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The Trust in Institutions Index IV 2023

Is Political Trust in Morocco Declining?

Preliminary Results

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Introduction

The Moroccan Institute for Policy Analysis (MIPA) has developed the Trust in Institutions Index project to measure and analyze Moroccans' level of confidence in various political, economic, and social institutions. This project aims to provide a platform for public debate on the issue of trust in institutions in Morocco and to make recommendations and proposals to decision makers in order to strengthen institutional trust.

The previous three reports discussed Moroccans' trust in various institutions, including the parliament, education and healthcare sectors, and public administration. The first wave of Trust in Institutions Index I: The Parliament and Beyond (2020) was conducted before COVID 19 pandemic and it discussed the particular features of the trust and distrust of Moroccans in an institution which is central for the functioning of the democratic life of a country: The Parliament. Our analysis has shown that the parliament has been one of the least trusted institutions, both in the qualitative exploration and quantitative survey. It has been perceived as a non-functioning institution, in which MPs do not have a clear agenda and cannot be held accountable by the citizenry.

The second wave of Trust in Institution Index II: Education and Healthcare sectors (2021) identified the nature and level of trust in the education and healthcare institutions. Despite the health crisis associated with the spread of Covid-19 and the emergency conditions that imposed it, Moroccans still prioritized health and education according to our results. We discovered that the satisfaction levels in both private and public education sectors were quite similar, with no noteworthy disparities. In contrast, satisfaction levels concerning health sector services lagged behind those in education. Furthermore, a more pronounced discrepancy emerged between the public and private health sectors, as individuals reported greater satisfaction with the services offered in the private sector.

The third wave of Trust in Institution Index III: Public Administration [2022] shed the light on public administration and continued the diagnosis of Moroccan political trust after the 2021 September elections that revealed remarkable results and proved a change in citizens' social and political attitudes. Overall, two out of three respondents expressed an overall satisfaction with the performance of the public administration. Moroccans were most satisfied with the infrastructure, accessibility and personal of public administration institutions, and least satisfied with the time needed to complete a task as well as the possibility to present formal complaints.

The Trust in Institutions Index IV : Political Institutions [2023] persistently assesses political trust in Morocco. Our analysis revealed that citizens are gradually losing confidence in elected institutions as a whole, and specifically in the current government. We have observed a reversion to trends that prevailed prior to the 2020 pandemic, during which trust in political institutions was notably low.

The report of Trust in Institutions Index IV: Political Institutions [2023] is divided into five main sections. The first section tackles trust in elected and non-elected institutions. Trust in these institutions can have significant impacts on society, as it affects how people engage with them and how they view their role in society. High levels of trust can lead to increased engagement and cooperation, while low levels of trust can lead to apathy, disengagement, and even distrust. The second section deals with the issue of social trust by analyzing the indicators of interpersonal trust, especially the willingness to trust others, including nuclear family, the extended family, neighbors and strangers. The third section is devoted to civic and political trust as one of the focal areas of trust index. The study relies on several indicators, including the interest and participation in the public sphere, partisan and civic affiliation, voting patterns, civic engagement, perceptions about government goals and priorities. The Fourth section touches upon government measures to fight corruption while the last section talks about the state's future trajectory.

Research Design

This section outlines the methodology and describes the research design adopted in this study. The study in this report uses a quantitative method approach. The findings in this report are based on quantitative data analysis based on a representative sample of 2000 people. The data was collected between November 23rd, 2022 and February 23rd, 2023, representing the Moroccan population aged 18 and above. To ensure the sample's representativeness, a stratified random sampling approach was employed, using the variable "gender" as a predefined quota to achieve an equitable distribution of females and males in the sample. Data collection was conducted via CATI [Computer Assisted Telephone Interviews]. The questionnaire comprises 149 variables. In accordance with demographic structure of the Moroccan population as outlined by the Higher Planning Commission [RGHP 2014], the sample is representative of the Moroccan population aged 18 and above.

Sample characteristics: The sample comprises an equal gender distribution, with 50% of the sample being female. The age distribution reveals that 48% are between 18 and 35 years old, 25% are between 35 and 45, the elderly (65 and up) make up for 3% of the sample. Regarding regional distribution, 21% of respondents live in the Casablanca region, followed by the region of Rabat–Sale–Kenitra with 14% and Fes–Meknes [14%]. Marrakesh–Safi comprises 13% while only 3% of the respondents live in the southern regions. The urban population comprises 60% versus 36% of rural respondents. The persons with income less than 3000 MAD constitute about 52% of the respondents, while those whose income ranges between 3000 and 8000 MAD per month account for 22%. As per their education level, 17% were uneducated, 19% had a primary level, about 39% of the respondents have a middle–school or high school level, and 10% had a university–level education (1st or 2nd year).

Figure 1 : Gender

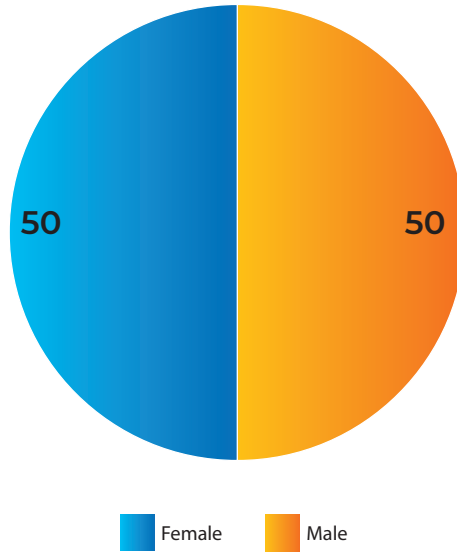


Figure 2 : Age Distribution

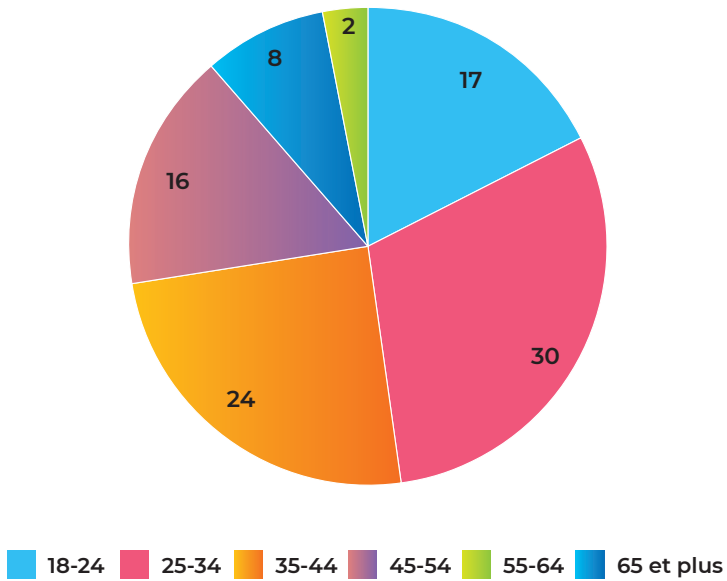


Figure 3 : Urban/Rural

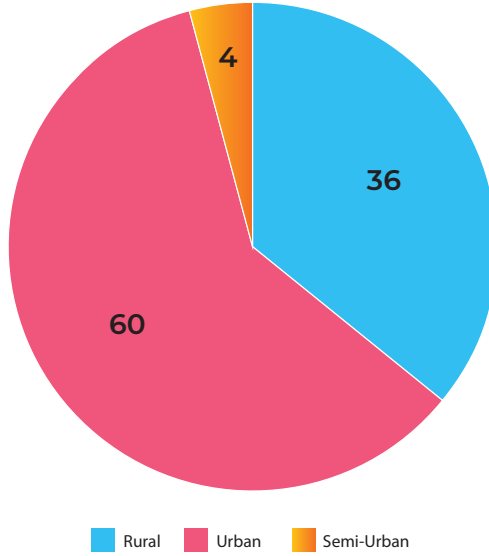


Figure 4 : Region

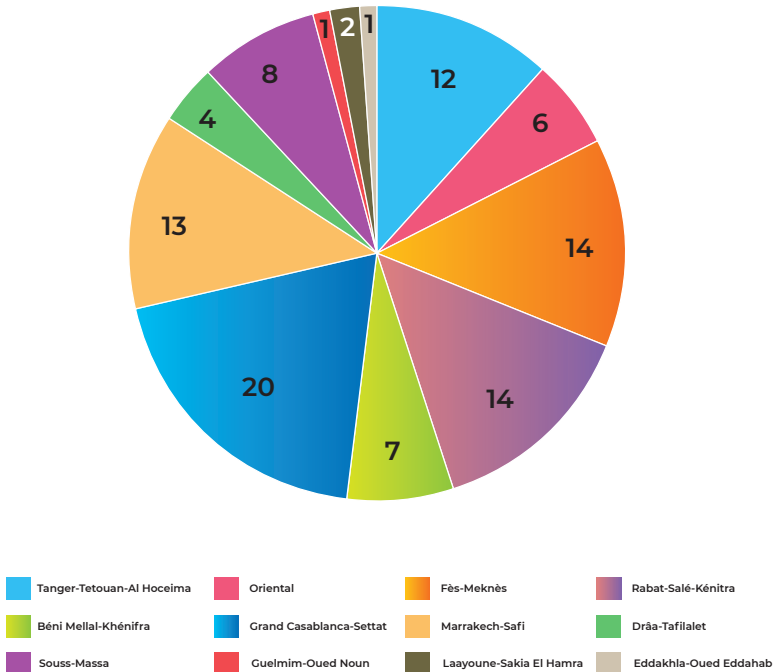


Figure 5 : Education

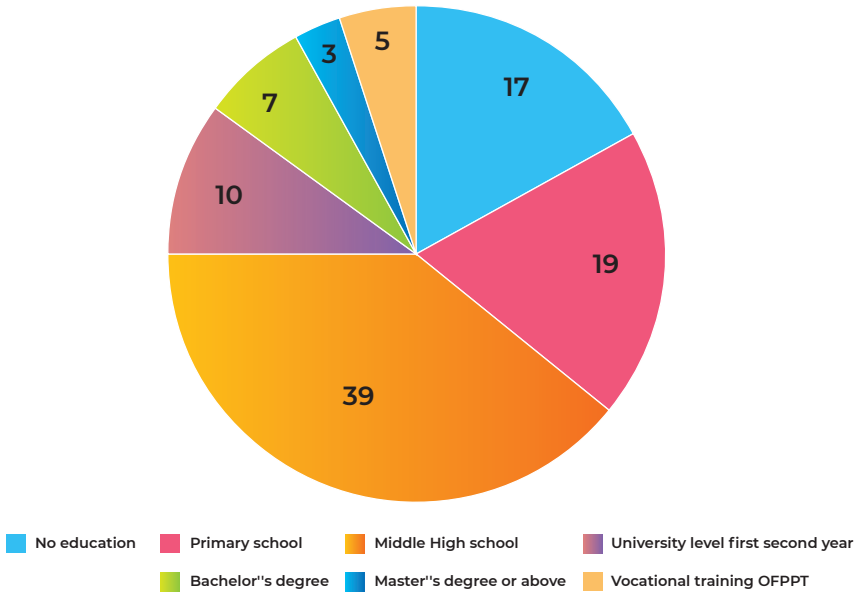
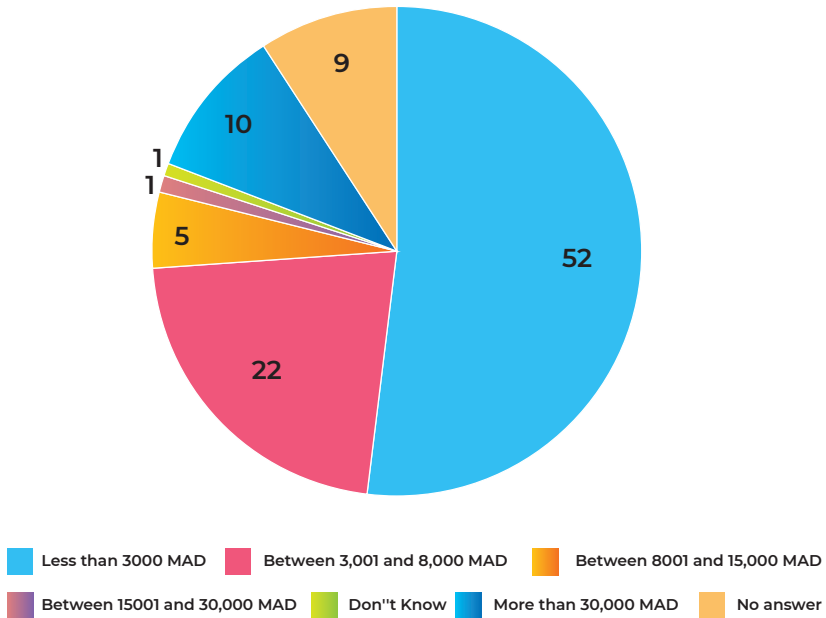


Figure 6 : Income



Key Findings

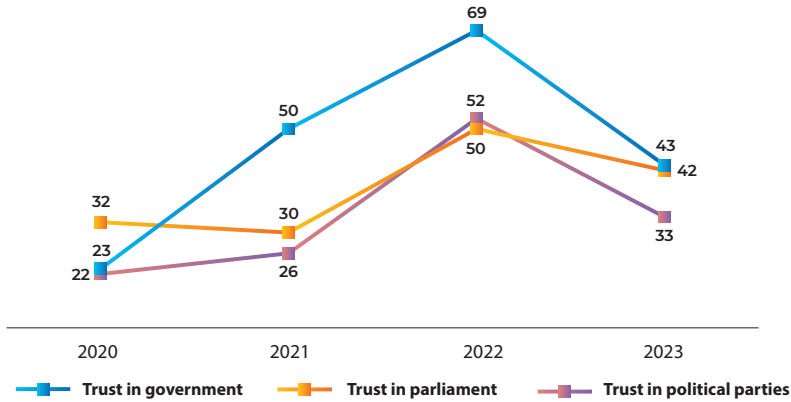
Political Trust

The Trust Index places significant emphasis on political trust as a core area of investigation. This study draws on various indicators, including levels of trust in elected and non-elected institutions, citizens involvement and engagement in the public sphere, affiliations with political parties and civic groups, attitudes towards corruption and the freedom of expression. By analyzing these factors, the Trust Index aims to provide a comprehensive understanding of the extent to which individuals have confidence in their political systems and institutions.

Trust in Elected and non-Elected Institutions

Trust is an important indicator to measure how people perceive the quality of, and how they associate with government institutions. One of the main findings in this wave is the overall decrease in trust in elected institutions, including the current government compared with the previous year [see Graph 7]. This year [see Graph 8], around 43% of Moroccans said that they trust government against 69% in 2022. A similarly remarkable result is the sudden decrease in trust in political parties and parliament. In 2023, 42% of Moroccans who participated in this survey said that they trust parliament; 33% in political parties, against 50% and 52% respectively one year earlier.

Figure 7 : Levels of trust in the different Elected and non-Elected Institutions



However, local political institutions seem to garner higher level of trust. Specifically, trust in municipal councils pertains to the extent to which individuals have confidence and faith in their local governing bodies responsible for managing their local communities. Trust in municipal councils is crucial for the effective functioning of local government and for maintaining a healthy relationship between citizens and their elected representatives. While levels of trust in elected institutions are somehow declining, the results found that 62% of the respondents expressed their trust in the municipal councils.

The Ministry of Interior plays an important role in the Moroccan community through ensuring public safety and maintaining law and order; managing civil registration and documentation; administering local governance; managing elections and political affairs. The results indicate that 73% of the respondents trust the ministry (47% completely trust and 26% trust somehow). In a similar vein, and since independence, the Ministry of Religious Endowment and Islamic Affairs represents the institution of the commander of the faithful in its symbolic and functional dimensions. This institution rests on the allegiance which is a formal contract of loyalty and gained 83% of citizens trust in the survey (57% completely trust and 26% trust somehow). Al Majlis Ilmi

also enjoys a reasonable level of trust of about 67% (37% completely trust and 30% trust somehow).

Relating to the education sector, 76% of the respondents trust the quality of public education in Morocco, (where 39% completely trust public education and 37% somehow trust it) compared to 80% in 2022. Surprisingly, trust in the quality of private education had decreased moving from 76% in 2022 to 55% in 2023 (where 24% completely trust private education and 31% somehow trust it).

Within public services and similar to last years' surveys, trust in the public health sector is low compared to that of the education sector as 49% expressed their trust (20% completely trust and 29% somehow trust), while 49% expressed their distrust (35% do not trust at all and 14% do not trust much). Similar to 2022 results, there is a discrepancy between the public and private sectors in this area, as the level of trust with the services of the private health sector is significantly higher with about 72% (33% completely trust and 49% are somehow trust) of the respondents being satisfied with private health services.

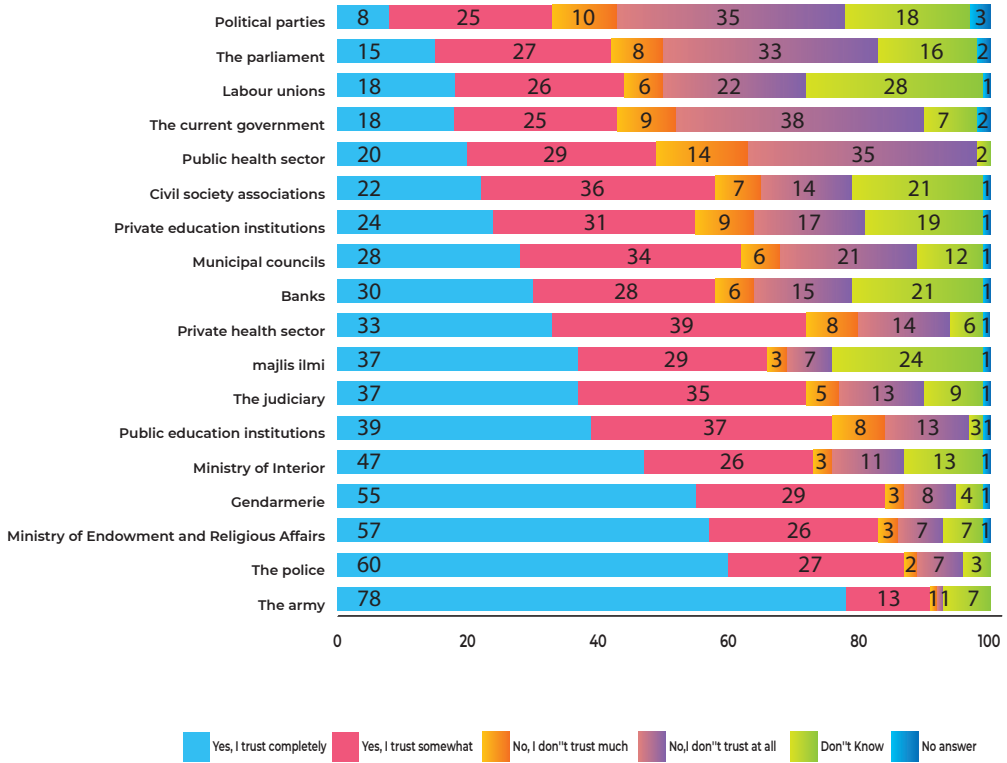
Trust plays a central role in the way in which financial services and organizations present themselves to their customers, as it influences customers' willingness to deposit money, borrow, invest, and transact with banks. In this year's survey, respondents were asked to evaluate their institutional trust in the Banking system. The results report average level of trust of 58% (30% completely trust and 28% trust somehow), underscoring the importance of financial sector regulators, policy makers and other stakeholders to ensure that banks operate with integrity, transparency, and customer-centricity.

Trust in CSOs is crucial as it determines the level of support and engagement that individuals or communities are willing to provide to these organizations. Trust in CSOs can be influenced by various factors, including the organization's transparency, accountability, track record, leadership, and impact. When people trust CSOs, they are more likely to collaborate, donate, volunteer, and advocate for their

causes. In Morocco, CSOs still enjoy a moderate level of trust where about 58% of the respondents have a great deal or a lot of trust in civil society organizations (22% completely trust and 36% trust somehow). Additionally, the importance of public opinion about unions has rarely been highlighted in the contemporary literature on labor politics. According to this survey, overall trust in labor unions remain stable at 44% (18% completely trust and 26% trust somehow). It should be noted that trust can be influenced by various factors, such as individual experiences, political ideologies, and media coverage.

Findings reveal that both non-elected enjoy higher levels of trust compared to elected institutions. Similar to the Trust Index 2022 results, the police, the army and gendarmerie are the most trusted institutions for Moroccans. The level of trust in the police is 87% (60% trust completely and 27% somewhat trust) (compared to 92% in 2022); 89% of respondents trust the armed forces (76% trust completely and 13% somewhat trust) (compared to 95% last year); and 84% trust the gendarmerie (55% trust completely and 29% somewhat trust). Yet, trust is also high in the judiciary albeit somewhat lower compared to the police and army, reaching about 72% (37% trust completely and 35% somewhat trust).

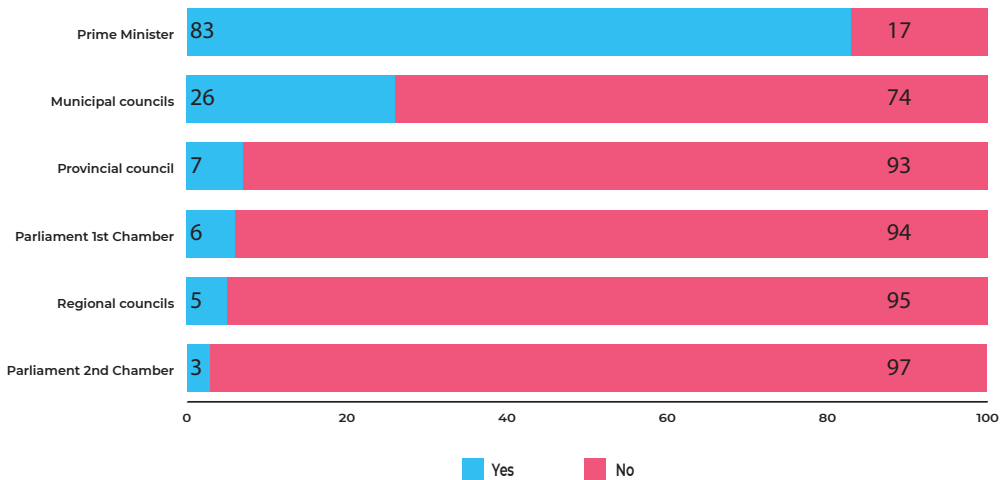
Figure 8: Trust in the different political and economic institutions



Political literacy

The level of political literacy, or the understanding and awareness of political processes and systems, can have a significant impact on the development of a country. When asked “do you know the name of the presidents of these institutions”, 83% said that they know the name of the prime minister but names varied between Aziz Akhnouch, Abdellah Benkirane, Saad Edine Othmani; only 6% knew the name of the chair of the 1st parliamentary chamber and 2% knew the name of the chair of the 2nd parliamentary chamber; 74% do not know the names of their municipal councils presidents; 93% do not know the names of their provincial councils presidents; 93% also do not know the presidents of their provincial council (Majalis I9limia). [see Graph 9]. Similarly, when asked about the roles of these institutions, respondents expressed some kind of knowledge of the government’s roles (51%) and municipal councils (42%). However, 72% said that they don’t know the roles of political parties; 63% of the respondents also do not know the roles of the parliament; 87% do not know the roles of the regional councils.

Figure 9 : knowing the name of the president of different political institutions



Public Engagement and Social Accountability

In a democracy, it is important for citizens to be able to have contact with their elected representatives and engage in ongoing communication regarding policy matters. This allows for the exchange of ideas, feedback, and information between the elected officials and the constituents they represent. Such communication can help elected officials better understand the needs and concerns of their constituents, and in turn, it allows citizens to express their views and influence policy decisions. In this survey, we asked citizens whether they have ever been in contact with an elected person about an issue of personal or public interests. Results revealed that 11% contacted an elected representative (mainly members of municipal councils with about 65% [see Graph 10; 11] and from this percentage 65% were satisfied with the degree of communication) [see Graph 12]; 88% of the respondents never got in touch with an elected person while 0.7% tried but failed. [See Graph 10].

Figure 10 : Previous contact with an elected person

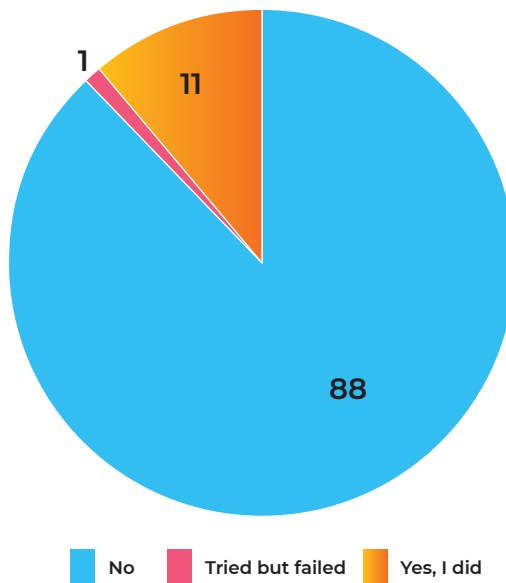


Figure 11 : Citizen's contact with different institutions

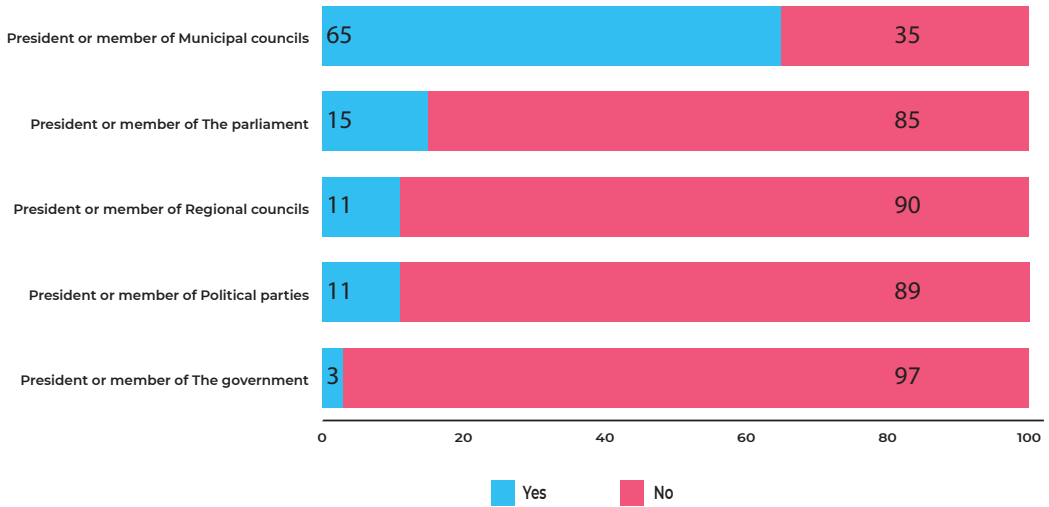
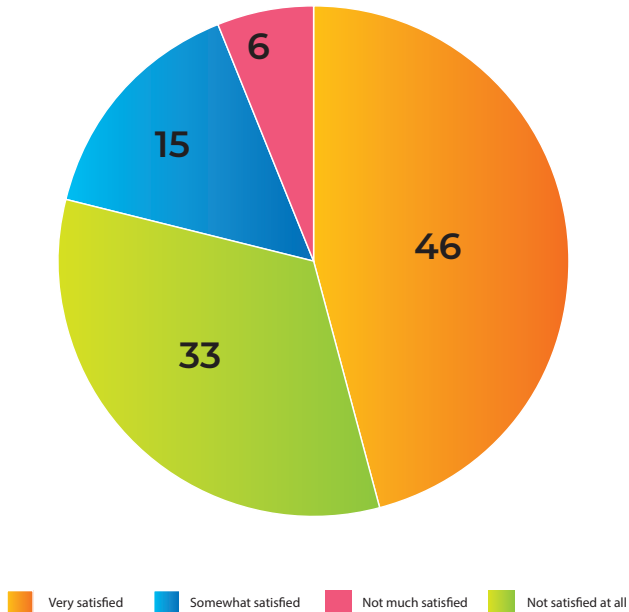
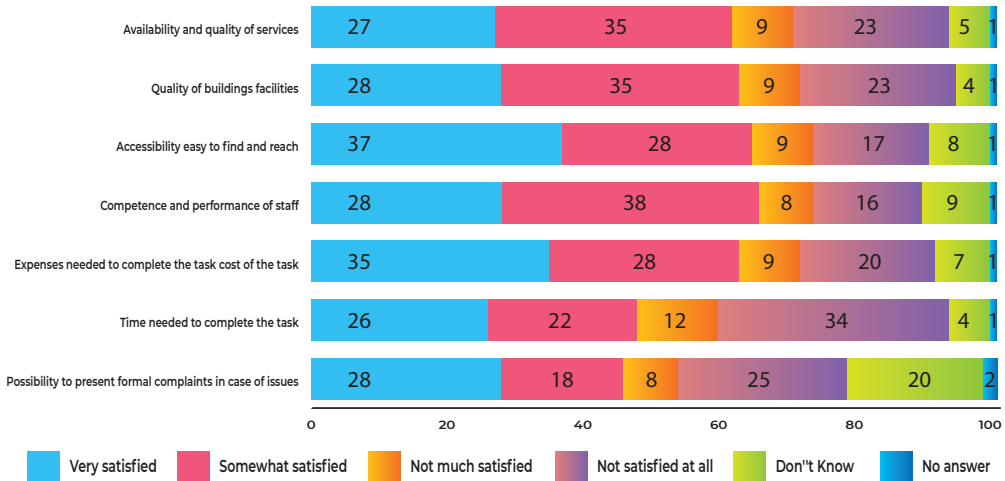


Figure 12: The level of satisfaction with the degree of communication of the elected person



The general satisfaction is examined in further detail by looking at certain aspects of Municipal councils. The results reveal high levels of satisfaction. 40% of the respondents are satisfied with the possibility to present formal complaints in case of issues; 48% of the respondents are satisfied with the time needed to complete a task; 63% are satisfied with the expenses needed to complete a task; 66% are also satisfied with the competence and performance of the council's staff; 62% are satisfied with the quality and availability of services (see Graph 13).

Figure 13 : General satisfaction with different aspects of municipal councils



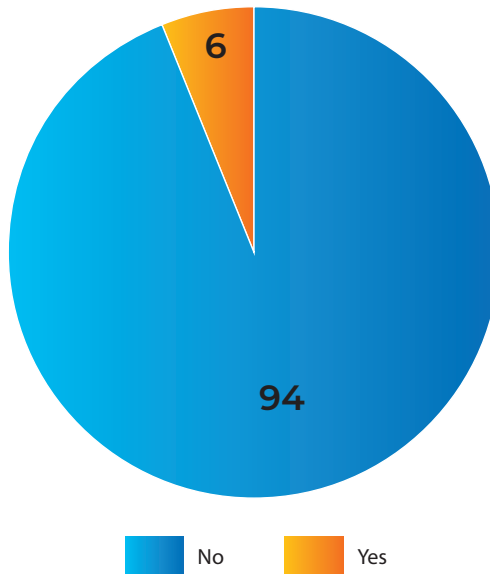
Civic Trust and political participation

Political and civic trusts are related concepts referring to the level of confidence and faith that individuals or groups have in both the political system and the broader civic institutions and actors within a society. Citizen's participation and in the political process such as voting, running for office, or participating in political campaigns, contributing to shaping the decisions and policies that affect their communities and societies; and civic participation in activities that promote the common

good, such as community organizing, volunteering, advocacy, and social activism; are crucial for the development and progress of any country.

According to the survey results, only 8% of the respondents are members of a civil society organization (see Graph 14). The main focus of the organizations include environment (0.5%); human rights and women (0.2%); neighborhood (0.5%); religion, culture, language and art (1.4%); politics (0%); sport (1%); and charity (1%).

Figure 14 : Membership in civil society organizations



Same as last years, the findings of the survey also show that there is little involvement in formal politics as 98% of the respondents are not members of any political party (96% in 2022) (see Graph 15). With regard to participation in the political and public sphere, citizens expressed limited interest in regard of current political issues; around 74% said that they do not follow politics with interest (49% do not follow at all and 25% said that they follow rarely) (see Graph 16).

Figure 15 : Membership in Political Party

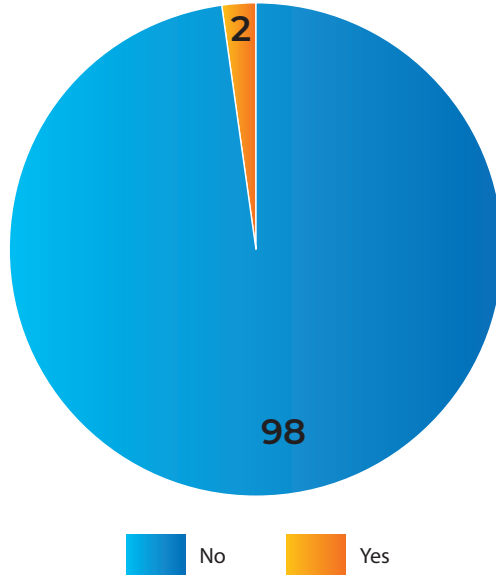
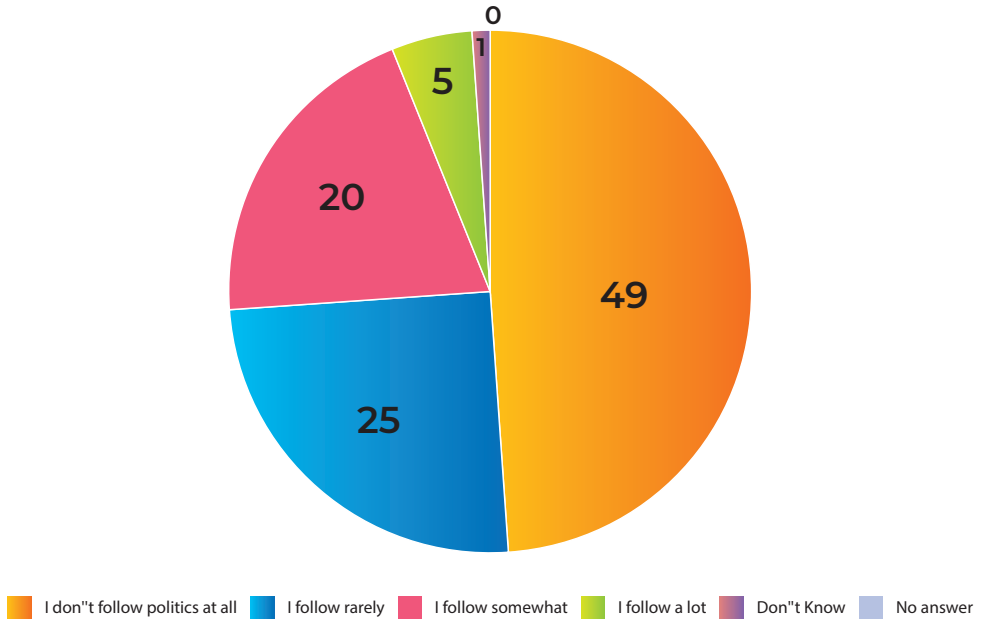
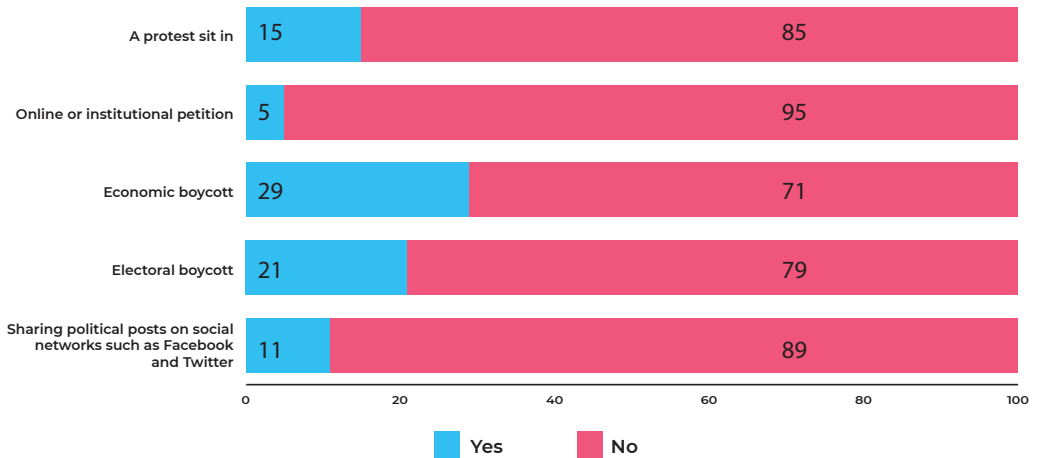


Figure 16 : Interest in Politics



A similar finding of low-involvement can be seen with regard to non-formal political involvement. As for non-traditional methods of political participation, such as economic boycott, signing petitions, or sharing political content on social media. 15% said they had previously participated in a protest, 5% participated in signing a petition, 29% said they participated in the economic boycott, 21% participated in an election boycott, and 11% said they had previously shared political content on social media. (see Graph 17). The percentages are almost similar to last year.

Figure 17 : Participation in civic activities



Participation in elections and voting is a fundamental right and responsibility in democratic societies. It allows citizens to have a voice in shaping the government and making decisions that affect their lives. For example, the findings on people's participation in the last elections revealed that 40% of the respondents participated in the last elections of 2021 (compared to 42% in 2022) (see Graph 18) and 48% think of voting in the next elections (see Graph 19). The 34% of the respondents who do not think of voting have reasons based on different assumptions such as not convinced with political parties (11%); no trust in the election results (5%). Relating to the previous elections of 8th September 2021,

only 38% expressed satisfaction of the electoral campaign (as 19% said they are very satisfied; 19% somehow satisfied); 36% were satisfied with the competency level of the candidates and 51% were satisfied with the organization of the electoral day (see Graph 20).

Figure 18 : participation in the last election

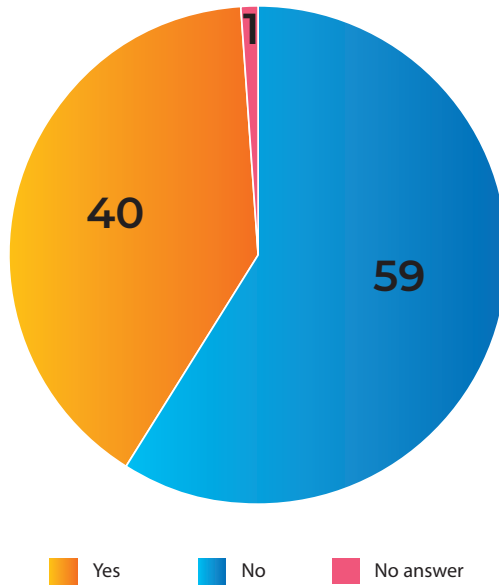


Figure 19 : Vote intention in the next election / Willingness to vote in the next election

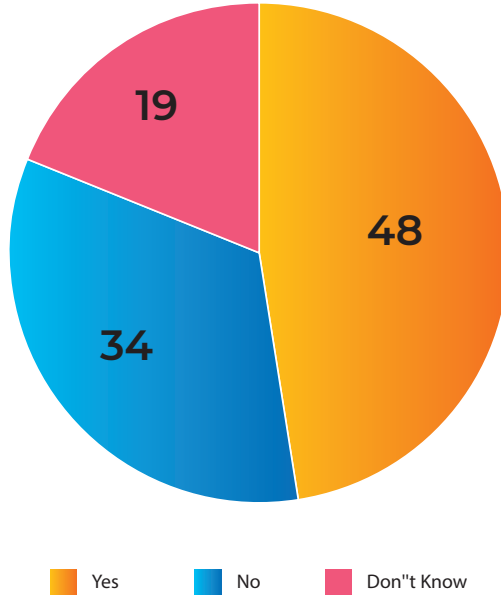
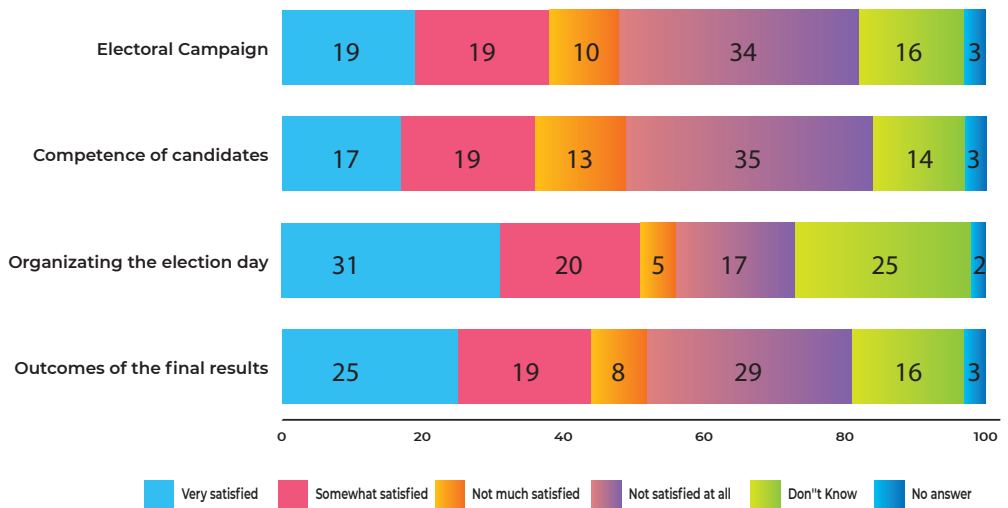
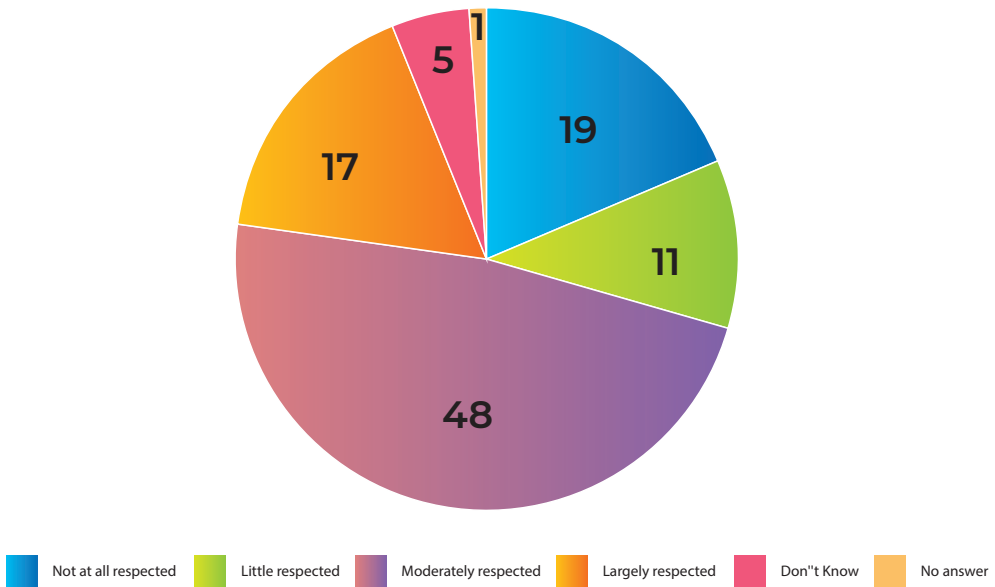


Figure 20 : The level of satisfaction with different aspects of the 2021 election



Protection of human rights promotes political trust. In other words, when human rights are respected and protected by the government and institutions, individuals feel secure, valued, and respected. This fosters a sense of trust among people, as they believe that their rights will be upheld and that they will be treated fairly and justly. According to the survey, 17% of the respondents said that human rights are largely respected, while 48% said they are moderately respected. On the other hand, 19% believe that they are not respected at all (see Graph 21).

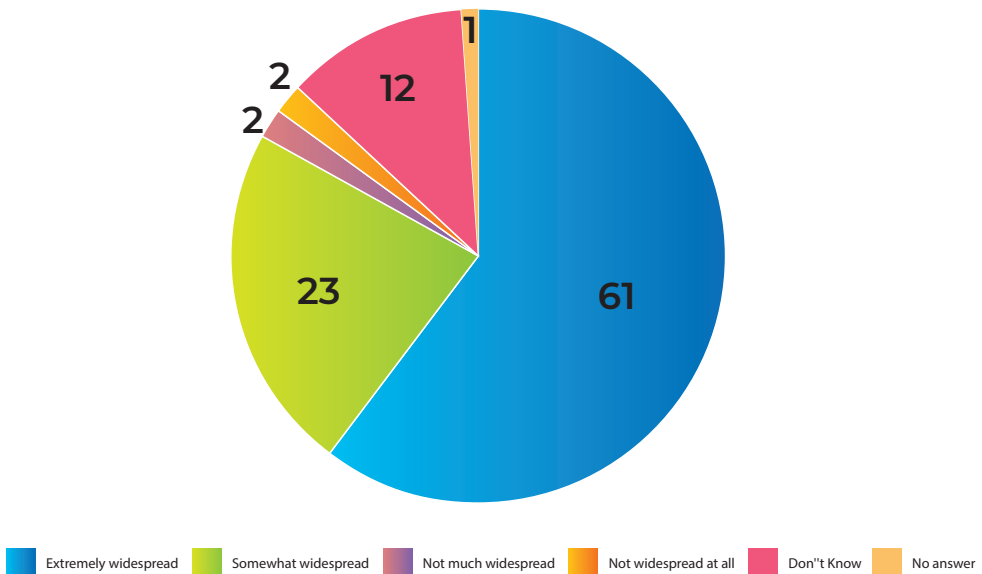
Figure 21 : Respect for human rights



Corruption

Corruption is often considered as an aspect of poor governance and can distort decision-making processes, undermine the rule of law, weaken democratic institutions, and erode the social contract between citizens and the government. It can create a perception of unfairness and inequality, as resources and opportunities are siphoned off for personal gain rather than being allocated for public welfare. This can result in a sense of injustice and a loss of trust in the ability of institutions to serve the best interests of the public. 83% of the respondents argue that bribery is widespread in Morocco (61% said extremely widespread and 22% said somehow widespread) (see Graph 22). In regard of fighting corruption, 47% of the respondents said that they are generally satisfied with the government efforts to fight against corruption (31% are very satisfied and 16% are somehow satisfied) against 56% in 2022, whereas 45% are not satisfied (36% are not satisfied at all, and 9% not much satisfied). (see Graph 23).

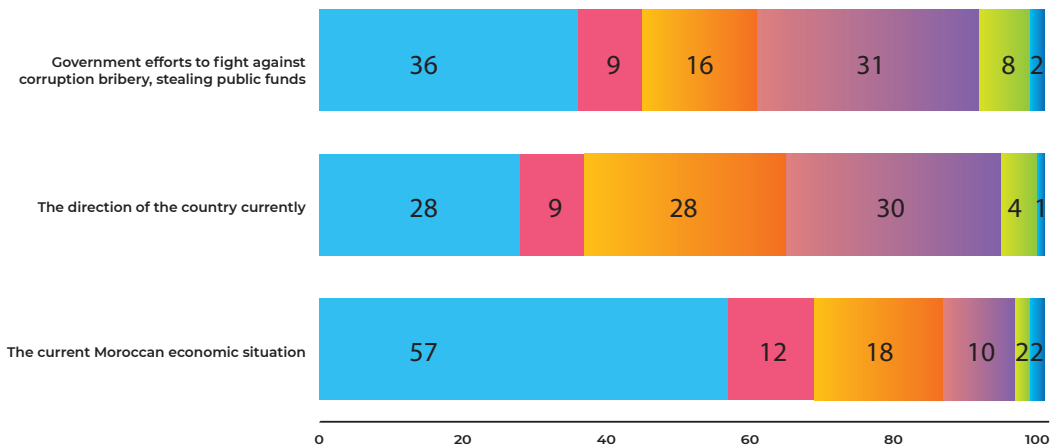
Figure 22 : Perception of bribery



Trust in The Future

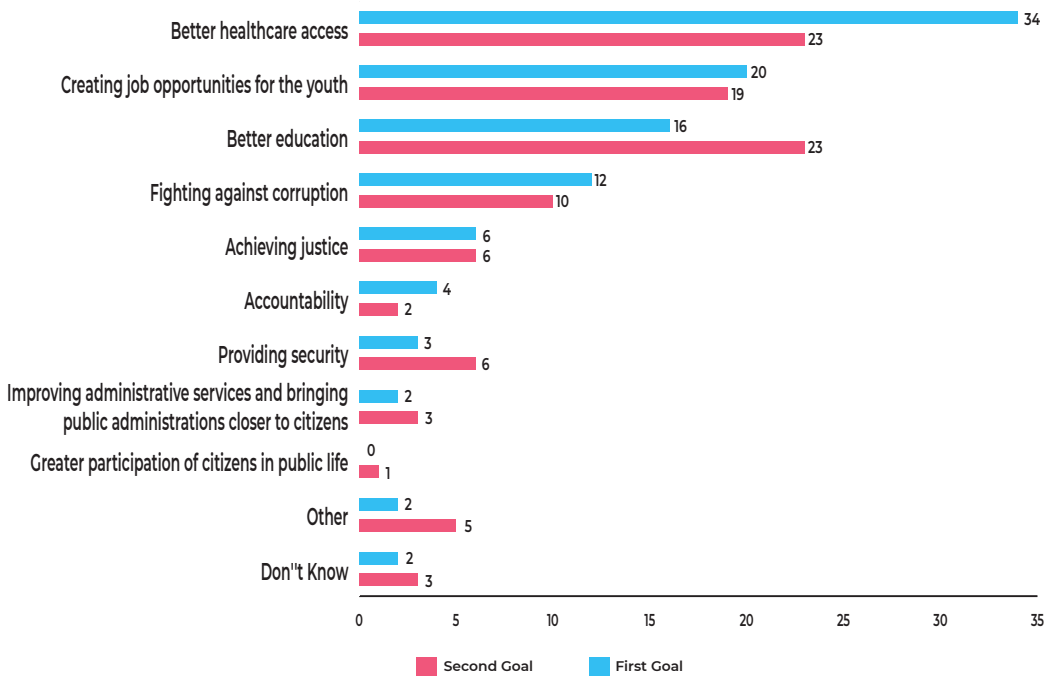
This year, results reveal a somehow decrease in the level of satisfaction with Morocco's general direction as 58% of the participants expressed satisfaction against 66% in 2022. In terms of the economic development of the country, only 28% of the respondents expressed satisfaction of the current Moroccan economic development against 50% in 2022 (see Graph 23). Moroccans may be facing economic challenges such as high unemployment rates, low wages, rising inflation, and a widening wealth gap. These economic issues can impact people's livelihoods and well-being, leading to dissatisfaction with the overall economic situation.

Figure 23 : Satisfaction with general societal trend of Morocco



When asking respondents about the most important goals that the Moroccan government should achieve during the next five years, the priorities are almost the same as the findings of 2022 where 23% said better health sector; 23% said better education; 19% said creating job opportunities for youth; 10% said fighting against corruption; while only 1% said greater participation of citizens in public life (see Graph 24).

Figure 24 : Important goals the Moroccan government should achieve during the next five years



Social Trust

Social trust refers to the level of trust and confidence that individuals have in each other and in societal institutions. It is a fundamental aspect of social cohesion and plays a crucial role in shaping the relationships and interactions within a community or society. Social trust findings have been stable across the last three years.

Following the previous year's trends, parenthood has a strong and consistent effect on social trust across age and gender groups. The survey found that 98% of the respondents said they completely trust their nuclear families, and 78% said they completely trust the extended family, against 47% in 2022. The results also show high levels of trust in the Imams of mosques, with about 73%, possibly given the religious authority, moral and ethical conduct, accessibility, integrity, and transparency. However, 66% of the respondents do not trust people they meet for the first time (47% do not trust completely, and 19% do not trust), 45% of them do not trust people of other religions, 35% do not trust people of other nationalities against 45% in 2022; 37% do not trust their neighbors; 25% do not trust their friends (see Graph 25). The results indicate, that the closer the ties, the higher the trust (e.g. family). Stereotypes might play a role in higher levels of distrust towards foreigners, people of different religions etc.

Furthermore, 58% of the respondents believe that Moroccans trust each other against 65% in 2022. While only 15% of respondents think that Moroccans trust each other completely, 43% think that Moroccans trust each other somewhat (see Graph 26). It is a conceptual difference, whether people think about other's level of trust or about their own feelings of trust. When it comes to people's own feeling of trust, 60% of the respondents trust people in general (24% trust completely and 36% trust somehow (see Graph 27).

Figure 25 : Social trust

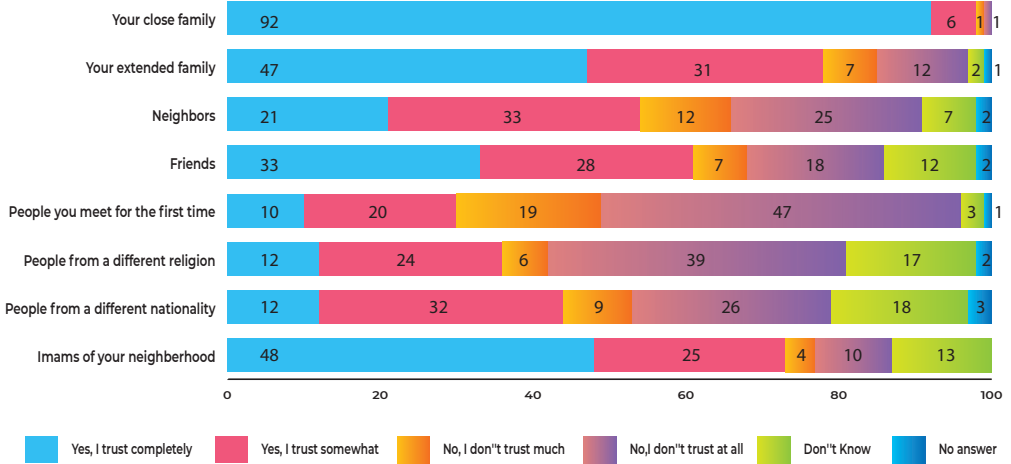


Figure 26 : Perceptions of trust among Moroccans

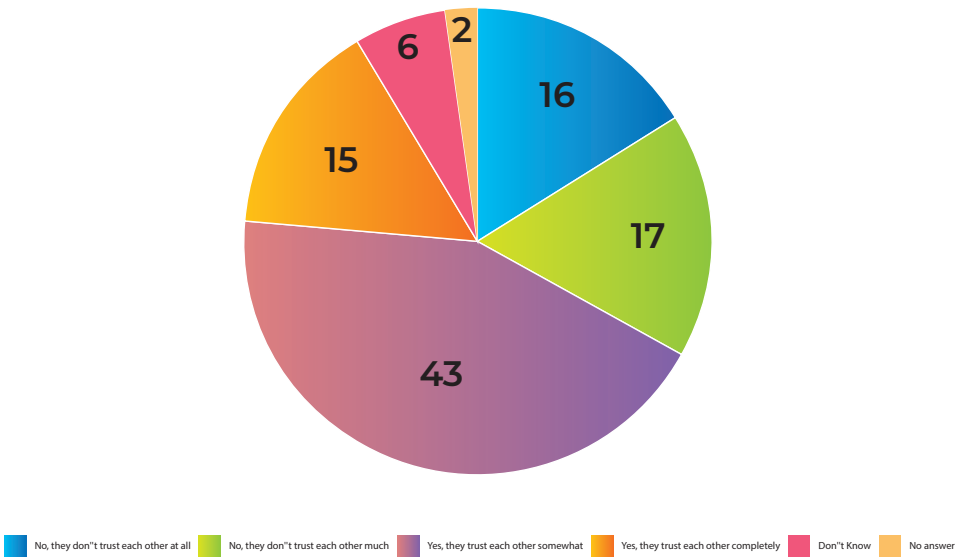
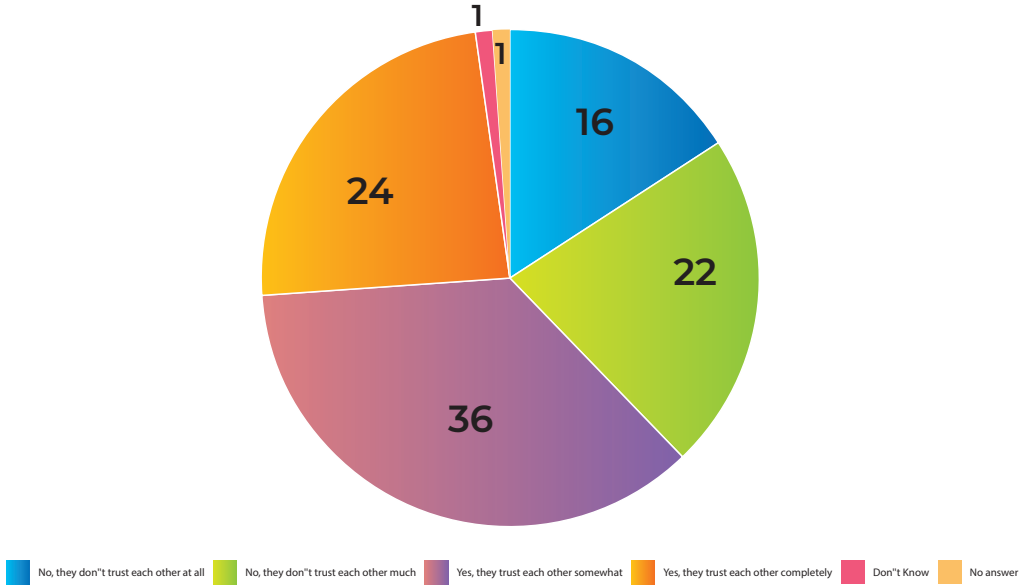
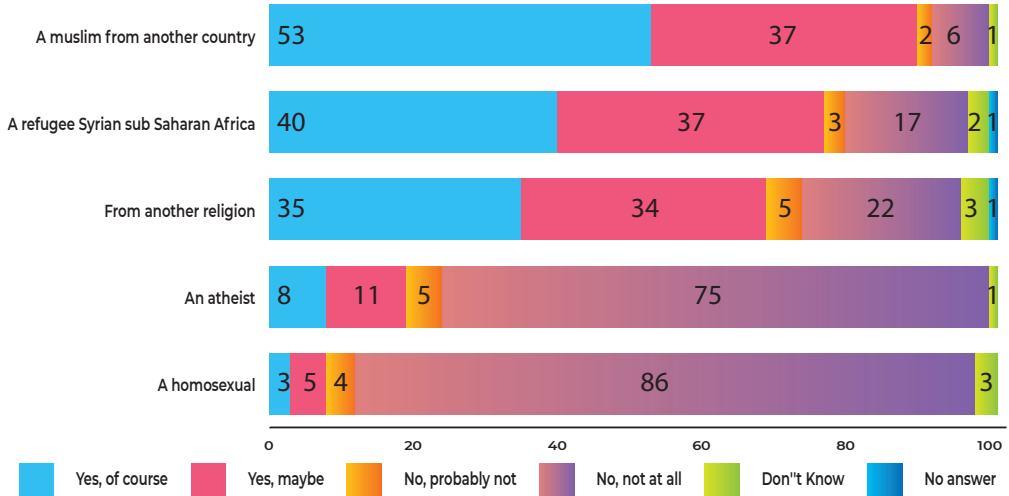


Figure 27 : Respondent's level of trust in people



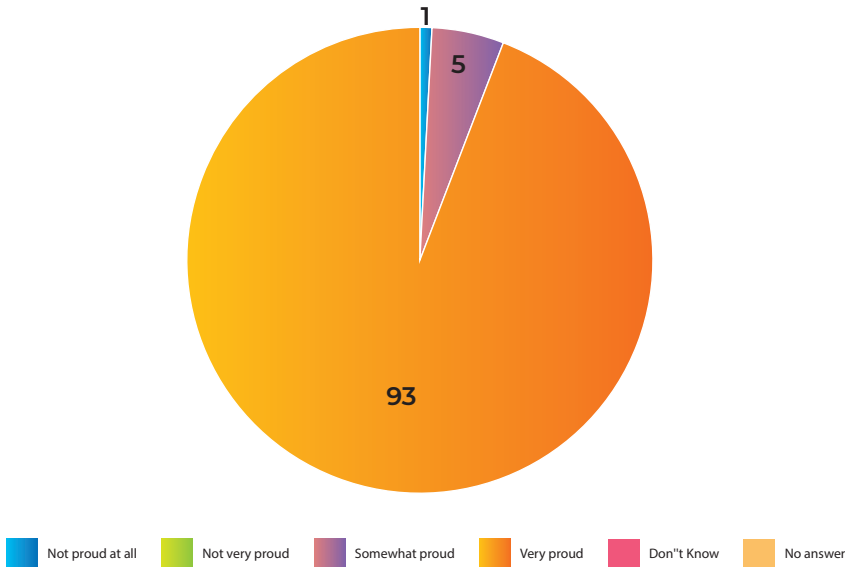
With regard to making friendships, 90% of the respondents would accept a friend Muslim from a different country; 69% would accept having a friend from a different religion, 77% would accept having refugee friends. However, only 18% would accept atheist friends, and 7% would accept having homosexual friends. [see Graph 28].

Figure 28: Accepting friends



As for their Moroccan identity, 93% of the respondents said they are very proud of being Moroccan; another 5% of the respondents said they are somewhat proud, whereas only very few Moroccans state, that they are not very [0.4%] or not proud at all [1%]. [see Graph 29].

Figure 29 : Proud to be Moroccan



Research Team

Mohammed Masbah

Dr. Mohammed Masbah is the Founder and President of the Moroccan Institute for Policy Analysis (MIPA), an Associate Fellow at Chatham House, and Fellow with the NPSIA at Carleton University. Previously, he was affiliated with the Carnegie Middle East Center and the German Institute for International and Security Affairs.

His research focuses on institutional reforms, public policy, democratization, countering violent extremism, and political Islam. He has authored a range of academic and policy papers and conducted training sessions on public policy. He led various research projects at MIPA using both qualitative and quantitative analysis.

Dr. Masbah's received various awards, including the Chevening Scholarship from the British Government, the Prize for the Best Ph.D. Dissertation in Social Sciences from Mohamed V University, and the Research Grant from the African Peacebuilding Network of the Social Science Research Council, New York.

His recent publications include «Synergy in North Africa: Furthering Cooperation,» published by Chatham House in 2020, «Moroccan Jihadists: Local and Global Dimensions,» published by Al Jazeera Centre for Studies in 2021, and the «Trust in Institutions Index 2022,» published by the Moroccan Institute for Policy Analysis.

Rachid Aourraz

Dr. Aourraz is an economist researcher and co-founding member of the Moroccan Institute for Policy Analysis. Rachid holds a Ph.D. in applied economics, with a focus on human capital and economic growth in Morocco. He is the author of numerous policy papers and reports on Morocco's economic development and reform, education, citizen-state relations, and the impact of the global COVID-19 pandemic.

Hajar Idrissi

Dr. Hajar Idrissi is a research associate at the Moroccan Institute for Policy Analysis (MIPA). She holds a jointly supervised PhD in education and human development studies from Sidi Mohammed Ben Abdellah University, Morocco and the Graduate School of Education and Human Development, the George Washington University, USA. She has been a visiting scholar at different institutions such as the Institute of Social Studies, University of Tartu, Estonia and Bergen University, Norway. Her main research interests are citizenship education policy trends, global citizenship education, curriculum and instruction, sustainable development and climate change education. Dr. Idrissi is currently an Assistant Professor at the Higher School of Education and Training.



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