

## RISK & SAFETY MANAGEMENT IN ADVENTURE TOURISM

### COUNTRY FACTSHEET: MOROCCO

#### OVERVIEW

The sectoral strategy for tourism sector is a 10-year plan, called *Vision 2020*, put in place by the Moroccan government in 2010. It aims to double the number of the tourists by 2020, and invest in regional and international airports, speed rail links throughout the country, which is easing the travel to new areas and improving travel to popular destinations.<sup>1</sup> The Vision 2020 for tourism gives a few figures on the sectoral weight: 1st contributor to the balance of payments during the 1st decade of 2000, 2nd contributor to the national GDP, 2nd job-creating sector.<sup>2</sup>

According to the Kingdom of Morocco; Ministry of Tourism, Airport Transport, and Handicrafts statistics,<sup>3</sup> the tourism sector in Morocco continues to forge on, with 24 % of tourism growth recorded during the first three months of 2018. In terms of structuring and organization, more than half of the 941 existing travel agencies are located between Casablanca and Marrakech and the number of guides operating in Morocco is 2759.<sup>4</sup>

#### RISK & SAFETY MANAGEMENT IN ADVENTURE TOURISM OVERVIEW

Tourism makes a significant contribution to Morocco's economy and is considered a strategic sector for driving the country's economic and social development. Since 2010 the number of inbound tourist arrivals has increased, on average, by 2% per year to reach 10.3 million in 2016.<sup>5</sup> There was a decline in arrivals from the main markets in 2016, because of the economic crises experienced in several European countries, wherein lie many of Morocco's traditional tourism source markets as well as perception on the safety of the country. According to the World Economic Forum, Morocco's falling ranks comparing last couple of years were also related with a dip in performance in the business environment, health and hygiene, human resources and ICT readiness categories.<sup>6</sup> There are no particular licensing requirements for risk management or safety in tourism sector. Hence, during outings and activities, risk management often falls on guides. In order to be qualified as an official guide for natural areas, every guide should complete a six-month training school in Tabant (East of Marrakech) under the Royal Moroccan Federation of skiing and mountaineering. These six months training is a pre-requisite qualification for any Guide for natural areas in Morocco and also qualifies the guides for leading trekking tours anywhere in Morocco, however this training has not qualified them as international tour guide, and the school is closed due to the high number guides in the Country.

---

<sup>1</sup> Financial Times, Mohamed Sajid, tourism is essential for Morocco's development, <https://www.ft.com/content/783fc966-5c23-11e7-b553-e2df1b0c3220>

<sup>2</sup> To get the more data on tourism figures, please see the following link: <http://www.observatoiredu tourisme.ma/>

<sup>3</sup> Morocco World News, Morocco's Tourist Arrivals Increase 24% During 1st Trimester of 2018, <https://www.morocoworldnews.com/2018/04/245089/moroccos-tourist-arrivals-increase-24-during-1st-trimester-of-2018/>

<sup>4</sup> Ministry of Tourism, Airport Transport, and Handicrafts statistics `http://www.tourisme.gov.ma/fr/node/127`

<sup>5</sup> OECD Tourism Trends and Policies 2018, <https://www.oecd-ilibrary.org/docserver/tour-2018-en.pdf?expires=1540983656&id=id&accname=guest&checksum=A140B954C3D6D599B2228CE710DA8547>

<sup>6</sup> Oxford Business Group, Tourism, Strong Performance of Moroccan Tourism Industry Expected to Continue in 2018, <https://oxfordbusinessgroup.com/overview/turning-tide-sector-expected-continue-its-recovery-back-strong-performance-2017>

## LEGAL FRAMEWORK FOR RISK & SAFETY MANAGEMENT

In Morocco, the Ministry of Tourism, Airport Transport, Handicrafts and Social Economy is the main governing body related with tourism activities and its actors. The main legislative documents on occupational safety and health (OSH) include the Labor Code and the Decision 93-08 of 12 May 2008. Nevertheless, it doesn't provide any specific guidance related to Health and Safety at work. Other legislative documents regulate particular hazards, covering large sectors such as agriculture, services, and the public sector, with a special emphasis on the proper maintenance of facilities.

Pursuant to the Labor Code, employers must ensure that work sites are clean and meet all safety and health requirements, and they must provide fire protection devices, ventilation, noise reduction, drinking water, and appropriate bathroom facilities.

Machinery must meet the highest safety standards possible. A worker's failure to comply with safety and health regulations may result in his/her immediate dismissal. Businesses that employ 50 workers or more are required to establish safety and health committees composed of an employer representative, the chief safety officer, the company physician, two labor representatives, and one to two union representatives. The committee is tasked with investigating occupational hazards that threaten workers, supervising the maintenance and use of company equipment, and initiating efforts to apply safety and health legislative and regulatory provisions. OSH legislation is specific, but the law does not specify the competent national authority for safety and health at work as well.

In addition to the Labor Code, the Government has implemented various decrees to regulate occupational safety and health conditions. The Decree of November 14, 1952, covers general hygiene and safety measures; Decree No. 2-56-1019 concerns the prohibition of women and children in performing dangerous work.

- Law No. 80-14 dated October 2015, regulates the tourism facilities and other forms of tourism accommodation. It will not apply until the publication of its implementing legislation.
- The specified rating system of tourism establishments, established by the law 61-00 (Dahir No. 1-02-176 of 13 June 2002)
- The tourism guide profession is governed by Law No. 05-12 regulating the tourism guide profession, which establishes the conditions of access and exercise of the profession needed to professionalize the profession and ensure quality standards of the offered services.
- The activities of travel agencies are governed by Law No. 31.96. It specifies the conditions for issuance and operation of travel agency licenses. The regulatory framework is supplemented by Decree No. 2-97-547 of 25 Jumada II 1418 (28 October 1997) which sets the rules for implementing the specified law.

The most recently the Moroccan government put Health & Safety at work on the agenda. In 2017, together with ILO, the Ministry of Labour and professional insertion drafted the National Profile for Health and Safety at work, giving a comprehensive inventory of the situation in the country. It's described as the first step to set up a national policy to promote H&S at work, as planned in the government programme on the period 2017-2021.

## CHALLENGES & OPPORTUNITIES

Tourism in Morocco has a long history and is an important source of economic prosperity. The Moroccan Sustainable Tourism Charter dated January 2016, highlights four principles being the environment and biodiversity protection; sustainability of culture and heritage, prioritization of local development and respect for host communities, adoption of the principles of fairness, ethics and social responsibility. Taking in consideration sectoral issues in the country, the Strategic Alliance in Morocco intends to address specific needs in terms of Health and Safety at work related to the training of the guides, the practices of local tour operators in terms of risk management and the support to the national policy efforts on H & S and implement existing framework.

Despite all the efforts made by the Moroccan government through big investments and promotion of the sector worldwide to make from tourism a main source of revenue, the delay of several projects could be explained by the terrorist threats in the region and the financial crisis in the Eurozone. Therefore, the future of tourism remains very sensitive to external factors especially that the recent events in neighbouring countries keeps tourists sceptical from visiting the North Africa region. A further challenge is that, like investors, potential tourists to Morocco continue to be deterred by regional instability and insecurity. Several countries, including France and the US, have recently issued travel warnings to their nationals urging them to use extreme caution when travelling to Morocco.