# Morocco, an immigration country

Morocco has long been known as a major emigration country. Nevertheless, until just before the protectorate was established in 1912, the country was also considered a land of refuge, not only for Muslims, but also for Jews and Christians.

During the colonial period (1912-1956), Morocco took in thousands of Europeans fleeing political unrest in Europe or hoping to make their fortune in this new colony. As the Second World War loomed, the country opened its doors to Spanish Republicans forced into exile, but also to stateless subjects of the former Russian Empire, who were fleeing Stalinism. There were also Jews escaping persecution and the internment camps. One of the classic films of American cinema, *Casablanca*, touches on this saga.

Immigration to Morocco increased until 1955, as France had put in place a real colonisation policy. As a result of all these migration flows, by 1952, 5% of the Moroccan population were foreigners. This number fell drastically after the country became independent.