

Morocco's reputation in the World in 2016

SYNOPSIS

As part of analyzing emerging concepts, the Royal Institute for Strategic Studies (IRES) completed a study in May 2015, on assessing Morocco's overall wealth and its intangible capital for the period 1998-2013.

The study revealed that brand equity weighs heavily in Morocco's intangible capital and its overall wealth. Indeed, the Kingdom has a generally positive image at the international level. This reflects the progress made in gradually building a status as an attractive power. Morocco's prominence and reputation need to be constantly developed and leveraged to enhance the Kingdom's stature in the concert of nations.

On that basis, IRES conducted a study in 2015 on the Morocco brand which helped define the distinctive elements around which that brand could be built and make proposals for an integrated Morocco brand strategy to be used as a lever for the Kingdom's economic diplomacy.

Parallel to that, in 2015 the Institute set up an observatory on Morocco's reputation. Partnering with the "Reputation Institute" – a consulting firm specializing in assessing the reputation of 70 countries around the globe – it conducted a study on how Morocco's image is perceived by the citizens of G8 countries and those of 10 other industrialized or emerging countries.

A second study was carried out in 2016, this time involving 23 countries, against 18 in 2015. The countries added were mostly from Africa and Northern Europe.

This study showed that in terms of external reputation among citizens of G-8 countries, Morocco was ranked 39th in 2016, against 36th in 2015, out of the 70 countries studied the Reputation Institute - practically at the same level as Indonesia.

Morocco's reputation is better than that of BRIC countries, with the exception of Brazil. It is far better than that of Turkey and of all Arab and African countries. Thus, South Africa, Egypt, Angola, Algeria and Nigeria are ranked 49th, 55th, 63rd, 64th and 66th respectively.

Morocco's 2016 reputation is higher than the world average – that is of the 70 countries studied – in India, Russia, Turkey, Australia, Mexico, the United States and Canada. It has an average reputation in Chile, Belgium, the United Kingdom, France and China. However, its reputation is less favorable in Brazil, Japan and South Korea and is low in Italy, Holland, Sweden, Germany, Spain, Kenya, Nigeria and South Africa.

Nevertheless, it should be pointed out that respondents in South Africa have a better image of Morocco than of their own country in such areas as safe place, ethical country, transparency, international respect, the institutional environment, social well-being and effective use of natural resources.

Compared to 2015, Morocco's 2016 reputation remained relatively the same with regard to the 17 reputation attributes, except for the 'safe place' attribute, on which Morocco's score fell 3 points because of the growing terrorist threat at the international level and also probably the excessive media coverage - at the national level - of terrorist cells dismantling operations.

A country's reputation is built around attributes grouped into three categories: quality of life, quality of institutions and level of development. For Morocco, the most positive assessments relate to reputation for quality of life and, to a lesser extent, institutional quality. The least favorable assessments concern the level of development attributes.

Morocco's strengths, according to the perception of citizens of G-8 countries, concern the following attributes: a good natural environment, friendly and welcoming people, availability of leisure and entertainment facilities and appealing lifestyle.

The most notable weaknesses concern technology and innovation, the education system, the economic environment, social well-being and contribution to global culture. Morocco's reputation also suffers from the lack of well-known Moroccan brands among citizens of G-8 countries and shortcomings in terms of human capital.

Moreover, Morocco continues to be perceived as a country to visit or in which to attend events. That appeal is not as compelling when it comes to buying Moroccan products and services, investing or living in the country and, above all, studying in the Kingdom.

As far as citizens of G-8 countries are concerned, Morocco has a better reputation than Turkey on all examined attributes; same thing for South Africa, except for the "friendly and welcoming people" attribute. It fares much better than Mexico, except for the "leisure and entertainment", "culture" and "friendly and welcoming people" attributes. In contrast, Morocco is less well perceived than Chile on all 17 reputation attributes.

As for the internal reputation, it is generally perceived in a positive manner by resident citizens who know best the reality of their country. Morocco is no exception in this regard, since in 2016 the Kingdom's internal reputation index exceeds by nearly 13 points that of the external reputation, compared to 16 points in 2015.

On certain attributes, the internal reputation is significantly higher than the external reputation. The Moroccan citizens surveyed consider that they live in a country where security prevails, in which people are friendly and welcoming and where the natural environment is good. They consider that Morocco is internationally respected and that it has a good cultural heritage. These are opportunities around which the Kingdom should develop its communication policy in order to build its international image on solid foundations.

Conversely, the internal perception is negative compared to the external perception on the attributes relating to technology and innovation, the education system, the use of natural resources, well-known brands, the businesses environment, ethical country, transparency, political and institutional environment and social well-being. These shortcomings may constitute real risks for both Morocco's internal and external reputation, and for this reason, they constitute real challenges that need to be addressed.