

## **Citizenship and political participation among Belgian-Moroccans**

In Morocco, Belgium is seen as a country where the Moroccan diaspora stands out for its high level of political integration. From this point of view, the Kingdom of Belgium appears to Moroccan observers as a country that welcomes cultural diversity, all the way to the highest ranks of its institutions. This observation reflects a reality. The number of elected officials in the Belgian assemblies is indeed proportionally higher than in other European countries. This is particularly the case **in Brussels, where Belgian-Moroccans play a visible role in the local, regional and national political landscape.** In just over three decades (1988-2024), there has been significant progress in the political representation of people from diverse backgrounds, in particular Belgian-Moroccans.

This political involvement has several dimensions, ranging from intra-community activism within associations to electoral mobilisation, through representation within parliamentary institutions or governments. Although previous research has established that Belgian-Moroccans are relatively less involved in community organisations than other populations from diverse backgrounds, intra-community activism remains an important characteristic of Belgian-Moroccans. Cultural, youth, neighbourhood and women's associations, as well as rights groups, work actively on a daily basis to promote inclusion, social justice and recognition of cultural diversity. In cities like Antwerp, Brussels, Ghent, Charleroi and Liège, their involvement is visible in the public space. They organise awareness campaigns, cultural events, educational programmes, etc., aimed at strengthening the social fabric and promoting intercultural dialogue. The scope of this mobilisation goes beyond the intra-community level. It also enables Belgian-Moroccans to have their voice heard and attempt to influence local and national political debates.

Over the years, Belgian-Moroccans have gradually increased their presence in the political arena, helping them to make an impact on local, regional and national policy-making. Their presence within political institutions encourages a diverse range of viewpoints and consideration of their specific concerns.