



UIC Map of Morocco's High-Speed Rail Lines

Located in Northern Africa, Morocco has a population of over 323.3 million people, with the largest cities being Casablanca (3.245 million) and Rabat, the nation's capital (1.77 million). It maintains coastlines with the North Atlantic Ocean and Mediterranean Sea and borders Algeria, Western Sahara, and three small Spain-controlled exclaves. It has the 59th largest economy with a GDP of over \$165.7

billion and ranks 149th in the world with a GDP per capita of \$5,100. Fifty-nine percent of the population is listed as residing in urban areas. Morocco began construction on its first high-speed line and has an additional line planned for future development. The map above displays the lines, according to the International Union of Railways (UIC).

SYSTEM DESCRIPTION AND HISTORY

Morocco has begun construction of a 200 km (125 mile) high-speed rail line between the major cities of Tangier and Casablanca, the country's largest city, while also passing through the capital Rabat. The high speed (greater than 250 km/h or 155 mph) portion of the route will connect Tangier to Kenitra where the system will travel over improved standard railway lines the remainder of the trip to Casablanca. An additional 480 km (300 miles) high-speed line is planned between Settat and Marrakech. Both lines are described in the table below.

UIC Table of Morocco's High-Speed Rail Lines

Stage	Speed		Year Opened	Length	
	km/h	mph		km	miles
Under Construction:					
Tanger – Kenitra	300	185	2015	200	124
Planned:					
Settat – Marrakech	300	185	-	480	298
GRAND TOTAL				680	422

The Moroccan government chose the construction of a high-speed line to accommodate the passenger levels projected to travel between Tangier and Casablanca, a route already experiencing congested conditions on the standard rail services. The country signed agreements in October 2007 with the French state-owned railway company SNCF for construction of the project. This first phase is

reported to cost between \$2.8 billion and \$4 billion, with an expected ridership between 6 and 10 million passengers per year.¹

According to one article, the Moroccan government granted \$585 million funding for the project. About \$122 million is being secured from the Hassan II fund for Economic & Social Development and \$1.2 billion from France. Around \$1.5 billion was secured through loans, with the remaining cost funded by Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, and the United Arab Emirates. ONCF, the Moroccan national railway operator, will be responsible for providing the high-speed passenger service, along with managing and operating the infrastructure, fixed installations, and trainsets.

The high-speed service, plus service improvements to existing segments, is expected to reduce the travel time over the 200 km (125 mile) segment from 5 hours 45 minutes to 2 hours 10 minutes. Construction began in September 2011 and the line is planned to enter commercial service in December 2015. In December 2010, ONCF contracted with Alstom for 14 TGV Duplex trains for the Phase 1 line between Kenitra and Tangier. The approximately \$500 million contract calls for trainsets with an operating speed of 320 km/h (200 mph) and passenger capacity of 533 commuters each.

¹Ranges are due to source discrepancies, not from official ranges.

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