

Do you speak Morocco's languages?

There is no one Moroccan language in Morocco. The situation is far more nuanced than that: it's not simply a case of speaking Darija or Amazigh.

Immigration has broadened the European horizons of Moroccan people, weaving a new richness into the nation's self-expression. This shift has been influenced by the children of immigrants, scattered across the European continent. Over the decades, Morocco has seen the return of its descendants, coming from families speaking Amazigh or Darija, but enriched by new languages such as German, Dutch or Italian.

This blend of European languages with Amazigh or Arabic nuances has added to the national linguistic make-up, giving rise to new Towers of Babel on the shores of Morocco when expatriates return each summer.

The Amazigh language was modelled on the ancient Phoenician, Greek and Roman languages, and influenced them in return. Likewise, **Moroccan Arabic combines elements of Amazigh, Portuguese, French and Spanish**, in a process of cross-fertilisation that has enhanced the country's linguistic heritage.

Arabic has also been enriching the European languages since the Crusades in the 9th century. It remains the third largest source of loanwords in French and transcends the boundaries of time.

In the Parisian suburbs and the Belgian-Moroccan neighbourhoods of Brussels, the voices of youth intermingle, fashioning a hybrid language tinged with sounds from the Maghreb. Rap and hip-hop culture is amplifying this convergence and propelling familiar Arabic words onto the pages of the French dictionary.

.....