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Danish National ID Centre

Birkerød Kongevej 2
DK-3460 Birkerød
Denmark

Phone +45 61 98 39 00
Email nidc@nidc.dk
Website www.nidc.dk

Morocco: The National Identity Card and the Electronic National Identity Card

Introduction

The following note presents the National Identity Card (CNI) and the Electronic National Identity Card (CNIE). It entails a short presentation of the general features of both ID cards, the requirements to obtain them, and the issuance procedures for citizens residing in Morocco and abroad.

The General Directorate for National Security (DGSN) is the authority responsible for issuing the CNI and the CNIE. The DGSN is the national police force of Morocco and is located under the Ministry of Interior.¹

This note is based on an interview with the DGSN conducted in January 2023 in Rabat, Morocco. Open source information has additionally been consulted.

General features of the CNI and the CNIE

The CNIE is the newest version of the Moroccan biometric ID card. Morocco first began issuing biometric ID cards on 1 April 2008. The 2008 version is referred to as CNI. The CNIE has been issued since 13 August 2020. Both versions are valid as of January 2023.²

Since 8 August 2020, it is mandatory to have an ID card issued at the age of 16 years. Prior to this, the ID card was mandatory when a person was 18 years old. However, a person can have an ID card issued from the moment they are born.³

Only Moroccan citizens can have a Moroccan ID card issued. There is a different type of ID card available for foreigners and for police officers.⁴

¹ The General Directorate for National Security, Rabat, January 2023.

² The General Directorate for National Security, Rabat, January 2023.

³ The General Directorate for National Security, Rabat, January 2023.

⁴ The General Directorate for National Security, Rabat, January 2023.

The ID card's validity is 10 years for applicants above 12 years. For applicants younger than 12 years, the card's validity is 7 years. However, the expiry date of an ID card issued to a minor cannot exceed his or hers 12th birthday. Prior to 2020, the validity for all ID cards were ten years.⁵

Layout of the CNIE

The CNIE has the following demographic data displayed: Name, date of birth, parent's names, address, occupation, national identification number, gender, and civil status. It also contains two pictures of the cardholder.⁶

The CNIE have a chip and a Machine Readable Zone (MRZ). The MRZ holds the bearer's demographic data. The data is encrypted and is only accessible with authorisation from DGSN.⁷

Documentation needed to obtain an ID card

There are seven different scenarios in which the DGSN can issue an ID card. The scenarios are as follows:

- 1) First time issuance of ID card.
- 2) Replacement of CNI to CNIE.
- 3) Replacement of card in case of loss, theft or alteration of ID card.
- 4) Replacement in case of change of address.
- 5) Replacement in case of change of holders biographic data, e.g. name, date of birth, birthplace, parents names, civil status document number.
- 6) Renewal in case of expiration of previous card.
- 7) Renewal in case of a minor coming of age (turning 12 years old).⁸

The documentation needed to have an ID card issued differs, depending on which of the above-mentioned scenarios is cause for the issuance. The following section lists the documentation requirements for each scenario as outlined by the DGSN.⁹

Scenario one: First time issuance of ID card

All applicants must provide:

- Extract of birth certificate in Arabic and French issued no longer than three months prior submitted the application, or a copy of the page in the family book that concerns the person in question.
- Four photos: 45X45 mm of size, with blue or grey background, and no older than six months.
- Stamp of payment (droits de timbre).

⁵ The General Directorate for National Security, Rabat, January 2023.

⁶ The General Directorate for National Security, Rabat, January 2023.

⁷ The General Directorate for National Security, Rabat, January 2023.

⁸ The General Directorate for National Security, Rabat, January 2023.

⁹ The General Directorate for National Security, Rabat, January 2023.

If applicant is residing in Morocco, they must also provide:

- Residence certificate, issued by the Moroccan police or by the gendarmerie (depending on whether the applicant is living in an urban or rural area – police if urban, gendarmerie if rural), which is no older than three months.

If applicant is residing abroad, they must also provide:

- Consular certificate (also called a 'residence bilingual certificate', issued by the consulate in ones country of residence).

If applicant has obtained Moroccan citizenship, they must also provide:

- Authenticated certificate of nationality.¹⁰

Scenario two: Replacement of CNI to CNIE

All applicants must provide:

- Extract of birth certificate in Arabic and French issued no longer than three months prior submitted the application, or a copy of the page in the family book that concerns the person in question.
- Four photos.
- Stamp of payment.
- CNI to be replaced.

If applicant is residing in Morocco, they must also provide:

- Residence certificate, issued by the Moroccan police or by the gendarmerie, which is no older than three months.

If applicant is residing abroad, they must also provide:

- Consular certificate.

If applicant has obtained Moroccan citizenship, they must also provide:

- Authenticated certificate of nationality.¹¹

Scenario three: Replacement of card in case of loss, theft or alteration of ID card

All applicants must provide:

- Four photos.
- Stamp of payment.

In case of theft, and if applicant is residing in Morocco, they must provide:

- Form of theft by national police signed by applicant.

In case of theft, and if applicant is residing abroad, they must provide:

- Affidavit of theft.
- Consular certificate.¹²

Scenario four: Replacement in case of change of holder's address

All applicants must provide:

¹⁰ The General Directorate for National Security, Rabat, January 2023.

¹¹ The General Directorate for National Security, Rabat, January 2023.

¹² The General Directorate for National Security, Rabat, January 2023.

- Four photos.
- Stamp of payment.¹³

Scenario five: Replacement in case of change of holder's biographic data

All applicants must provide:

- Four photos.
- Stamp of payment.

If the data change regards the family name, they must also provide:

- Extract of birth certificate.
- Ministerial order substantiating the data change.

If the data change regard other data, for example; first name, date of birth, parents names, they must also provide:

- Integral copy of birth certificate.
- Court ruling substantiating the data change.

If the applicant's civil status has changed to married, they must also provide:

- Authenticated copy of their marriage certificate.
- Extract of the birth certificate of their spouse.

If the applicant's civil status has changed to widow/widower, they must also provide:

- An extract of the death certificate of their spouse.
- Authenticated copy of birth certificate of the deceased spouse.

If applicant is residing abroad, they must also provide:

- Consular certificate.¹⁴

Scenario six: Renewal in case of expiration of previous card

All applicants must provide:

- The expired ID card.
- Four photos.
- Stamp of payment.

If applicant is residing in Morocco, they must also provide:

- Residence certificate, issued by the Moroccan police or by the gendarmerie, which is no older than three months.

If applicant is residing abroad, they must also provide:

- Consular certificate.¹⁵

Scenario seven: Renewal in case of a minor coming of age

All applicants must provide:

- Personal attendance by the minor and the parent or representative.
- Copy of the ID card of the parent or representative.

¹³ The General Directorate for National Security, Rabat, January 2023.

¹⁴ The General Directorate for National Security, Rabat, January 2023.

¹⁵ The General Directorate for National Security, Rabat, January 2023.

- Documentation of kinship with applicant or justification of the representation.
- Four photos.
- Droits de timbre.

If applicant is residing in Morocco, they must also provide:

- Residence certificate, issued by the Moroccan police or by the gendarmerie, which is no older than three months.

If applicant is residing abroad, they must also provide:

- Consular certificate.

If applicant has obtained Moroccan citizenship, they must also provide:

- Authenticated certificate of nationality.¹⁶

Application process and issuance procedure

According to the DGSN, the process of obtaining a CNIE is as follows: Firstly, the person wishing to obtain an ID card will have to gather the necessary documents, and appear in person at the nearest Identification Document Centre (CEDI) with their documents.¹⁷

As was implemented during the Covid19 pandemic and still practiced by January 2023, the applicant must submit their biographic data, and make an appointment through the DGSN's website. After doing so, the applicant receives a document with a QR code containing their submitted data.¹⁸

When the applicant appears at the CEDI centre, the following transpires:

- The applicant's documents are pre-checked by a reception agent.
- The reception agent checks that the data complies with data already registered e.g., from when the person was issued their previous ID card.
- If it is a first time issuance, an ID number is issued to the applicant.
- The applicant pay the stamp duty (droits de timbre) and receive a receipt.
- The typing agent type the demographic data into the computer system, digitalise the photo brought by the applicant and capture the applicant's fingerprints with ink or by scanner or both (ink is used for minors, first time issuance, loss/theft, and if exchanging from CNI to CNIE).
- The typing agent validates the data in the computer and finally release the production order to the system.¹⁹

At the Central Service (CDGI), it is checked that the applicant's biometric data is not already in the system under another identity. If no discrepancies has been detected,

¹⁶ The General Directorate for National Security, Rabat, January 2023.

¹⁷ The General Directorate for National Security, Rabat, January 2023.

¹⁸ The General Directorate for National Security, Rabat, January 2023.

¹⁹ The General Directorate for National Security, Rabat, January 2023.

the CDGI prints the card.²⁰ At the printing facility, the quality of and data on the card is verified. Subsequently, the card is dispatched to the centre where the application was made.²¹

According to Moroccan law, an ID card can only be delivered to the applicant him/herself. After receiving the notification, the applicant must appear in person at the centre and an initial identification is made by scanning the applicant's fingerprints. It is the agent who decides which finger to scan. Upon scanning, the picture and data belonging to the person who is registered with the fingerprint will appear on the agents screen and as such, the person's identity is verified. The agent then delivers the ID card, and asks the applicant to choose a pin code.²²

According to the DGSN, the process of obtaining an ID card takes a week or less, depending on the workload of the office.²³

As of January 2023, issuance of a Moroccan ID cards costs 75 MAD for adults and minors above 12 years of age and 50 MAD for minors below 12 years of age.²⁴

Immobile applicants

For applicants who are not able travel to a CEDI centre – if the person for example is hospitalised, bedridden or otherwise immobilised, the applicant or a representative can fill out the form 'particular cases'. A family member submits the form to the CEDI and an agent from CNIE will then travel to the place where the person is, obtain the applicants fingerprints and collect their biographic data.²⁵ In these cases, the CNIE agent will also deliver the card in person. As an instant fingerprint validation is not possible, the agent capture the applicant's fingerprints and the verification is carried out subsequently.²⁶

Application process and issuance procedure abroad

According to the DGSN, the procedure to obtain an ID card abroad differs from the previously described procedure. Firstly, the person wishing to obtain an ID card will have to gather the necessary documents, and appear in person at the embassy or consulate in their country of residence. The application is submitted to an agent at the embassy or consulate. The agent receives the necessary documents and captures the person's fingerprints with ink. The agent issues a receipt for the applicant documenting that the application has been received. The agent does not

²⁰ The General Directorate for National Security, Rabat, January 2023.

²¹ The General Directorate for National Security, Rabat, January 2023.

²² The General Directorate for National Security, Rabat, January 2023.

²³ The General Directorate for National Security, Rabat, January 2023.

²⁴ The General Directorate for National Security, Rabat, January 2023.

²⁵ The General Directorate for National Security, Rabat, January 2023.

²⁶ The General Directorate for National Security, Rabat, January 2023.

have access to the DGSN database, and cannot verify the data submitted by the applicant.²⁷

The agent then sends a request to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA) through the diplomatic pouch, which is sealed. The MFA receive the application and sends it to the DGSN. The DGSN receive the application from the MFA and process the application. The card is sent back to the embassy in sealed post, and once the card is received, the embassy can invite the applicant to pick it up.²⁸

²⁷ The General Directorate for National Security, Rabat, January 2023.

²⁸ The General Directorate for National Security, Rabat, January 2023.

Reference

Oral source

The General Directorate for National Security (DGSN), (January 2023): Interviewed in Rabat, Morocco.