

**Flygtningenævnets baggrundsmateriale**

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# Freedom on the Net 2025 - Morocco



## Key Developments, June 1, 2024 – May 31, 2025

Internet freedom remained tenuous in Morocco. While connection speeds have improved in recent years, users were still subject to surveillance, arrests, and harassment for their online activities during the coverage period. Self-censorship on topics such as Western Sahara, the royal family, and religion continued to be pervasive, and the proliferation of progovernment outlets and state-sponsored propaganda drowned out critical voices online.

- While fixed-line internet speeds improved during the coverage period, the network of service provider Orange Maroc was down for nearly a full day in April 2025 due to a major power outage in nearby Spain and Portugal.<sup>1</sup> Orange Maroc was one of only three licensed internet service providers in Morocco (A1).<sup>2</sup>
- The government did not block or filter any websites for political, social, or religious content during the coverage period. However, according to Google’s Transparency Report, Moroccan court orders were issued to request the removal of 10 pieces of content by the end of 2024; all of the requests involved allegations of defamation (B2).<sup>3</sup>
- Progovernment media outlets published misleading information to smear and defame critics of the government or royal family. Following the pardon and release of jailed journalists Omari Radi, Taoufik Bouachrine, and Soulayman Raissouni in July 2024, progovernment media outlets used their platforms to harass the journalists and spread misinformation about their cases (B5 and C7).<sup>4</sup>
- Prominent journalists and activists were arrested and prosecuted for their online activities. In April 2025, a Moroccan court upheld a one-year prison sentence for activist Mohamed Boustati, who was convicted for social media posts that criticized the Saudi Arabian government’s policy on the conflict in the Gaza Strip.<sup>5</sup> In November 2024, journalist Hamid el-Mahdaoui was sentenced to 18 months in prison and a fine for a 2023 video published on a news website, through which he was accused of spreading false statements and defaming the minister of justice (C3).<sup>6</sup>
- In November 2024, *Maroc Hebdo*, an online journal, was the target of a distributed denial-of-service (DDoS) attack that left it inaccessible, and the disruptions continued for several days. The journal alleged that the attack was perpetrated by Algerian hackers; it began shortly after the outlet posted a cover story with the title “Algeria Wants War” (C8).<sup>7</sup>

# Political Overview

Morocco holds regular multiparty elections for Parliament and local bodies. Reforms in 2011 shifted some authority over government from the monarchy to the national legislature. Nevertheless, King Mohammed VI and his palace officials maintain full dominance through a combination of substantial formal powers, informal lines of influence in state and society, and ownership of crucial economic resources. Many civil liberties are constrained in practice.

## Note

Western Sahara is not covered in this report. Certain territories that are assessed separately in Freedom House's *Freedom in the World* reports are also excluded from the relevant country reports in *Freedom on the Net*, as conditions in such territories differ significantly from those in the relevant countries. *Freedom in the World* reports assess the level of political rights and civil liberties in a given geographical area, regardless of whether they are affected by the state, nonstate actors, or foreign powers. Related, disputed, or occupied territories are sometimes assessed separately from the relevant countries if they meet certain criteria, including distinct conditions for political rights and civil liberties and boundaries that are sufficiently stable to allow year-on-year comparisons. For more information, see the report [methodology](#) and [FAQ](#).

*This report has been abridged for Freedom on the Net 2025 due to [ongoing budget constraints](#). Please consider making a [donation](#) to support future editions of this vital resource.*

*For additional background information, see last year's [full report](#).*

## A Obstacles to Access

A1 0-6 pts

|   |              |
|---|--------------|
| <b>Do infrastructural limitations restrict access to the internet or the speed and quality of internet connections?</b> | <b>6 / 6</b> |
|---|--------------|

*Score Change: The score improved from 5 to 6 because fixed-line internet speeds improved during the coverage period, according to some measurement sources.<sup>8</sup>*

A2 0-3 pts

|  |              |
|--|--------------|
| <b>Is access to the internet prohibitively expensive or beyond the reach of certain segments of the population for geographical, social, or other reasons?</b> | <b>2 / 3</b> |
|--|--------------|

A3 0-6 pts

|   |              |
|---|--------------|
| <b>Does the government exercise technical or legal control over internet infrastructure for the purposes of restricting connectivity?</b> | <b>5 / 6</b> |
|---|--------------|

A4 0-6 pts

|   |              |
|---|--------------|
| <b>Are there legal, regulatory, or economic obstacles that restrict the diversity of service providers?</b> | <b>4 / 6</b> |
|---|--------------|

A5 0-4 pts

Do national regulatory bodies that oversee service providers and digital technology fail to operate in a free, fair, and independent manner?

1 /  
4

## B Limits on Content

B1 0-6 pts

Does the state block or filter, or compel service providers to block or filter, internet content, particularly material that is protected by international human rights standards?

6 /  
6

B2 0-4 pts

Do state or nonstate actors employ legal, administrative, or other means to force publishers, content hosts, or digital platforms to delete content, particularly material that is protected by international human rights standards?

2 /  
4

B3 0-4 pts

Do restrictions on the internet and digital content lack transparency, proportionality to the stated aims, or an independent appeals process?

2 /  
4

B4 0-4 pts

Do online journalists, commentators, and ordinary users practice self-censorship?

2 / 4

B5 0-4 pts

Are online sources of information controlled or manipulated by the government or other powerful actors to advance a particular political interest?

2 /  
4

B6 0-3 pts

Are there economic or regulatory constraints that negatively affect users' ability to publish content online?

1 /  
3

B7 0-4 pts

Does the online information landscape lack diversity and reliability?

2 / 4

B8 0-6 pts

Do conditions impede users' ability to mobilize, form communities, and campaign, particularly on political and social issues?

4 /  
6

## C Violations of User Rights

C1 0-6 pts

|   |          |
|---|----------|
| <b>Do the constitution or other laws fail to protect rights such as freedom of expression, access to information, and press freedom, including on the internet, and are they enforced by a judiciary that lacks independence?</b> | 2 /<br>6 |
| <b>C2 0-4 pts</b>   |          |

|  |          |
|--|----------|
| <b>Are there laws that assign criminal penalties or civil liability for online activities, particularly those that are protected under international human rights standards?</b> | 1 /<br>4 |
| <b>C3 0-6 pts</b>  |          |

|   |          |
|---|----------|
| <b>Are individuals penalized for online activities, particularly those that are protected under international human rights standards?</b> | 2 /<br>6 |
| <b>C4 0-4 pts</b>   |          |

|   |          |
|---|----------|
| <b>Does the government place restrictions on anonymous communication or encryption?</b> | 3 /<br>4 |
| <b>C5 0-6 pts</b>   |          |

|  |       |
|--|-------|
| <b>Does state surveillance of internet activities infringe on users' right to privacy?</b> | 1 / 6 |
| <b>C6 0-6 pts</b>  |       |

|   |          |
|---|----------|
| <b>Does monitoring and collection of user data by service providers and other technology companies infringe on users' right to privacy?</b> | 2 /<br>6 |
| <b>C7 0-5 pts</b>   |          |

|  |          |
|--|----------|
| <b>Are individuals subject to extralegal intimidation or physical violence by state authorities or any other actor in relation to their online activities?</b> | 3 /<br>5 |
| <b>C8 0-3 pts</b>  |          |

|  |          |
|--|----------|
| <b>Are websites, governmental and private entities, service providers, or individual users subject to widespread hacking and other forms of cyberattack?</b> | 1 /<br>3 |
|--|----------|

*Score Change: The score declined from 2 to 1 because an online Moroccan magazine was disabled by a cyberattack, allegedly in reprisal for a cover story about Algeria.<sup>9</sup>*

**Footnotes**

- <sup>1</sup>“Morocco Internet Slowly Returns After Spain Power Outage,” Barron’s, April 29, 2025, <https://www.barrons.com/news/morocco-internet-slowly-returns-after-spai...>; Adil Faouzi, “Orange Maroc Internet Service Severely Disrupted by Iberian Power Outage,” Morocco World News, April 28, 2025, <https://www.moroccoworldnews.com/2025/04/194736/orange-maroc-internet-s...>
- <sup>2</sup>International Trade Administration, “Morocco Country Commercial Guide,” Accessed October 2024, <https://www.trade.gov/country-commercial-guides/morocco-telecommunicati...>

- 3Google, “Morocco: Government requests to remove content,” Transparency Report, Accessed October 2025, <https://transparencyreport.google.com/government-removals/government-re...>
- 4Committee to Protect Journalists, “Morocco’s pardoned journalists face smears, threats after prison,” October 21, 2024, <https://cpj.org/2024/10/moroccos-pardoned-journalists-face-smears-threa...>
- 5DAWN, “DAWN Statement on Morocco's Imprisonment of Activist Mohamed Boustati for Criticizing Saudi Arabia,” May 1, 2025, <https://dawnmena.org/dawn-statement-on-moroccos-imprisonment-of-activis...>
- 6Reporters Without Borders, “Morocco: The unjust conviction of journalist Hamid El Mahdaoui must be overturned,” November 27, 2024, <https://rsf.org/en/morocco-unjust-conviction-journalist-hamid-el-mahdao...>
- 7“Decoding Cyberattacks on Morocco,” Cyfirma Research, November 28, 2024, <https://www.cyfirma.com/research/decoding-cyberattacks-on-morocco/>; Firdaous Naim, “Algerian Hackers Target Maroc Hebdo After Controversial Cover Story,” Morocco World News, November 18, 2024, <https://www.moroccoworldnews.com/2024/11/12285/algerian-hackers-target-...>
- 8Ookla, “Morocco Median Country Speeds,” Speedtest Global Index, Accessed October 2026, <https://www.speedtest.net/global-index/morocco>.
- 9“Decoding Cyberattacks on Morocco,” Cyfirma Research, November 28, 2024, <https://www.cyfirma.com/research/decoding-cyberattacks-on-morocco/>; Firdaous Naim, “Algerian Hackers Target Maroc Hebdo After Controversial Cover Story,” Morocco World News, November 18, 2024, <https://www.moroccoworldnews.com/2024/11/12285/algerian-hackers-target-...>