

QUALITY ASSURANCE IN VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING IN MOROCCO

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CONTENTS

1.	INTRODUCTION	4
1.1	National context	4
1.2	Statistics	4
1.3	The vocational education and training system	5
2.	QUALITY ASSURANCE IN VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING	8
2.1	Overview	8
2.2	Quality assurance related to key vocational education and training areas	9
3.	NEW DEVELOPMENTS AND REQUIREMENTS	12
4.	GOOD PRACTICE EXAMPLES	12
	LIST OF ACRONYMS	13

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 National context

The Kingdom of Morocco is a constitutional monarchy. According to figures from the Haut Commissariat au Plan (Higher Planning Commission, 'HCP'), the country's population was 35.2 million in 2018. In recent years, the Moroccan economy has been characterised by macroeconomic stability, including low and stable inflation levels. It benefits from strong export growth, notably in the automotive sector, and a favourable trend in private investment and tourism. In 2018, the growth rate stood at 3% (HCP figures), down by almost 1% compared with 2017, when the rate was 4.2%. Although illiteracy levels remain high, these are falling - among the population aged 10+: it was 32% in 2014, compared with 43% in 2004 and 55% in 1994 (HCP figures). Morocco was placed 121st of 189 countries in the 2018 rankings by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), with a slightly improved Human Development Index: 0.67 compared with 0.61 in 2010.

The labour market is dominated by very small enterprises and the informal sector.

1.2 Statistics

TABLE 1. PROPORTION OF YOUNG PEOPLE IN THE LABOUR FORCE

	Working age population (15–59 years)	Proportion of young people (15–24 years, %)
2010	20 983 000	19.5
2014	21 062 000	18.0
2018	21 618 000	17.0

Source: Haut Commissariat au Plan

TABLE 2. EMPLOYMENT

	Participation rate (15 years+, %)	Employment rate (15 years+, %)	Employment rate amongst young people (15–24 years, %)
2010	49.6	45.1	29.8
2014	48.0	43.3	26.1
2016	46.6	42.0	22.1
2018	46.2	41.7	20.2

Source: Haut Commissariat au Plan

TABLE 3. EDUCATIONAL LEVELS OF ADULT POPULATION

	Low (%)	Medium (%)	High (%)
2010	83.3	11.9	4.8
2014	79.6	12.3	8.1
2019	78.1	11.4	10.5

Note: Equivalence with the International Standard Classification of Education (ISCED): low level – ISCED levels 0–2; medium level – ISCED levels 3–4; high level – ISCED levels 5–8

Source: Ministry of National Education, Vocational Training, Higher Education and Scientific Research

TABLE 4. PARTICIPATION RATES IN VOCATIONAL TRAINING

	Secondary (ISCED level 3) (%)	Post-secondary (ISCED level 4) (%)
2010	16.2	N/A
2014	15.7	N/A
2019	16.0	N/A

Source: Ministry of National Education, Vocational Training, Higher Education and Scientific Research

1.3 The vocational education and training system

Governance and management

Responsibility for VET policies, including in quality assurance, lies with the Ministry of National Education, Vocational Training, Higher Education and Scientific Research. Its Department for Vocational Training develops the government’s vocational training policies, implementing and evaluating the strategies devised for the development of the vocational training sector and ensuring its overall coordination.

Economic and social partners i.e. trade unions and employers play an active part in the governance of the system and are involved from defining the strategy and skills needed to assessing learning outcomes, through to the development and implementation of training programmes.

The role of civil society in the governance of the system remains limited.

Financing

The vocational training system is characterised by a diverse range of funding sources: State, businesses, households, donors and private investment.

The budget allocated to vocational training was 0.5% of GDP in 2014¹.

The Office for Vocational Training and Job Promotion’s (Office de la formation professionnelle et de la promotion du travail – OFPPT) budget essentially comes from a tax on vocational training (1.6% of the wage bill). Some 70% of the budget is allocated to the funding of actions and projects relating to the OFPPT’s initial training and 30% to the funding of on-the-job training.

¹ National Strategy for Vocational Training 2021

The general State budget is the main source of funding for the Department for Vocational Training and public training institutions.

The private vocational training sector is financed mainly by payments by individuals for their training.

It should be noted that trainees receiving public vocational training at specialised technician level receive a grant, in the same way as university students. Trainees receiving private vocational training at the same level also receive a contribution towards their training costs paid to them by the Department for Vocational Training.

Regulatory framework and development strategy

Vocational training is governed by two main laws.

- Framework Law No 51/17 on the education, training and scientific research system, enacted on 9 August 2019, defines the basic principles of the educational and training system. It sets out the main objectives of public policy and its strategic choices for reforming the system. The ways in which those objectives will be met are also set out and include the system's components and structure, the rules governing its organisation and management, how its services can be accessed, and its funding sources and measures. The law complies with the recommendations in the 2015–2030 strategic vision to reform education and training.
- The second is Law No 60-17 on continuous training, the main aims of which are to:
 - review the governance of continuous training;
 - extend access to continuous training to other categories of beneficiaries other than employees;
 - introduce continuous training initiated by those beneficiaries using time-credit training;
 - institutionalise the skills audit and the validation of professional experience acquired.

It should be noted that the secondary legislation is under preparation.

Two strategic documents guide the vocational training sector.

- The Roadmap for the Development of Vocational Training was approved in 2019. Its aims include reforming the sector to make it a strategic lever for business competitiveness and to support young people in entering the labour force. It is structured around the following five areas:
 - upgrading vocational training provision;
 - creating a new generation of vocational training centres;
 - modernising teaching methods and the adaptation of new quality standards;
 - professionalising young people who work in the informal sector and/or are seeking employment;
 - early guidance for young people and increasing the attractiveness of vocational training.
- The National Strategy for Vocational Training 2021 was adopted in 2016 and is currently being implemented. It brings together stakeholders and operators around a vision centred on employability (especially of young people), efficient resource management, integrating the potential for in-house training, whilst promoting closer ties with other parts of the education and training system.

Main provider institution types

Vocational training in Morocco is provided by a range of operators:

- the Office for Vocational Training and Job Promotion (OFPPT), a strategic publicly-owned establishment operating under the supervision of the Department for Vocational Training, which provides 90% of public training;
- ministerial departments, which provide training in business sectors that correspond to their area of work;
- the private vocational training sector, which is governed by Law No 13-00;
- other stakeholders, including businesses, professional chambers and non-governmental organisations (NGOs).

In 2018/19, the training sector comprised 679 public and 1 372 private establishments, in addition to apprenticeship training centres owned by businesses or NGOs. There are also nine delegated management institutes in the system, which were established under public-private partnerships (PPP) and are managed by professionals.

More than 347 training pathways are available.

Main provision/programme types

Initial training – There are three methods of initial training:

- residential training, which mainly takes place in the training institute with an internship in a business for one to two months per year. This is the most common method, chosen by 68% of young people in training in 2018/19;
- dual training (23% of the total headcount). At least one third of the overall duration of this training takes place in the training institute and at least 50% is in a business or other workplace;
- apprenticeship training (9% of the total headcount), at least 80% of which takes place in the workplace, with an additional 10% in the training institute.

Skills training – 128 500 people received skills training in 2018/19. This is short-term training not leading to a qualification and is aimed at improving the employability of young jobseekers.

Continuing training – Continuing training targets remaining in or returning to work, career progression by developing skills, adapting qualifications to developments in the labour market and improving business productivity and competitiveness. In 2018, 602 756 employees benefited from continuing training compared with 391 000 in 2016.

Organisation of initial training (diplomas and certificates)

Initial training is aimed at young people aged 15 and over who meet the access requirements (educational level and age). It has a five-level structure:

- vocational apprenticeship certificate: accessible with a minimum level of reading and writing skills (this level is taught by apprenticeship only);
- specialisation: accessible after the 6th year of primary education;
- qualification: accessible after the 3rd year of secondary education;
- technician: accessible after the final year of the Baccaalaureate;
- specialised technician: accessible to holders of the Baccaalaureate.

The training takes two years for the 'specialised technician' and 'technician' levels and is defined by decree according to the sector and skills required for the 'qualification' and 'specialisation' levels.

2. QUALITY ASSURANCE IN VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING

2.1 Overview

The Department for Vocational Training is fully responsible for the quality assurance system, from designing quality assurance measures to implementing them, with considerable input from stakeholders and partners, including professionals and businesses.

These are some of the main quality assurance measures being implemented.

- Quantitative and qualitative needs in the labour market are being defined using the sectoral studies carried out in accordance with the requirements of specific guides. Those studies do not yet cover all training sectors.
- Establishment procedures are being formalised, using regulatory texts, specific to each type of training institution (public, private, or delegated management) and/or training pathway.
- Training programmes are being developed using the competence-based approach, as formalised in a specific methodological framework transposed into guides and tools.
- Advisory and training bodies involved in continuing training are being classified. This measure seeks to give institutional recognition to the competences and professionalism of advisory and training bodies in a particular sector. The new law on continuous training lays down generalised provisions in respect of all public and private bodies.
- There has been regular and continuous evaluation, since 1987, of the system's external performance in the form of surveys on the integration of recipients in the labour market and their career path.

At the level of vocational training institutions, quality assurance takes the form of:

- procedures for classifying pathways and the accreditation of private vocational training institutions defined by the law governing the private training sector;
- a unified system for the self-assessment of all institutions (public and private) which is now being rolled out at the rate of 250 institutions per year;
- ISO certification of the management processes of certain establishments falling under the OFPPT.

In addition,

- Since 2019, the National Certification Framework has been assuring the quality of certifications through the governance and operationalisation bodies. The certifications forming part of the Framework are subject to a predefined quality assurance process.
- The creation of a quality assurance team representing the various training operators, to instil a culture of quality in the vocational training system and increase dialogue on that subject.

Despite those initiatives and measures, Morocco does not yet have a national, formalised and systematic policy on quality assurance in the vocational training system. However, Framework Law

No 51-17 provides for the establishment of a dedicated system – some measures and tools are already operational, whereas others are being introduced.

2.2 Quality assurance related to key vocational education and training areas

Statistical data for quality assurance

The information system on the supply and demand of labour is based primarily on the following:

- the national employment survey, conducted on a continuous basis by the Haut Commissariat au Plan, which is the leading Moroccan institution for economic, demographic and social statistical data. It provides an assessment of the status and trends by activity, in employment and unemployment both nationally and regionally;
- studies and surveys carried out at the initiative of ministerial departments according to their respective duties and priorities;
- surveillance surveys carried out by the National Agency for the Promotion of Employment and Skills (Agence nationale de promotion de l'emploi et des compétences – Anapec) for drawing up the skills training map;
- tools for gathering information on labour market developments directly related to vocational training, such as sectoral and planning studies conducted by the Department for Vocational Training.

The effectiveness of the vocational training system and whether the training meets the needs of the labour market are measured by two surveys.

- The first survey is carried out nine months after graduation to serve as an indicator of graduate employment.
- The second is carried out three years after graduation to serve as a qualitative and quantitative indicator of, inter alia, career development amongst graduates and whether the training received was adequate for the positions held.

To ensure better alignment between skills supply and demand, the Department for Vocational Training made the strategic decision to adopt the competence-based approach, which seeks to identify skills needs. That approach is based on sectoral and planning studies to enable the qualitative and quantitative needs of various economic sectors to be identified, so as to plan the training offer accordingly.

The Department for Vocational Training also produces information and indicators that offer insight into the attainment of certain objectives relating to the quality of training, in particular:

- the vocational training participation rate (by subsector, type, training method, level, geographical location, etc.);
- the dropout rate;
- the list of accredited private vocational training institutions.

It should be noted that:

- those training providers with their own information systems also produce indicators specific to their systems;

- the Departments for National Education and Higher Education have personal data on students and diplomas which are a source of information for the vocational training system;
- the interprofessional advisory boards (GIAC), whose mission is to help businesses identify their skills needs and to develop plans for continuing training, provide the training system with information on the labour market;
- the National Labour Market Observatory publishes labour market analyses.

The various statistical tools and measures set out above have not yet been consolidated in an integrated system. This would make it possible to ensure continuity in the process of producing information for use when planning the training offer and evaluating the system.

Quality assurance and the qualifications cycle

To reform its vocational training system, Morocco has adopted an integrated, global strategy, involving all stakeholders and a competence-based approach.

Each phase follows a process enshrined in a methodological framework with guides to support and ensure quality in each of the following stages: planning, development, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the supply. Professionals are involved in all phases of the education and training system cycle. Skills needs are defined in close collaboration with professionals when carrying out sectoral studies aimed at identifying tasks that necessitate the creation of a training programme.

An 'occupational standard' together with a 'qualification standard' is then drawn up to describe the occupations and skills linked to each task identified. The two documents are validated by the professionals. The curriculum is then developed. It sets out the training needed for trainees to reach the required level to enter the labour market with qualifications that are in line with workplace expectations.

Learning assessments, using the competence-based approach, are structured using the 'assessment framework' whereby professionals determine the thresholds to be met in order for skills to be validated.

In addition to curricula provided by the OFPPT, which are all developed using the competence-based approach, a further 167 programmes, also competence-based, are available through the Department for Vocational Training.

Finally, it should be noted that, despite all the existing, or pending, quality assurance measures being implemented in education and training, the monitoring and assessment of each phase is still limited.

Quality assurance and VET provision/provider institutions

The quality assurance measures within education and training institutions differ according to their status.

Public vocational training institutions

In 2019, the Department for Vocational Training started implementing the unified system for the self-assessment of training institutions. Before that, each operator had its own system. The OFPPT has carried out ISO certification audits of some of those training institutions.

Private vocational training institutions

These institutions are subject to two obligations:

- accreditation of the training programme to ensure its compliance with pre-established standards, ensuring the quality of training, safeguarding the interests of trainees and preparing the accreditation terms of private vocational training institutions;
- accreditation of the institution itself, once all training programmes have been accredited. This accreditation permits the training institution to organise exams for its trainees and to issue them with diplomas certified by the public administration. Accreditation is awarded for a specified period (three to five years) and may be withdrawn in the event of failure to comply with the standards as identified by checks performed by the Department for Vocational Training.

Delegated management institutes

Delegated management institutes are established under public-private partnerships. The State is responsible for constructing and fitting out these institutes and entrusts their management to a company set up by professionals in an effort to better meet the skills requirements of businesses.

A model and framework for the management of these institutes has been developed, which enables accountability and provides benchmarks for assessing management practices within the institute (currently being implemented).

NGOs providing apprenticeship training

NGOs involved in apprenticeship training are assessed upstream by an eligibility committee in order to ensure that they can form partnerships with the State. A monitoring committee supervises the actual running of the training courses.

Upstream assessment is carried out using a framework that is completed by the NGO which provides an overview of its capacity in terms of premises, human/financial resources and experience in carrying out the training.

Towards a unified quality assurance system

The Department for Vocational Training is working on the development of a unified quality assurance system for all public and private vocational training institutions which will encompass the self-assessment of those institutions, their external assessment and their accreditation/certification against a specific standard. Self-assessment tools have already been developed and they are being introduced gradually.

Quality assurance and VET teacher/trainer qualifications standards and continuing professional development

Trainers are not subject to common rules and are generally recruited without any prior teacher-training to prepare them for the role. Only the OFPPT has nine skills development centres for supporting newly recruited trainers when they take up their posts, and when subsequently they do annual skills audits followed by further training.

Professional development for trainers and the certification of their skills remains very limited. To remedy this, the Department for Vocational Training has created training benchmarks for six training professions. This accompanying measure is part of the ongoing establishment of a National Training Institute for Trainers and Tutors (INFFT). The aim of that institute will be to organise and promote the

training professions, ensure that trainers are prepared to perform their role, and ensure professional development and the certification of their skills. It is intended to act as a federation, making it possible to pool, unify and optimise the efforts and resources of training providers in that field.

3. NEW DEVELOPMENTS AND REQUIREMENTS

New developments

- The Roadmap and Framework Law No 51/17, adopted in August 2019, provide for the establishment of a quality assurance system with procedures that will be set out in the implementing legislation currently being prepared.
- Official establishment of the national commission of the National Qualification Framework in practice.
- The establishment of an integrated and unified quality assurance system for training institutions, ranging in scope from their self-assessment to their accreditation.
- The launch of other strategic projects to include:
 - a reform of governance;
 - the adoption of a forward-looking and dynamic training map;
 - the development and deployment of an integrated information system.

Needs

1. To establish an adequate governance method capable of aligning the actions of the various parties involved.
2. To establish an integrated information system.
3. To improve and expand the measures used to define labour market needs.
4. To extend the implementation of the competence-based approach to all institutions and pathways.

4. GOOD PRACTICE EXAMPLES

1. The evaluation of the external performance of the system, based on surveys on integration (nine months after graduation) and career paths (three years after graduation).
2. The accreditation system for vocational training institutions.
3. The general framework of education and training system, based on the following four key phases of quality assurance: 'Plan' (sectoral studies, integration surveys, directory of occupations and trades and jobs and skills framework, labour market monitoring, training map, etc); 'Do' (methodological framework for the development and implementation of programmes, training map, procedures and regulations); 'Check' (system for assessing programmes and institutions); 'Act' (this phase is not yet operational).
4. The integrated, unified and regulated quality assurance system for training institutions, ranging in scope from their self-assessment to their accreditation. Its implementation is already underway.

LIST OF ACRONYMS

ETF	European Training Foundation
GDP	Gross domestic product
GIAC	Groupements interprofessionnels d'aide au conseil (interprofessional advisory boards)
HCP	Haut Commissariat au Plan (Higher Planning Commission)
ISCED	International Standard Classification of Education
NGOs	Non-governmental organisations
OFPPT	Office de la formation professionnelle et de la promotion du travail (Office for Vocational Training and Job Promotion)
VET	Vocational education and training

Where to find out more

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