

# **Morocco 2020 Crime & Safety Report**



This is an annual report produced in conjunction with the Regional Security Offices at the U.S. Embassy in Rabat and the U.S. Consulate General in Casablanca. OSAC encourages travelers to <u>use this report</u> to gain baseline knowledge of security conditions in Morocco. For more in-depth information, review OSAC's <u>Morocco country page</u> for original OSAC reporting, consular messages, and contact information, some of which may be available only to private-sector representatives with an OSAC password.

# **Travel Advisory**

The current U.S. Department of State <u>Travel Advisory</u> at the date of this report's publication assesses Morocco at Level 2, indicating travelers should exercise increased caution due to terrorism. Review OSAC's report, <u>Understanding the Consular Travel Advisory System</u>.

# **Overall Crime and Safety Situation**

### **Crime Threats**

The U.S. Department of State has assessed Casablanca as being a **HIGH**-threat location and Rabat as being a **MEDIUM**-threat location for crime directed at or affecting official U.S. government interests. Media reporting and anecdotal observations indicate that the frequency and intensity of crime in Morocco's major cities is similar to other large cities in North Africa. The most common crimes are petty crimes, such as pickpocketing, theft from unoccupied vehicles, robberies, purse snatching, and burglaries. Criminals focus on high-traffic and high-density areas such as tourist sites, markets, medinas, and festivals in major cities. Criminals tend to fixate on people who appear unfamiliar with their surroundings, dress in obviously foreign clothing, or otherwise draw attention to themselves. Due to the low availability of firearms in Morocco, when violent crimes occur, they tend to involve edged weapons such as knives (and occasionally swords). Larceny and residential burglaries are common in low-income neighborhoods, and occasionally occur in more affluent neighborhoods. Review OSAC's report, <u>All That You Should Leave Behind</u>.

Pedestrians walking alone in isolated areas, or late at night, are at greater risk for becoming a target. Gratuitous displays of wealth may attract unwanted attention and increase the risk of becoming a target. Dress in a conservative manner, do not display a large amount of currency, protect smart phones from being easily snatched, carry wallets in front pockets, ensure that purses/backpacks are carried securely, and do not wear elaborate jewelry/watches. Guard possessions carefully on public transportation. Leaving any item of value unattended in a public place or in a vehicle in plain sight can make that item the target of petty theft. Have a friend or colleague watch the surrounding area as you focus on completing your transaction at an ATM.

Visitors, especially females, should make a concerted effort to travel in pairs and avoid walking alone at night. Travel in pairs/groups, drink in moderation, maintain control over drinks, and never accept drinks from strangers. Avoid being out alone and during late-night or early morning hours. At night, avoid areas that are poorly lighted or secluded. Review OSAC's report, <a href="Shaken: The Don'ts of Alcohol Abroad">Shaken: The Don'ts of Alcohol Abroad</a>.

The government of Morocco's 2020 Crime Rate Report highlighted an 8.6% decrease in violent crimes in 2019, noting that law enforcement ultimately resolved 90% of cases. The report also noted increased efforts to combat criminal networks, particularly those involved in illegal immigration and forgery.

Equip homes to prevent unauthorized entry. This generally means installing security grilles protecting accessible windows and glass doors; exterior doors should be solid and have a minimum of two deadlocks. Single-family homes should have a wall that discourages intruders from entering the premises. Apartment dwellers should consider the possibility of intruders gaining access via adjacent balconies or structures, and ensure that there are functional locks or other protection for areas vulnerable to unauthorized entry. Keep doors and windows locked, even when home. Review OSAC's reports, <a href="Hotels: The Inns and Outs">Hotels: The Inns and Outs</a> and Considerations for Hotel Security.

### Cybersecurity Issues

ATMs are generally safe when taking normal precautions. There have been several recent reported cases of debit/credit card fraud. In all cases, the victims reported money withdrawn from their accounts after using their cards at ATMs, or their credit cards being billed for unaccounted charges after using them at local establishments. Review OSAC's reports, <u>The Overseas Traveler's Guide to ATM Skimmers & Fraud</u> and <u>Taking Credit</u>.

Cybercrime in Morocco thus far remains generally limited to common scams requesting money up front for promised services, or chances to obtain more money with a downpayment. More advanced cyber fraud is common in Ouad Zem, a city towards the center of Morocco, where many cases of sexual blackmail took place via the internet. Much of the blackmail allegedly targeted foreigners residing outside Morocco. U.S. citizens have also been victims of international financial scams based in Morocco, where someone the target has not met in person offers romance and/or marriage to the target, then asks the target for money to pay hospital fees, legal expenses, or expenses related to many sudden unforeseen problems. Review OSAC's reports, Cybersecurity Basics, Best Practices for Maximizing Security on Public Wi-Fi, Traveling with Mobile Devices: Trends & Best Practices, and Satellite Phones: Critical or Contraband?

#### **Transportation-Safety Situation**

#### **Road Safety and Road Conditions**

Traffic accidents are a major concern. On average, more than 11 Moroccans die in motor vehicle accidents every day; the fatality rate for motor vehicle accidents is approximately twice that of the United States. Compared to North America or Europe, driving in Morocco can be more erratic, aggressive, and even reckless. It is common to see vehicles driving into oncoming traffic and ignoring stop signs or traffic signals. Drivers frequently execute right turns from the left lane and vice-versa. A wide variety of vehicles (e.g. bicycles, scooters, donkey carts, slower-moving utility vehicles) share the road. Some vehicles are older, overladen, and lack proper maintenance. Pedestrians often walk into traffic without looking, or intentionally dart between moving cars. Riders on mopeds and motorcycles routinely split lanes and do not yield to vehicles making legal turns. Road conditions vary and can change dramatically due to climatic conditions, becoming dangerous and temporarily impassible.

Along highways and toll roads, speed limits are marked clearly, and law enforcement radar speed traps are increasingly frequent. If police stop you for speeding, expect a fine. It is common for police to stand in the road and wave vehicles to the side. Traffic enforcement authorities reportedly have asked for bribes on occasion. Valid traffic fines will include paperwork, like a traffic ticket issued in the United States, and often must paid on the spot. Police checkpoints are common when entering towns or cities. These checkpoints serve primarily as security screening points.

Any use of a cellular phone by a driver must be via a hands-free device. Visitors who self-drive must have their passport and driver's license with them and must present these documents if stopped by local law enforcement. Review OSAC's reports, <u>Road Safety Abroad</u>, <u>Driving Overseas: Best Practices</u>, and <u>Evasive Driving Techniques</u>; and read the State Department's webpage on <u>driving and road safety abroad</u>.

Criminals have on occasion thrown rocks off overpasses onto cars on highways throughout Morocco. These actions likely intended to get the drivers to pull over, where the rock throwers could rob the driver at knifepoint. Local media reported at least six of these incidents in 2017, and several more in 2018 and 2019. Media coverage of these incidents resulted in a robust police deployment on overpasses between Rabat and Casablanca. Improvements have been made to the physical security features around the bridges themselves, to include high fencing inhibiting the throwing of projectiles onto the road below.

# **Public Transportation Conditions**

Public transportation is somewhat reliable in Morocco. Drivers often do not follow road safety rules or traffic laws, and many vehicles lac proper maintenance. Watch belongings on any type of public transport.

the Moroccan Government has authorized Heetch and Careem, two popular web-based ride-sharing services, to operate legally in Morocco. However, these companies face opposition from taxi drivers, who have on occasion surrounded and confronted Heetch and Careem drivers. This problem is particularly acute at transportation hubs such as airports and train stations, as well as major hotels, tourist sites, and shopping malls.

"Petit taxis" are common in most cities, holding up to three people. These taxis should use a meter and can pick up additional passengers along the way. Each town has its own particular color for petit taxis: red in Casablanca, blue in Rabat, and tan in Marrakech. The availability of safety features like seatbelts and airbags may vary from taxi to taxi. Riders may have to hail multiple taxis because drivers are not obliged to agree to take them to their destination. Taxis are generally less available late at night or early in the morning.

"Grand taxis" are usually white with black lettering, and are often older Mercedes or Dacia vehicles that use fixed urban or inter-urban routes. They can be crowded and uncomfortable, and are less restricted on how many occupants may ride in them at one time. These vehicles are generally not recommended for use by visitors except in rural areas where there are no other transportation options.

Despite the availability of intra-city public buses in Morocco, visitors should avoid them. These buses often lack proper maintenance, and drivers can be aggressive and reckless. The buses become particularly crowded in the summertime, to the point that riders hang out of open doors and windows.

The quality of inter-city buses varies greatly, and generally corresponds with the ticket price of the bus. Avoid taking overnight bus trips, as roads become more dangerous overnight; travelers have been the victims of robbery and sexual assault while sleeping.

Morocco has an extensive and reliable inter-city train network. Find train destinations and times on the ONCF website, which has information in English, French, and Arabic. Tramways service parts of Casablanca and Rabat, with plans for future expansion. Review OSAC's report, <u>Security In Transit: Airplanes, Public Transport, and Overnights</u>.

### **Aviation/Airport Conditions**

There are 28 civilian airports in Morocco, 16 of which support international flights to Europe, North America, Africa, Asia, and the Middle East. International airports in Morocco meet International Civil Aviation Organization standards for safety and security according to a recent ICAO Audit. The U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS), Transportation Security Administration (TSA), and Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) assessed the government of Morocco's Civil Aviation Authority as being in compliance with International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) aviation security and safety standards for oversight of Morocco's air carrier operations at the Casablanca International Airport (CMN) which provide service to the United States.

American citizens are currently authorized 90 days visa-free entry to Morocco. Travelers must exit Morocco prior to the original 90-day expiration of their original authorized entry or request an extension from Moroccan Immigration authorities. Authorities automatically bar travelers who overstay from departure. This includes barring overstayers from boarding any international flight out of Morocco. Individuals overstaying their entry must see an Immigration judge to resolve their visa overstay and pay a fine.

#### **Terrorism Threat**

The U.S. Department of State has assessed Casablanca and Rabat as being **MEDIUM**-threat locations for terrorism directed at or affecting official U.S. government interests. The Government of Morocco employs a comprehensive counterterrorism strategy that includes vigilant security measures, regional and international cooperation, and counter-radicalization policies. However, terrorist attacks occurred in Morocco in 2003, 2007, 2011, and 2018. The 2018 attack targeted two female Scandinavian tourists, who extremists claiming allegiance to ISIS followed into a remote hiking area near Imlil and murdered.

More than 1,600 Moroccan nationals have traveled to conflict zones to fight alongside extremist groups. Many of these individuals may try to return to Morocco, especially as successful anti-ISIS efforts in Syria, Iraq, and Libya progress. Moroccan security services are aware of the potential danger these individuals may pose, and have gone to great lengths to intercept them at international border crossings.

Moroccan security services are generally proactive and effective in identifying and neutralizing terrorists and terror cells. According to local media reports, the Moroccan government has broken up hundreds of terrorist cells, many of which expressed allegiance to or sympathy with ISIS. These arrests often include individuals spreading extremist ideologies and propaganda. Disruptions of alleged terrorist cells occurred nearly monthly in 2019.

The Central Bureau of Judicial Investigation (BCIJ) remains the primary law enforcement agency responsible for counterterrorism prosecutions. The following offers a snapshot of arrests in 2019:

- In January, Moroccan authorities dismantled a 13-person cell for inciting terrorist crimes and undermining the state's security in the cities of Sale, Casablanca, and Mohammedia, seizing electronic devices, bladed weapons, and a written pledge of allegiance to ISIS.
- In May, Moroccan authorities dismantled a 9-member cell pledging allegiance to ISIS that planned to perpetrate terrorist attacks in Tangier, seizing electronic devices, paramilitary uniforms, and harpoon guns.

- In October, Moroccan authorities dismantled a 7-person cell operating in Chefchaouen, Casablanca, and Ouazzane that was preparing to target sensitive infrastructure and strategic sites, seizing bladed weapons, diving equipment, and ISIS flags.
- In December, Moroccan authorities arrested a reported ISIS sympathizer in Meknes who was allegedly plotting a suicide operation. Authorities seized documentation that indicated the individual intended to manufacture explosives.

Credible information indicates terrorist groups continue plotting possible attacks in Morocco. The potential for terrorist violence against U.S. interests and citizens exists. Moroccan authorities have taken robust actions to guard against terrorist attacks and continue to disrupt groups seeking to attack U.S. or Western-affiliated and Moroccan government targets. Law enforcement has arrested numerous individuals associated with international terrorist groups. With indications that such groups still seek to carry out attacks in Morocco, U.S. citizens should be keenly aware of their surroundings and adhere to prudent security practices such as avoiding predictable travel patterns and maintaining a low profile.

Establishments that are identifiable with the United States are potential targets for attacks. These may include facilities where U.S. citizens and other foreigners congregate, including clubs, restaurants, places of worship, schools, hotels, movie theaters, U.S. brand establishments, and other public areas. Such targets may also include establishments where activities that may offend religious sensitivities occur, such as casinos or places where alcoholic beverages are sold or consumed.

Establishments that could be perceived as catering to U.S. or Western visitors or those owned by Western companies could be potential targets for terrorism. Visitors should remain particularly alert and informed during periods of heightened tension in the country and the region.

# Political, Economic, Religious, and Ethnic Violence

The U.S. Department of State has assessed Casablanca and Rabat as being **MEDIUM**-threat locations for political violence directed at or affecting official U.S. government interests. The Western Sahara is an area where the legal status of the territory remains unresolved. The area was long the site of armed conflict between Moroccan government forces and the POLISARIO Front, which continues to seek independence for the territory. However, a cease-fire has been fully in effect since 1991. There are thousands of unexploded mines in the Western Sahara and in areas of Mauritania adjacent to the Western Saharan border. There are occasional reports of exploding mines causing death and injury. Morocco claims sovereignty over the Western Sahara, closely monitoring and controlling access to the territory. There have been instances in which authorities have expelled or denied entry into Western Sahara U.S. citizens suspected of being participants in political protests or of supporting NGOs critical of Moroccan policies.

#### **Civil Unrest**

Demonstrations occur frequently in Morocco, and typically focus on internal political, economic, or social issues. Protests in 2019 primarily involved disputes over teacher salaries; these events ended peacefully. The last demonstrations to turn violent occurred from late 2016 through 2017 in the northern town of al Hoceima in reaction to the death of a vendor whose product local authorities had seized. Demonstrations rapidly expanded to include long-standing grievances regarding jobs, roads, universities, hospitals, and investment in the region. However, of the hundreds of protests involving thousands of participants, only a few turned violent, and were mostly contained to al Hoceima.

Soccer matches attract large crowds to public stadiums, particularly when well-known teams from larger cities are playing. Moroccan authorities will often augment police presence in areas surrounding large stadiums due to the proclivity of crowds to turn violent and vandalize property during and following large soccer matches.

Moroccan law requires that all demonstrations obtain a government permit, but spontaneous unauthorized demonstrations, which have greater potential for violence, can occur. Different unions or groups may organize strikes to protest or strike in response to an emerging issue or government policy.

Avoid demonstrations if possible. If caught in a demonstration, remain calm and move away immediately when provided the opportunity. Review OSAC's report, Surviving a Protest.

# Religious/Ethnic Violence

Most Moroccans are Sunni Muslims tolerant of other religions. Longstanding churches and synagogues exist in many major cities, and religious or ethnic violence is virtually unheard of. The government strictly controls religious preaching, and local Imams are under close state control. Proselytizing is illegal, and as recently as 2017, proselytizing evangelical Christians have been deported.

#### Anti-U.S./Anti-Western Sentiment

Regional and global events have the potential to inflame public opinion and incite large demonstrations. In 2019, a hundred-person crowd staged a peaceful, authorized protest in front of the Consulate in Casablanca to protest a U.S. policy announcement. Previously, crowds ranging from several hundred to thousands of individuals demonstrated near the Consulate in Casablanca and in the city of Rabat following the 2017 announcement that the U.S. planned to move its embassy to Jerusalem. Protest organizers stated in local media that these protests were not anti-U.S. but against a particular policy, and the protests concluded peacefully, with no known injuries or use of force by the police. Even though most Moroccans view the United States and its citizens favorably, travelers should remain aware and informed of regional issues that could resonate in Morocco and create an anti-U.S. response.

#### **Post-specific Concerns**

#### **Environmental Hazards**

Environmental hazards mainly revolve around flooding and the occasional earthquake. The rainy season (November-March) often results in flash floods in the mountainous and desert areas. These floods can cause landslides and damage roads, making them impassable. In addition, heavy rain can overwhelm drainage systems and cause flooding.

Morocco does experience occasional strong earthquakes. There have been damaging earthquakes in the north (near al Hoceima), and the south (near Agadir). Strong earthquakes are relatively rare but can be extremely destructive.

#### **Critical Infrastructure Concerns**

Few industrial accidents are reported in Morocco. Hazardous chemical spills on highways are a top concern for the government. Aging buildings, especially in the Medina or "Old City" area of major cities, can be hazardous. Building collapses occasionally occur.

### **Economic Concerns/Intellectual Property Theft**

The government of Morocco has made important strides in improving its intellectual property rights (IPR) regime, including combatting counterfeit goods. Morocco has signed the multi-national treaty, the Anti-Counterfeiting Trade Agreement (ACTA).

In 2014, Parliament approved an IPR law that streamlines the patent application process and consolidates IPR enforcement by improving procedures for the destruction of counterfeit goods, enlarging the scope of border investigations, and providing complainants enhanced judicial remedies through civil and criminal courts to defend their rights. Morocco's introduced the "Our Safety" label to certify importers and distributors of non-counterfeit auto parts in the Moroccan market.

Morocco's capacity to detect and address internet based IPR violations remains inadequate in some respects. Counterfeiting of consumer goods is still common, and U.S firms allege that the use of pirated software is widespread. Common counterfeit goods available in Morocco include apparel, appliances, food, software, computer hardware, and auto parts arriving mainly from Asia, through the Tangier-Med and Casablanca seaports as well as the southern border with Mauritania. The U.S.-Morocco Free Trade Agreement ensured Morocco's IPR legal framework is one of the strongest in the region, and as Morocco continues to enhance its IPR enforcement measures and procedures, companies must work closely with Morocco's IPR enforcement authority to ensure effective and efficient implementation of the law.

Moroccan professional basketball teams have made contracts with U.S. citizens. Some of these players have subsequently claimed they were not paid as stipulated per the terms of the contract. Individuals considering playing basketball professionally in Morocco may wish to consult with a lawyer regarding the terms of their contract prior to signing.

#### Personal Identity Concerns

Although the law bans any form of sexual harassment, harassment of women remains prevalent in urban and rural areas alike. Many western women in Morocco report persistent harassment to varying degrees in public places including streets, parks, stores, cafés, and restaurants. Moroccan men will sometimes engage in whistling/hissing/staring/yelling and, on occasion, inappropriate physical contact. Groups of individuals have attempted to lure women into cars in smaller cities and rural areas, but this can also occur in urban areas late at night. Sexual assaults do occur, many of which are unreported because the victims are afraid of their friends and families shunning them. Sexual assaults have also taken place in broad daylight and at public events with many witnesses. In 2017, a group of juvenile males gang-raped a teenager on a bus in Casablanca; bystanders videotaped the attack, and the bus driver did not stop or seek police assistance. In August 2019 Hajar Raissouni, a Moroccan journalist who works for an independent news outlet critical of the state, received a one-year prison sentence for allegedly having sex out of wedlock and an illegal abortion. King Mohammed VI pardoned her in October 2019. Review the State Department's webpage on security for female travelers.

LGBTI+ persons regularly face discrimination and harassment. While there is a perceived level of tolerance, particularly in larger urban centers, homosexuality is illegal. Open displays of affection will likely attract unwanted attention. Review the State Department's webpage on security for <u>LGBTI+ travelers</u>.

While in Morocco, individuals with disabilities may find accessibility and accommodation very different from what is customary in the United States. Review the State Department's webpage on security for travelers with disabilities.

### **Drug-related Crime**

The illicit drug trade is thoroughly entrenched in Morocco. Most of the drugs produced or transported are destined for European markets. The primary drugs exported from Morocco are cannabis derivatives produced in northern Morocco, as well as cocaine. Morocco is a transit country for cocaine traffickers who funnel their product from South America into Europe and Sub-Saharan countries. The proceeds of the drug trade are laundered primarily through goods, real estate, and businesses; illicit funds often move across borders through use of *hawalas* and bulk cash smuggling. The government expends a great deal of effort into fighting international narcotics trafficking. In 2019, police reported seizing 2.4 tons of cocaine, over 1,161,000 pharmaceutical and MDMA (ecstasy) pills, and 150 tons of cannabis resin. Penalties for possession of narcotics are severe, and authorities deal harshly with suspected traffickers. Police/Gendarmerie corruption regarding drug trafficking is not unheard of, and while authorities have occasionally been implicated in assisting traffickers, they are tried and punished when identified.

Many homeless individuals in large cities are addicted to huffing solvents such as gasoline, paint, and glue. These individuals often engage in criminal activity or collapse on sidewalks or in the streets in drug-induced stupors. Additionally, poor youth abuse a cocktail commonly known as "karkoubi," which contains a mixture of benzodiazepines (e.g. Rivotril, Xanax, Valium), alcohol, cannabis and glue. Karkoubi elicits violent behavior in those who consume it.

# **Kidnapping Threat**

The kidnapping threat in Morocco has historically been low. Incidents of reported kidnappings in the media in 2019 generally related to family disputes or drug trafficking retaliations. Review OSAC's report, <u>Kidnapping: The Basics.</u>

#### **Other Security Concerns**

Moroccan customs authorities may enforce strict regulations concerning temporary importation into or export from Morocco of items such as firearms, unmanned aerial vehicle (UAV) or drones, religious materials, antiquities, business equipment, and large quantities of currency. Read the State Department's webpage on <u>customs and import restrictions</u> for information on what you cannot take into or out of other countries.

Taking photographs of anything authorities could perceive as being of military or security interest may result in problems. Do not photograph palaces, diplomatic missions, government buildings, or other sensitive facilities. When in doubt, ask permission from the appropriate Moroccan authorities. Review OSAC's report, Picture This: Dos and Don'ts for Photography.

Morocco is a popular destination for outdoor activities. Anyone traveling into remote areas in Morocco should use a licensed and accredited guide and be prepared to check in and out of remote checkpoints by presenting their passport number. Moroccan authorities may restrict access to certain areas; only camp within designated camping areas. While the Royal Gendarmerie is capable of responding to backcountry emergencies, travelers should ensure that they are well-prepared and appropriately provisioned prior to departing for remote areas, and that someone not on the trip has a copy of their proposed travel itinerary.

### **Police Response**

The emergency line in Morocco is **190** from a mobile phone and **91** from a landline. Law enforcement officials are well trained, with many attending international training programs. However, the police are generally understaffed, and in some cases underequipped.

The Moroccan police force is based on the French police system, with the Sûreté Nationale (DGSN) enforcing laws in the urban areas and the Royal Gendarmerie in the rural areas. The DGST, also a national security agency, generally oversees matters involving terrorism. These different agencies can and do cooperate on investigative matters; criminal cases can transfer from one investigative agency to another depending on the victim, locale, and public visibility of the incident under investigation. According to a 2019 study by a Moroccan think tank, Moroccans have a high rate of confidence in sovereign security institutions such as the Royal Armed Forces (83.3%) and the police (78.1%).

Police generally respond effectively to a report of a foreign victim of crime. There have been limited instances where interactions with the police, particularly in smaller cities and rural areas, have not been positive for foreigners. Victims are often present during interrogations of suspects, which can create an uncomfortable situation for a victim.

Some U.S. citizens report that police procedures appear to be less sensitive and responsive to a victim's concerns compared to procedures in the United States, particularly in cases of domestic violence, sexual assault, or when the victim and the perpetrator are both foreigners. Few victim-assistance resources or battered women's shelters exist in major urban areas, and they are generally unavailable in rural areas. Investigations of sexual assault crimes often proceed without female police officers present, and police typically ask about the victim's sexual history and previous relationships. The quality of interpreting from Arabic to English can vary and has caused problems for some U.S. citizen victims.

Police often arrest perpetrators if crimes are reported in a timely manner. The police rely primarily on confessions versus forensic evidence to determine culpability, although this is changing given Morocco's recent judicial and police reform programs, which the U.S. government supports. All police officers speak French or Arabic; English translation may not be readily available.

Download the State Department's Crime Victims Assistance brochure.

#### **Medical Emergencies**

Morocco has adequate medical services in the larger cities, but the quality of care diminishes elsewhere. The medical facilities and hospitals in Rabat and Casablanca can treat most general illnesses, and can provide emergency trauma care. However, specialized care is not as easily accessible in Morocco as in Western countries. It is common for doctors and medical facilities to demand payment up front before providing treatment, even for emergencies. Medical personnel speak French and Arabic; the availability of English translation services at medical facilities may vary greatly from location to location. Find contact information for available medical services and available air ambulance services on the U.S. <a href="Embassy website">Embassy website</a>.

Over-the-counter drugs common at pharmacies in large cities may be difficult to impossible to find in the smaller cities or rural areas. Specialty prescription medication may be difficult to locate even in Rabat or Casablanca, and a pharmacy stocked with a particular medication one week may not have it in stock again for several weeks due to availability issues. In the event of a medical emergency or serious traffic accident, immediate ambulance services are usually not available. Review OSAC's report, <u>Traveling with Medication</u>.

Ambulances in Morocco often will not have a paramedic or Emergency Medical Technician (EMT) assigned to them.

Consider insurance and flight options before leaving home, and be sure to carry insurance policy identity card as proof of such insurance. The U.S. Department of State strongly recommends purchasing international health insurance before traveling internationally. Review the State Department's webpage on insurance overseas.

The CDC offers additional information on vaccines and health guidance for Morocco. Review OSAC's reports, The Healthy Way, I'm Drinking What in My Water?, Health 101: How to Prepare for Travel, and Fire Safety Abroad.

## **OSAC Country Council Information**

Due to Casablanca's status as the commercial center of Morocco and the volume of U.S. organizations situated there, the OSAC Country Council resides in Casablanca. The second-largest city in North Africa, Casablanca is a regional hub for exports, and is home to the American Chamber of Commerce (AMCHAM).

As RSO Rabat and RSO Casablanca managed the Country Council jointly, directed OSAC inquiries to either office: RSO Rabat +212 (0) 537 637 692; RSO Casablanca +212 (0) 522 64 2084. Contact OSAC's Middle East & North Africa team for more information.

#### **U.S. Embassy Contact Information**

Km 5.7, Avenue Mohamed VI, Souissi, Rabat 10170 Hours of Operation 0800-1700 Monday to Friday

Website: https://ma.usembassy.gov/

Embassy Operator: +212-537-63-7200, Emergency calls after normal business hours: +212-661-13-1939

# Other U.S. Diplomatic Posts In Morocco

<u>Consulate General Casablanca</u>, 8, Boulevard Moulay Youssef, Casablanca. +212-522-642-099, Emergencies: +212-661-13-19-39.

# **Helpful Information**

Before you travel, consider the following resources:

- OSAC Risk Matrix
- OSAC Travelers Toolkit
- State Department Traveler's Checklist
- Smart Traveler Enrollment Program (STEP)