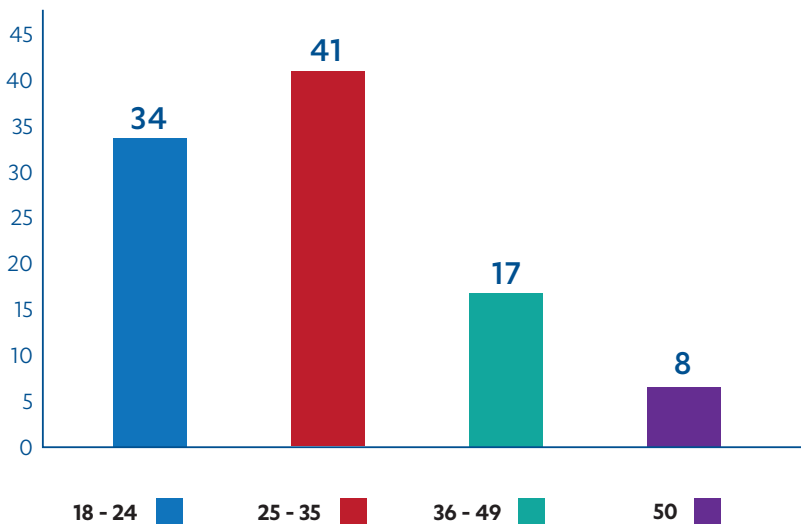
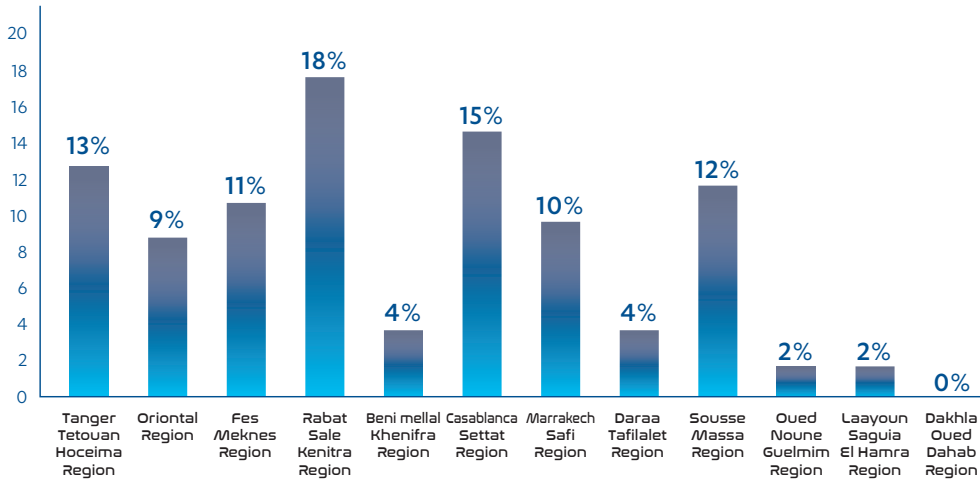


Figure 2: Age



As for the geographical distribution, about 18% of the respondents were from Rabat-Sale-Kenitra region, 15% from Casablanca-Settat region, 13% from Tangier-Tetouan-Al Hoceima region, 12% from Souss- Massa region, 11% from Fez-Meknes, 10% from Marrakesh-Safi, and 9% from the Orient region, while the rest of the respondents were distributed among other regions of the Kingdom.

Figure 3: Respondents by region



People with an income below 8000 dirhams make up about 70% of the respondents while 34% have an income of less than 3000 dirhams, 36% earn between 3,000 and 8,000 dirhams per month. 30% of the respondents' incomes exceed 8000 dirhams per month. As for the educational level, about 44% of the respondents hold university level (a bachelor's degree), 27% have a master's degree and 14% have a doctorate, while 8% hold a secondary education level.

Research Findings

1. Social relations

Despite the strained political relations, the Maghreb is associated with a strong cultural identity, reflected by similar customs and traditions. The shared cultural heritage in the countries of the Maghreb is rooted in history. These countries share a multitude of cultural foundations, spoken languages (Amazigh and Arabic) as well as art, gastronomy, and costumes. The countries of the Maghreb have enormous potential to create an integrated cultural and artistic scene, but they are underutilized. There are some isolated attempts at co-operation, such as the joint application by Algeria, Morocco, Mauritania and Tunisia in March 2019 to propose the nomination of couscous as a World Heritage⁷.

The Maghreb countries are also characterized by overlapping social relations. Until a few years ago, some border areas - such as Figuig, Oujda, and Maghnia - were interlinked with social, cultural and economic ties. The political borders were not able to curb this overlap between the components of the Maghreb⁸. Relations between Moroccans and the rest of the citizens of the Maghreb countries were active before the Moroccan-Algerian border was closed in 1994. Some studies have shown that although the closing of land borders between Morocco and Algeria imposed a new reality, the local population is weaving participatory family and trade relations. Moreover, it has forged a set of independent customs in relations with smugglers and border monitors, which are socially acceptable to meet local needs. Hence, the closure of the borders did not prevent the local population from “violating it” on a daily basis, acceptable to the various concerned parties (smugglers, residents, and border patrols)⁹. This

7 May Bart, *Regionalism in North Africa: the Arab Maghreb Union in 2019*, Brussels International Center, June 2019.

8 Mohammed Masbah and Mohamed El Dahshan, *Synergy in North Africa: Furthering Cooperation*, Chatham House, January 2020, <https://www.chathamhouse.org/publication/synergy-north-africa-furthering-cooperation>.

9 Fatiha Daoudi. *Analyse de situation aux frontières terrestres algéro-marocaines : vie quotidienne d'une population partagée*. Science politique. Université Grenoble Alpes, 2015.

situation has changed since 2014, after the Algerian authorities tightened border controls in order to prevent smuggling, which led to a significant decline in the level of “infiltration” of the borders and a decrease in smuggling activities and movement of persons.

Based on these considerations, it seems reasonable to understand how strong social ties between Moroccans and other Maghreb citizens are, and how this affects their perceptions regarding the Maghreb integration. Hence, the first part of the research is devoted to the topic of social relations that tie respondents to citizens in the Maghreb. To this end, the questionnaire posed a set of questions regarding the nature and quality of the relationship, its depth and its continuity, with the aim of understanding the breadth of the social ties between citizens in the Maghreb, and the impact of this on their perceptions regarding the Maghreb integration.

In this context, a question was asked about whether the respondents had ties with citizens of the Maghreb. Three types of ties have been identified, which are marital ties, in-law kinship and blood ties (paternal and maternal aunt and uncle ties), and finally, friendship. Other relationship types, such as commercial or academic relations, have been ruled out with the aim of focusing on the social aspect of the relationships. About 47% of the respondents replied that they actually had a relationship with Maghreb citizens. The proportion of women is not very different from men at this level, with about 45% of males and about 47% of women answering that they have relations with citizens of the Maghreb.

While the gender variable appears to have little impact on existing social ties with citizens in the countries of the Maghreb, age appears to be an important element in the interpretation, as the results show that the higher the age, the greater the social bond. Where only 41% of the 18-24 age group answered that they have extended social ties in the Maghreb, compared to about 57% among the older age group (50 years and over). This element may be explained by the fact that younger generations are less interested in social ties with Maghrebi citizens compared to the older generations.

Figure 4: Existing social ties (friendship, intermarriage ...) with a person or more from one of the Maghreb countries

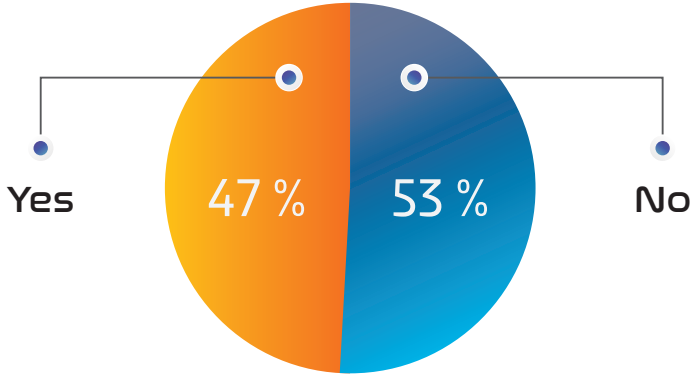
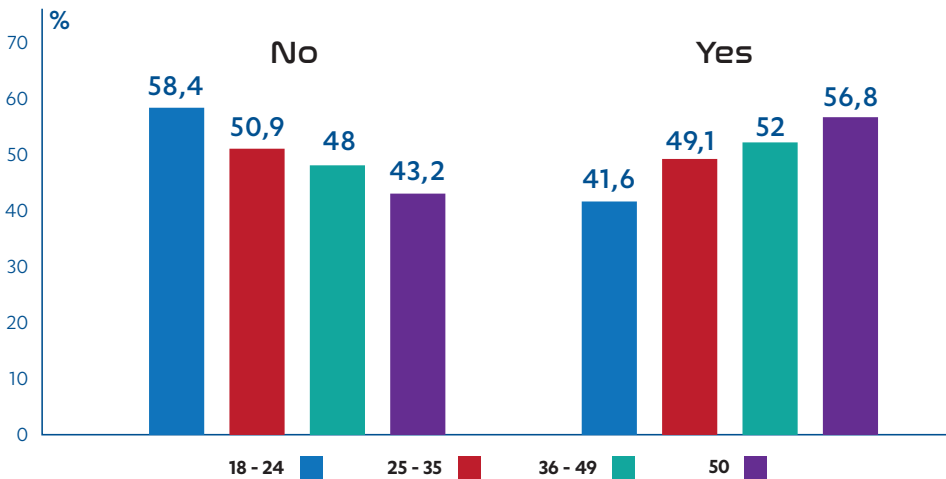
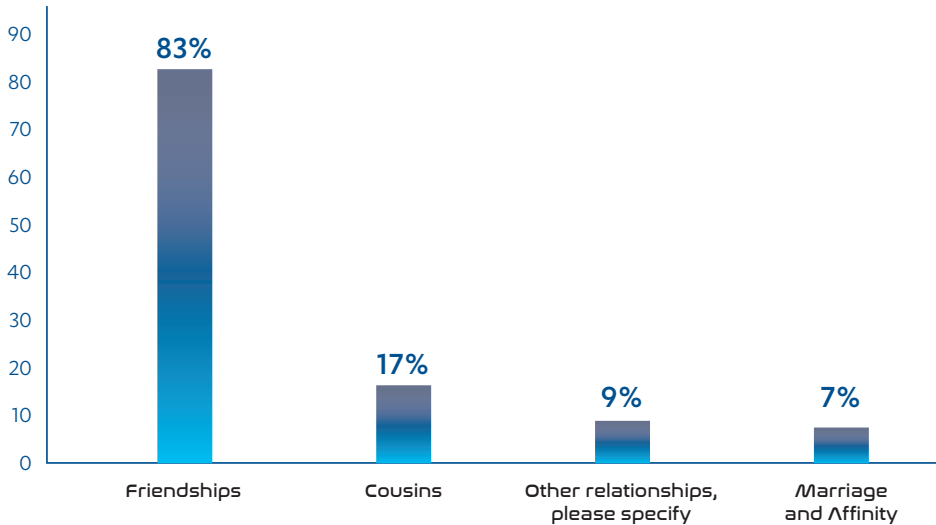


Figure 5: Social relationships (by age)

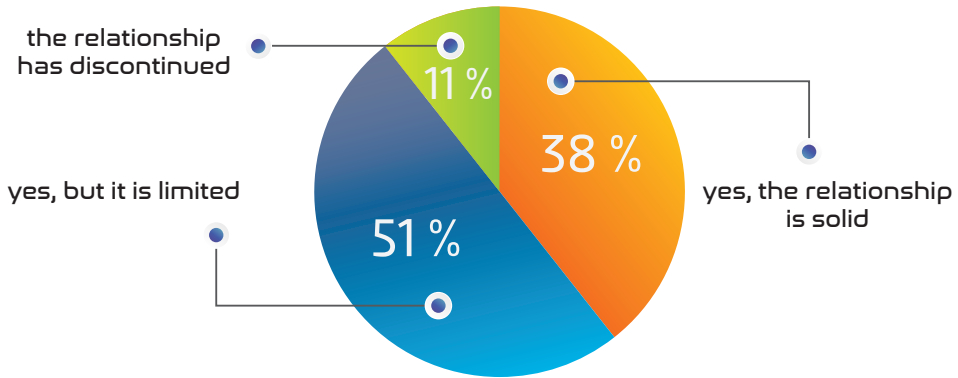


It appears that most people who have indicated having social ties with citizens of the Maghreb countries, (83% of respondents), have friendships, while 17% of them indicate that they have a family tie (cousins ...). 7% say that their relationships consist in mixed marriages with male and female citizens from the Maghreb countries.

Figure 6: kind of relationship (up to 2 choices)

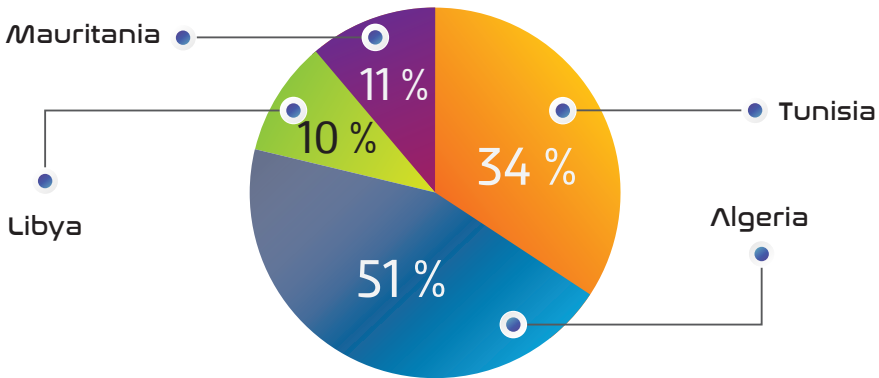
As far as the continuity of this relationship, the results of this survey show that about 89% of the respondents are still maintaining this relationship. About 38% of them indicated that this relationship is ongoing, while half of the respondents said that the relationship exists but is limited, and 11% indicated that the relationship was discontinued. It appears that the region of Tafilalet-Daraa has the largest percentage of people who still maintain relationships with citizens of the Maghreb countries. 61.5% said that the relationship is solid, while 38.5% said that the relationship is limited. Conversely, the Orient region and the Beni Mellal region seem to be the most important regions in terms of relationship disruptions by about 17 and 18%, respectively.

Figure 7: Relationship Continuity



As for the countries with the highest relationship rates, Algeria and Tunisia come on top of the countries where respondents say they have family relations with, with 45% and 34% respectively. This reflects perhaps the depth of historical relations between Morocco, Algeria and Tunisia, as the countries that have historical relations and cultural ties to Morocco.

Figure 8: In which country is this relationship?



2. Freedom of movement of individuals

As mentioned above, the Maghreb countries are tied by strong historical and social relations, and the experience of travel and residence in one of the Maghreb countries is one of the indicators of these relations. For decades, thousands of Moroccan workers and citizens emigrated and settled in a number of Maghreb countries, either for the purpose of trade, work, or other.

A research published in 2006 by the International Labor Organization on Morocco, Algeria, and Tunisia on legal international migration indicates that residents of Tunisia who come from other countries of the Maghreb, are from Algeria with 37%, Morocco with 19%, and Libya with about 3%¹⁰. A research by the International Organization for Migration in 2018 also confirms that migrants from North Africa constitute 29% of the migrants present in the Libyan territories in 2018, or about 203,341 people out of 704,142 migrants residing in Libya, of whom 5% are Tunisians, 3% are Moroccans and only 1% are Algerians¹¹.

The Maghreb immigrants are a source of remittances to their countries of origin, despite the fact that remittances transferred by the Maghreb migrants from European countries to their countries constitute a greater proportion. In the year 2004, France was the main source of remittances to Algeria, at 96%, and remittances to Tunisia and Morocco from Europe made up about 90%¹². Remittances by Moroccan immigrants residing in the Maghreb countries remain small, as their value in 2003 did not exceed 12.4 million Moroccan Dirham (MAD) (around USD 1,24 million) from

10 Summary report on migration and development in Central Maghreb, 2009, p9.

https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---ed_protect/---protrav/--migrant/documents/publication/wcms_201461.pdf

11 Libya's Migrant Report, OIM, 2018, p13.

https://www.iom.int/sites/default/files/dtm/Libya_DTM_201801-201802.pdf.

12 Summary report on migration and development in Central Maghreb, 2009, p 15.

Tunisia, 9.7 million MAD from Libya and 2.4 Million MAD from Algeria out of a total of 37 billion MAD transferred to Morocco that year¹³.

As for tourism, it is also a form of exchange between the countries of the Maghreb. Moroccan, Algerian and Tunisian citizens do not need a visa to enter these countries, and this is explained by the historical ties between the countries of the Maghreb, whose citizens wove social and intermarriage relationships before the emergence of the problems that accompanied the post-independence era when the Maghreb elites failed to maintain openness to one another.

Official statistics in Tunisia show that tourists from the Maghreb countries come first before tourists from Europe, and they also show that the numbers of tourists from the Maghreb countries increased in 2017 compared to the rest of the years, while they experienced a decrease in 2015¹⁴, perhaps because of the impact of the terrorist incidents that Tunisia was home to in that period. Meanwhile, Maghreb citizens are ranked fifth in terms of the number of tourists coming to Morocco in recent years, at 2% of the total arrivals to Morocco if we include Moroccans residing abroad and about 3.2% of the total foreign tourists coming to Morocco in 2018.

Evolution of the number of tourists to Morocco by nationality

	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	% 2018
France	1769710	1782056	1798190	1563568	1449757	1614011	1844397	15%
Spain	730882	682834	683761	626896	615720	710729	814069	7%
The United Kingdom	357347	403325	476550	504475	458561	486262	510516	4%
Belgium	255290	272593	267308	243815	238984	259658	273535	2%
Maghreb countries	219280	270227	213675	195214	209823	207885	214295	2%
	9375156	10046264	10282944	10176762	10331731	11349344	12288708	100%

Source: Morocco's Ministry of Tourism

¹³ IBID.

¹⁴ <http://www.ins.tn/fr/themes/tourisme#sub-400>.

In this regard, the second part of this survey was devoted to the topic of the travelling experience to the Maghreb countries. The poll results show that only 16% of all respondents have traveled to one or several of the Maghreb countries, and this percentage varies between the sexes, as about 19% of males indicated that they had previously traveled to one of the Maghreb countries, while the number decreased to about 12% in relation to female respondents.

Figure 9: Have you ever travel to a Maghreb country?

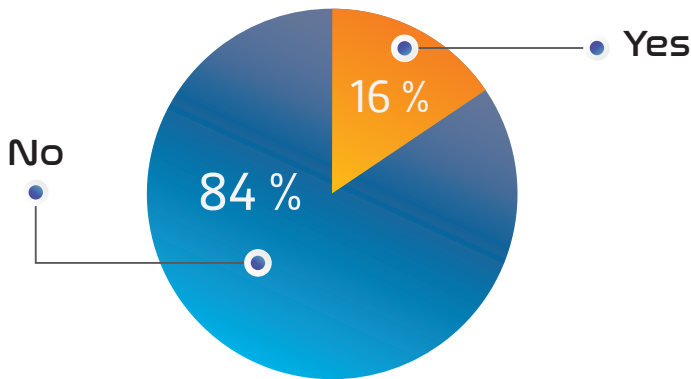
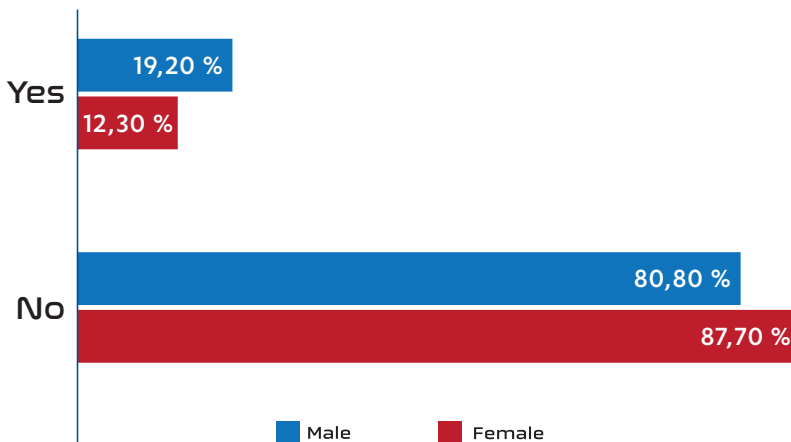


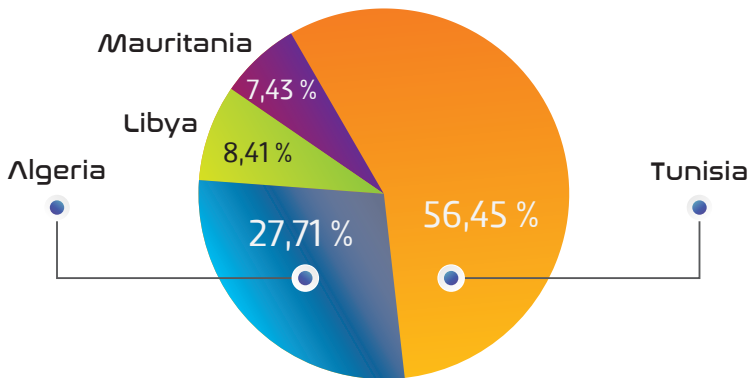
Figure 10: Travel experience by gender



As for the country that was visited, Tunisia comes in the first rank with 56% of the total number of people who have previously traveled to

one of the Maghreb countries, while Algeria comes in the second rank with 28%, then Libya with 8%, and Mauritania at about 7%. These results show that Tunisia ranks first on the list of countries visited by respondents, with more than half of the respondents. This is mainly attributed to the fact that Tunisia is an international and Maghreb tourist destination compared to other countries in addition to its openness in recent years, despite some difficulties experienced by the tourism industry as a result of the terrorist events that hit the country. Algeria comes in the second rank because of neighborliness and family ties that bind Moroccan families with Algerian families.

Figure 11: Which country did you travel to?



As to the time of the trip to one of the Maghreb countries, about a third of the respondents who indicate having visited one of the Maghreb countries indicated that they traveled in 2019, while 15% said that they traveled in the past two years. 21% traveled three to five years ago. As for the people who traveled more than five years ago, their percentage reached almost a third (9.6% 5 to 10 years, while 21% traveled more than 10 years ago).

When was your last visit to a Maghreb country?

	Percentage rate
During this year	32.53%
One or two years ago	15.66%
Three to five years ago	21.08%
Five to ten years ago	9.64%
Over ten years ago	21.08%
Total	100%

The reasons for travel among the respondents were numerous: about 31% of the respondents stated that the reason for travelling was to take part in an academic seminar, while 20% said that the main reason for the trip was tourism and 18% for a work related visit, while the rest was either for visiting relatives (12%), friends (10%), or other reasons. It is noted that visits for business reasons are at the bottom of the list, due to the low economic integration between the countries of the Maghreb.

What is the reason for the visit?

The reason of the visit	%
A family visit	12.11%
Trade	3.97%
Business trip	18.18%
Visiting friends	9.86%
A tourist trip	20.10%
Participation in a seminar	31.71%
Other reason	4.06%
Total	100%

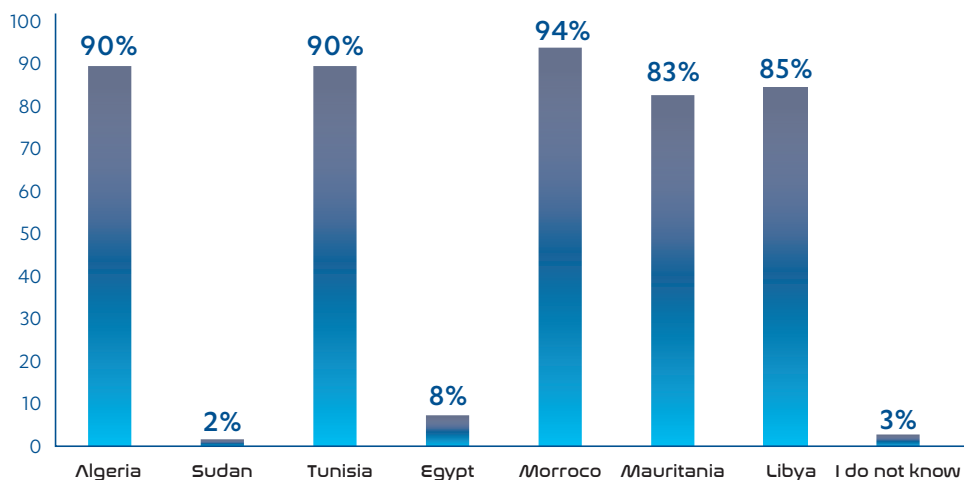
3. Attitudes towards Maghreb integration

In addition to the relations tying individuals in the Maghreb countries, this survey aims to monitor the perceptions of Moroccan citizens regarding the faltering Maghreb Union during the past three decades since the establishment of the “Arab Maghreb Union” in 1989 and until today. This stumbling block that was the main focus of academic and political meetings, seminars and conferences in the past years, but it is an elite debate that did not take into account the perceptions and opinions of citizens and the elites of civil society, which is what this research seeks to achieve.

The year in which the founding of the “Arab Maghreb Union” organization was announced constitutes a year of major global transformations, to which the Maghreb countries responded to by renewing their old ambition for the political, economic and social bloc, but that project was blocked and did not grow due to the political problems that arose between some Maghreb countries because of the aftermath of post-colonial events and conflicts.

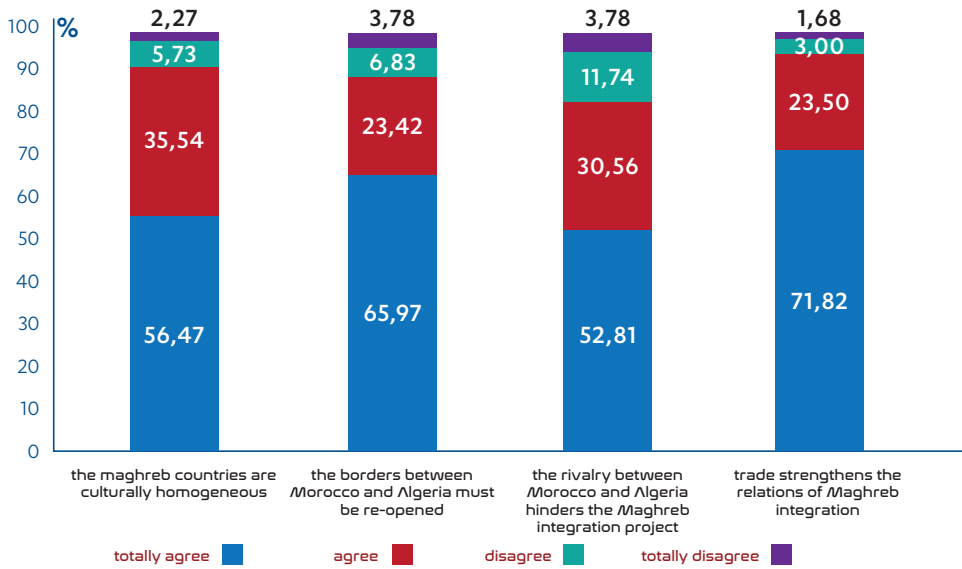
In order to survey the degree of the respondents’ knowledge of the Maghreb countries, the first question in this section was devoted to finding out the extent of the respondents’ knowledge of the names of the constituent countries of this organization, and it appears through the results that more than 90% of the respondents were able to answer this question, which was answered as a multiple-choice question with five out of seven choices, with the possibility of indicating lack of knowledge of the constituent countries of the Maghreb Union.

Figure 12: Knowledge of the member states of the “Arab Maghreb Union” [5 options]



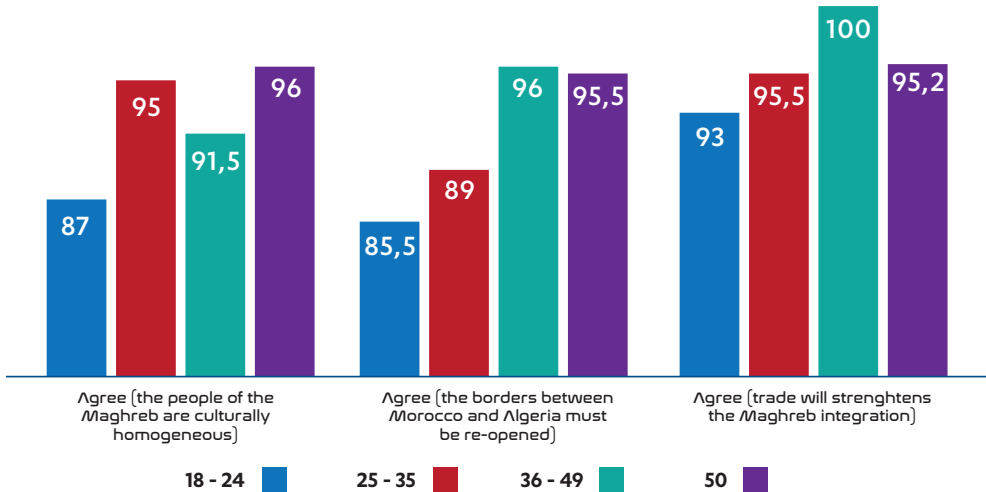
Regarding respondents' positions on some issues related to economic integration and the opening of borders between member states and culture, the overwhelming majority of respondents indicated positions in favor of economic integration and the opening of borders. 95% of the respondents indicated their agreement that the economic exchange between the Maghreb countries would enhance Maghreb integration, and 83% of them have affirmed that the conflict between Morocco and Algeria is the main factor impeding the Maghreb Union project, and with regard to this conflict between the two Maghreb countries, 89% of the respondents said that the borders between Morocco and Algeria must be reopened. With regard to the cultural commonality between the countries of the Maghreb, 91% of the respondents have indicated that the peoples of the Maghreb region are culturally close.

Figure 13: Attitudes towards the Maghreb integration project



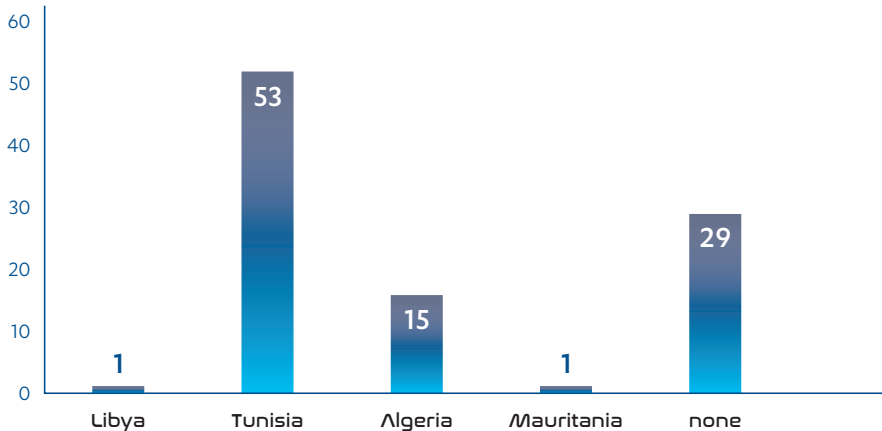
In this context, older age groups generally appear to be more receptive to opening borders and strengthening economic relations. About 95.5% of the older age group (50 years and over) expressed their desire to see the border between Morocco and Algeria open, while this percentage drops to about 85% of the 18-24 age group. All respondents from the 36 to 49 age group expressed their agreement with the promotion of economic exchange as one of the entry points for promoting Maghreb integration, while youth groups seem less interested.

Figure 14: Attitudes towards the Maghreb integration project (by age)



Moroccan respondents show a clear preference for living in Tunisia, up to 53% of all respondents, if given the opportunity to live in a Maghreb country other than Morocco. This choice can be explained by the smooth impact of Tunisia as a nascent democratic experience in the region on the rest of the peoples of the region. Its experience in recent years, after the sparks of the Democratic Spring began, is an inspiring one for large groups of elites and popular segments of the society in the Maghreb, despite some challenges that confront them. However, it is an experience that arouses the interest of many in the region, and the 25-40 age group seems to be the most interested in living in Tunisia, where about 55% and 58% of the 25-35 and 36-49 age groups, respectively, expressed their desire to settle in Tunisia If given an opportunity.

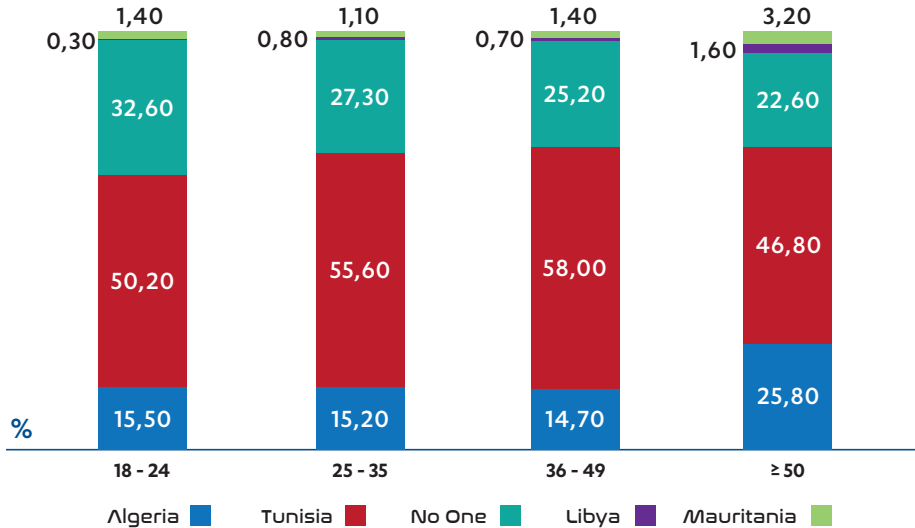
Figure 15: If you got the opportunity to live in a Maghreb country, which of the following countries would you prefer?



However, the second most ranked answer was “none”, where about 29% of the respondents have stated that they do not wish to live in any Maghreb country. It is also a notable result, as the Maghreb region appears unattractive to a number of Moroccan citizens, especially young groups, as about a third of youth expressed their unwillingness to live in any Maghreb country, compared to 22.5% of the older age group (50 years and over).

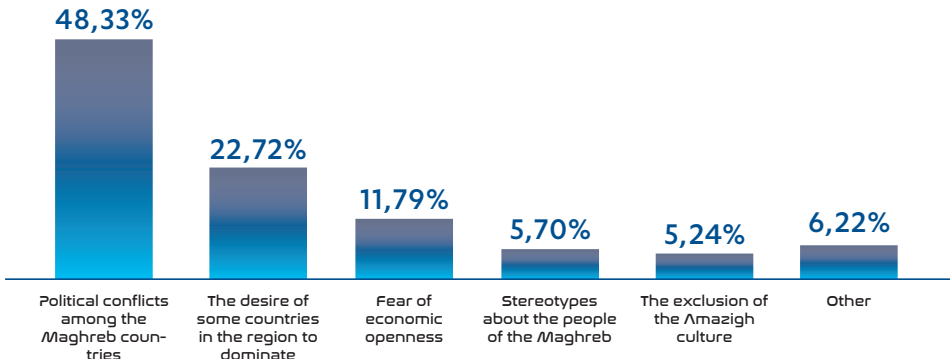
These percentages do not differ greatly when we take into account the age of the participants. Half of all age groups prefer living in Tunisia, at the expense of the rest of the countries. This rate goes up as far as the 36-49 age group is concerned standing at 58%, whereas Algeria is the best destination in the view of the respondents over 50 years as shown in the following diagram:

Figure 16: If you got the opportunity to live in a Maghreb country [other than Morocco], which of the following countries would you prefer? [By age]



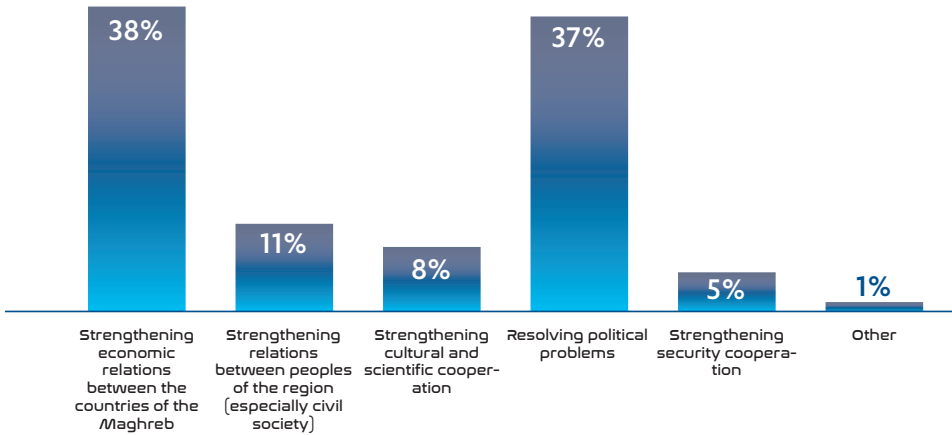
This survey did overlook the question of the reasons that explain the failure of the Maghreb Union. As for the question on the major weaknesses of the Maghreb Union project, the respondents placed on top of the list of factors “political differences among Maghreb countries” by up to 48%, and comes in the second rank “desire of some countries in the region to hegemony “ with 23%, which in turn is a political factor that may explain some of the political differences among the countries of the Union. This confirms that the respondents attributed the failure of the Union to political factors in the first place. Then, in the third rank, comes the “fear of economic openness” with 11.5%. “Stereotypes about the people of the Maghreb” got 6% and “the exclusion of the Amazigh culture in the countries of the Maghreb” with 5%.

Figure 17: Reasons for the failure of the Maghreb Union project



Although the highest percentage of respondents explains the failure of the Maghreb Union by political factors, the “strengthening of economic relations between the countries of the Maghreb” appears as one of the entry points for strengthening the project of the Maghreb Union. Where about 38% of the participants in this research indicated that strengthening economic relations between the Maghreb countries is the first priority that should be followed to strengthen the Maghreb Union. Then comes the priority of “resolving outstanding political problems” with 37%. In the third place, we find “strengthening relations between peoples in the region, especially civil society” with up to 11%, and in the fourth place comes the priority related to “strengthening cultural and scientific cooperation” with 8%. The respondents place the priority of “security cooperation” at the bottom of the list of priorities that must be undertaken to strengthen the Maghreb Union, with only 5%.

Figure 18: Priorities to strengthen the Maghreb integration



Optimism about the Maghreb future?

One remarkable aspect of this survey is the future of Maghreb. In an attempt to sound out the opinion of the respondents about the future, the questionnaire included a question about the extent of optimism of the respondents with the success of the Maghreb integration project in the next five to ten years, and in this regard, 58% of the respondents showed optimism about the future of the Maghreb Union, while 42% said they are not optimistic. It appears from the results of the research that people who have social relations with Maghreb citizens are the most optimistic respondents about the future of Maghreb integration, followed by women and the older age groups. 68% of respondents who said they have social ties with Maghreb citizens have expressed optimism about the future. About 63% of women expressed optimism about the future of the Maghreb integration, while the figure drops to about 53% for men. It also shows that the age groups below 35 appear to be less optimistic than the older age groups. Two-thirds of people over 50 appear to be optimistic, compared to only 53 among the 25-35 age group.

Figure 19: Optimism about Maghreb integration in the next 5 to 10 years

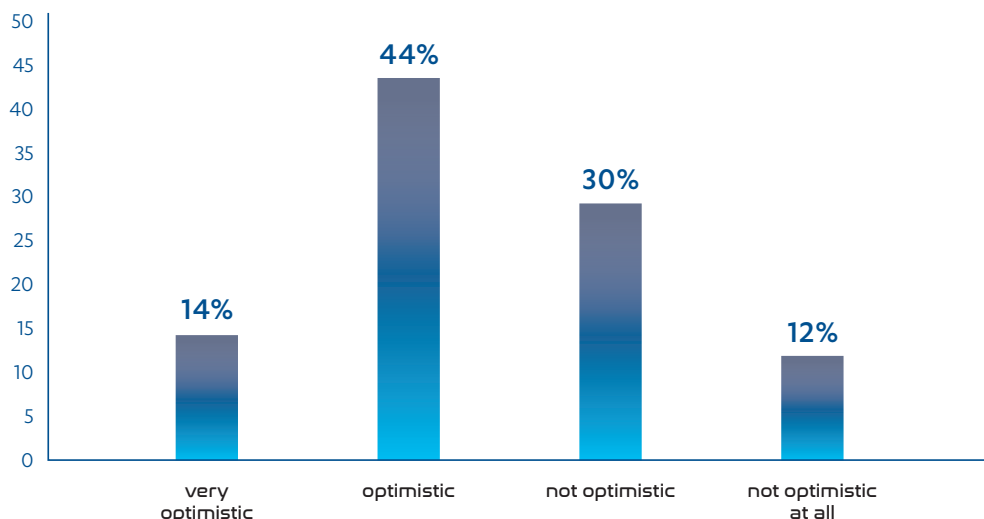
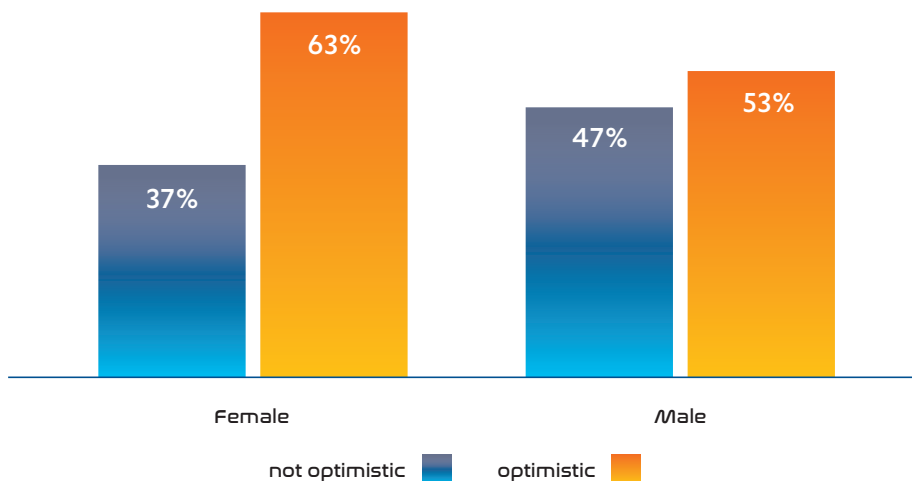


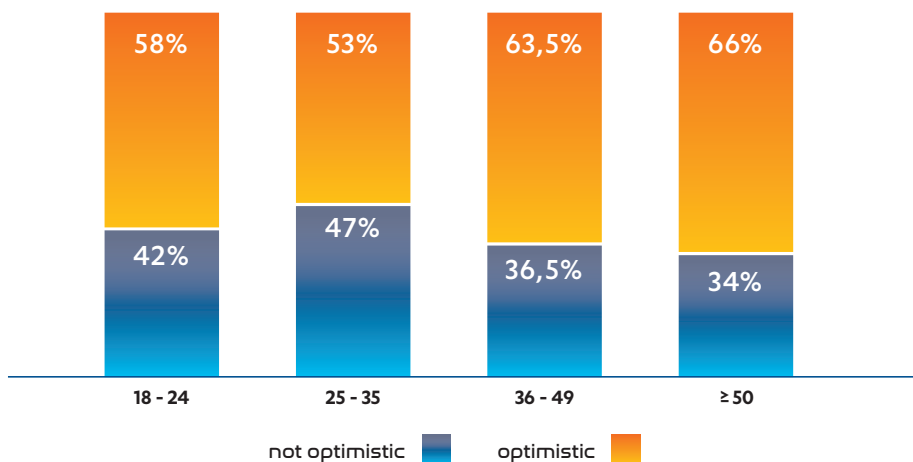
Figure 20: Optimism about Maghreb integration in the next 5–10 years, by gender



As for the age groups, the proportion of optimists is greater for those over the age of 50, at 66%, followed by the younger age group, aged 36 to 49 years, with a rate of 63.5%. Then comes the 18 to 24 age group, at 58%. The 25 to 35 age group ranks last with over 53%. These results show

that those over the age of 35 are more optimistic about the future of the Maghreb Union.

Figure 21: Optimism about Maghreb integration in the next 5 to 10 years by age



Appendixes

Study results by gender

- Do you have family relations (kinship, in-laws, friendship ...) with a person or persons from one of the Maghreb countries (Tunisia, Algeria, Libya, Mauritania)?

	female	male
Yes	48,3%	46,4%
No	51,7%	53,6%

- Have you ever traveled to any of the Maghreb countries (Tunisia, Algeria, Mauritania, Libya)?

	female	male
Yes	12,9%	19,9%
No	87,1%	80,1%

- Do you agree or disagree with the following statements?

	Male	Female
Disagree (People of the Maghreb region are culturally homogenous)	6,9%	4,5%
Totally disagree (People of the Maghreb region are culturally homogenous)	1,9%	2,4%
Agree (People of the Maghreb region are culturally homogenous)	31,9%	39,2%
Totally agree (People of the Maghreb region are culturally homogenous)	59,3%	53,9%
Disagree (Borders between Morocco and Algeria must be reopened)	6,0%	7,7%
Totally disagree (Borders between Morocco and Algeria must be reopened)	4,6%	2,9%
Agree (Borders between Morocco and Algeria must be reopened)	19,4%	27,6%
Totally agree (Borders between Morocco and Algeria must be reopened)	70,0%	61,8%
Disagree (Competition between Morocco and Algeria obstruct the project of Maghreb Union)	9,0%	14,7%
Totally disagree (Competition between Morocco and Algeria obstruct the project of Maghreb Union)	5,0%	4,8%

Agree (Competition between Morocco and Algeria obstruct the project of Maghreb Union)	27,8%	33,8%
Totally agree (Competition between Morocco and Algeria obstruct the project of Maghreb Union)	58,1%	46,6%
Disagree (Economic trade will strengthen Maghreb integration)	2,3%	3,9%
Totally disagree (Economic trade will strengthen Maghreb integration)	1,6%	1,8%
Agree (Economic trade will strengthen Maghreb integration)	21,0%	26,2%
Totally agree (Economic trade will strengthen Maghreb integration)	75,2%	68,1%

- If you had the choice to live in a Maghreb country (besides Morocco), which country would you prefer to live in?

	Female	Male
Algeria	13,0%	17,9%
Tunisia	52,7%	53,1%
None	33,0%	26,0%
Libya	0,68%	1,0%
Mauritania	0,68%	1,9%

- During the next five to ten years, are you optimistic about the success of the Maghreb integration project?

	Female	Male
Very optimistic	12,4%	14,9%
Optimistic	50,8%	38,2%
Not optimistic	30,0%	30,4%
Not optimistic at all	6,5%	16,5%

Study results by age

- Do you have family relations (kinship, in-laws, friendship ...) with a person or persons from one of the Maghreb countries (Tunisia, Algeria, Libya, Mauritania)?

	18 - 24	25 - 35	36 - 49	Over 50 years
Yes	41,6%	49,1%	52,0%	56,8%
No	58,4%	50,9%	48,0%	43,2%

- Have you ever traveled to any of the Maghreb countries (Tunisia, Algeria, Mauritania, Libya)?

	18 - 24	25 - 35	36 - 49	≥ 50
Yes	6,1%	15,3%	28,1%	47,4%
No	93,9%	84,7%	71,9%	52,6%

- Do you agree or disagree with the following statements?

	18 - 24	25 - 35	36 - 49	Over 50 years
Disagree (People of the Maghreb region are culturally homogenous)	8,4%	3,7%	7,4%	1,4%
Totally disagree (People of the Maghreb region are culturally homogenous)	4,5%	1,2%	1,2%	2,8%
Agree (People of the Maghreb region are culturally homogenous)	39,3%	38,8%	26,5%	19,7%
Totally agree (People of the Maghreb region are culturally homogenous)	47,7%	56,3%	64,8%	76,1%
Disagree (Borders between Morocco and Algeria must be reopened)	8,7%	7,0%	2,6%	2,9%

Totally disagree (Borders between Morocco and Algeria must be reopened)	5,6%	3,9%	1,3%	1,5%
Agree (Borders between Morocco and Algeria must be reopened)	28,1%	20,5%	25,0%	11,8%
Totally agree (Borders between Morocco and Algeria must be reopened)	57,6%	68,6%	71,1%	83,8%
Disagree (Competition between Morocco and Algeria obstruct the project of Maghreb Union)	11,6%	13,3%	10,2%	5,7%
Totally disagree (Competition between Morocco and Algeria obstruct the project of Maghreb Union)	4,0%	5,6%	5,5%	1,9%
Agree (Competition between Morocco and Algeria obstruct the project of Maghreb Union)	34,1%	30,1%	29,1%	22,6%
Totally agree (Competition between Morocco and Algeria obstruct the project of Maghreb Union)	50,2%	51,0%	55,1%	69,8%
Disagree (Economic trade will strengthen Maghreb integration)	5,5%	2,9%	0,0%	0,0%
Totally disagree (Economic trade will strengthen Maghreb integration)	1,6%	1,7%	0,0%	3,8%
Agree (Economic trade will strengthen Maghreb integration)	27,5%	23,4%	19,2%	11,5%
Totally agree (Economic trade will strengthen Maghreb integration)	65,5%	72,2%	80,8%	84,6%

— If you had the choice to live in a Maghreb country (besides Morocco), which country would you prefer to live in?

	18 – 24	25 - 35	36 - 49	Over 50 years
Algeria	15,5%	15,2%	14,7%	25,8%
Tunisia	50,2%	55,6%	58,0%	46,8%
None	32,6%	27,3%	25,2%	22,6%
Libya	0,34%	0,80%	0,70%	1,6%
Mauritania	1,4%	1,1%	1,4%	3,2%

- During the next five to ten years, are you optimistic about the success of the Maghreb integration project?

	18 - 24	25 - 35	36 - 49	Over 50 years
Very optimistic	12,8%	13,4%	12,8%	19,1%
Optimistic	44,8%	40,1%	50,7%	45,6%
Not optimistic at all	13,9%	11,8%	10,1%	11,8%
Not optimistic	28,5%	34,8%	26,4%	22,1%



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N 5, Appartement 5, Rue Figuig - Hassan - Rabat - Tél. : +212 5 37 26 26 02

