

# Zugänge, Barrieren und Potentiale für die internationale Mobilität von Wissenschaftlerinnen

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Länderbericht Algerien

# Country dossier Algeria

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## 1 Overview

Since its independence from France in 1962, Algeria remains a people’s democratic republic. The official state religion is the Malachite branch of Sunni Islam. The latest population estimates show Algeria’s total resident population nearing 44 million (UNFPA, 2020). Algeria is considered a young nation, with over 84 percent of the population between 10 and 65 years of age. The country’s official languages are Arabic and Tamazight. Additionally, there are vernacular Arabic and Berber languages. French is also used as a *lingua franca*.

Since its independence, education has been a key policy domain for development in Algeria. The major source of funding for all levels is the public revenue from oil and taxation. Education funds are reported to be distributed among the primary, secondary and tertiary education levels in the proportion of 30 percent, 30 percent and 40 percent, respectively.

Illiteracy was a major challenge in Algeria, but recent statistics suggest a decline in the illiteracy rate. According to the 1966 census, 75 percent of people aged 10 years and over could neither read nor write at the time of independence. This percentage was 85 percent for women, compared to 62 percent for men. According to estimates by the National Economic and Social Council (CNES), in 2011, the illiteracy rate had dropped to 15 percent for men and 21 percent for women. The UNESCO Institute for Statistics (UIS) data for 2018 suggest that 75 percent of adult women and 87 percent of adult men are now literate.

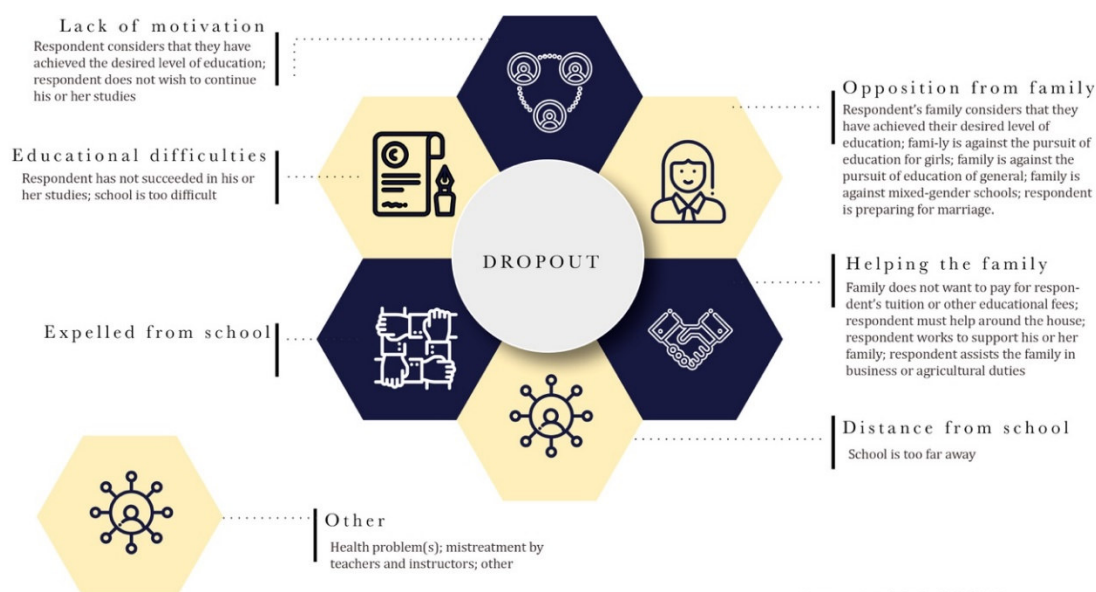
**Table 1 Literacy rate across age groups and by gender**

	TOTAL	MALE	FEMALE	
<b>Literacy rate (%)</b>				
15-24 years	97.4	97.6	97.3	(2018)
15 years and older	81.4	87.4	75.3	(2018)
65 years and older	33.5	47.9	19.7	(2018)

Source: UNESCO Institute for Statistics (UIS), 2020a

In Algeria, education at all stages was traditionally a privilege enjoyed largely by men and boys, with higher rates of enrolment at 5-14 years, higher literacy rates as adults, higher diplomas obtained, higher levels of education by age. Post-independence, universal access to education was made compulsory and free for children between the ages of 6 and 16.

In 2018, the Algerian League for the Defence of Human Rights report estimated that around 400,000 children dropped out of school annually in Algeria and that only 250,000 went on to professional training. The report identified the quality of education as a key factor behind the increasing rate of drop out. In order to avoid over-complicating the analysis with a large number of small proportions, the answers to a question administered to a sub-sample comprising young adults (aged 15–29 years) in the 2002 PAPFAM survey (“What is the main reason why [NAME] dropped out of school?”) were regrouped by Ouadah-Bedidi (2018) into seven categories as follows:

**Figure 1** Reasons for youth drop-out

Source: Ouadah-Bedidi 2018

There is a considerable drop in attendance after the age of 16, more so among boys than girls. And contrary to the gender disparities in enrolment rates before the age of 16, beyond this age, these discrepancies are in favour of women (Ouadah-Bedidi, 2018). Once they entered the school system, girls were found to be more likely to take full advantage of their education and continue their studies into secondary school and university. Since the early 2000s, this phenomenon has become increasingly evident in the records of the Ministry of Education and the National Office of Statistics (ONS) (Ouadah-Bedidi, 2004; CNES, 2006; ONS 2006, 2009, 2010, 2011 and 2013). An OECD report (2020) predicted that changes to online learning as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic may have some negative consequences in terms of dropout rates.

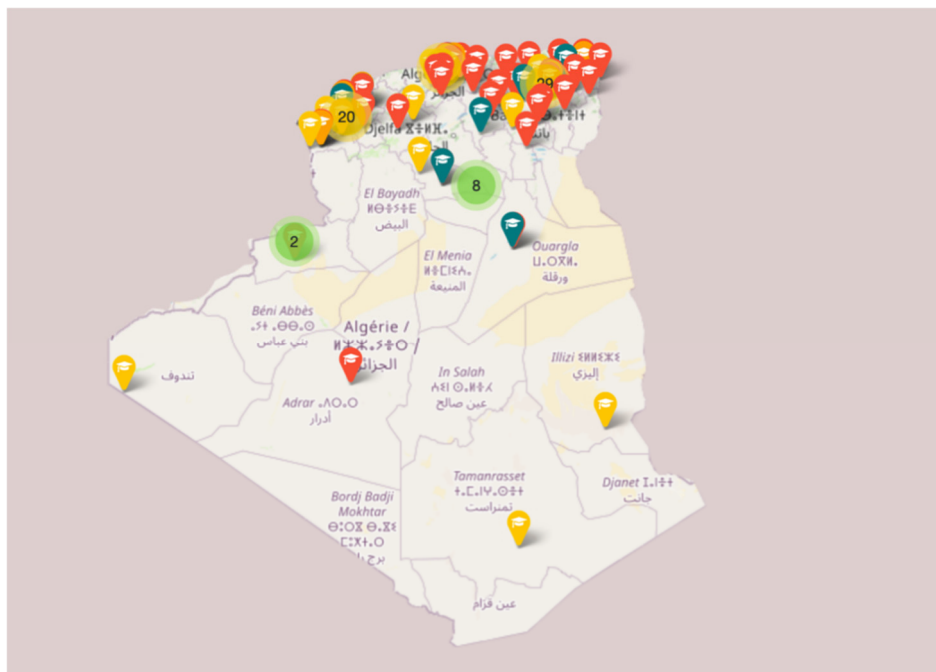
After independence, the September 1962 Constitution made Islam the official state religion but also guaranteed equality between the sexes and granted women the right to vote. Ten women were elected deputies of the new National Assembly. One of them, Fatima Khemisti, drafted legislation to encourage more education for girls. Passed in 1963, the 'Khemisti Law' raised the minimum age of marriage for girls to sixteen. The Union Nationale des Femmes Algériennes (UNFA) was formed, and Algeria saw the rise of a radical women's movement and of feminist organisations which developed critiques of patriarchy and authoritarianism – both on the part of the state and of Islamic fundamentalism – and drew attention to the importance of rights and equality to democratisation and national advancement (Moghadam, 2008). The 2018 data suggest that women hold 25.8 percent of the seats in Algeria's parliament (lower chamber) and only 6.8 percent of upper chamber seats (IPU, 2018).

### 1.1 The Higher Education landscape

The Algerian higher education landscape has changed significantly since independence, when higher education in Algeria was limited to a single university in Algiers and two engineering schools (one multidisciplinary, the other specialising in agronomics) on the outskirts

of the capital. There are now 106 higher education institutions distributed over 48 states (*wilayas*). The geographic distribution of higher education providers shows a saturation in the northern and north eastern regions of the country. This poses challenges in terms of local mobility – especially for women from rural and marginalised communities in the south.

**Figure 2** Geographic distribution of higher education institutions (HEIs)



Source: Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research (MESRS), 2017

All holders of the Baccalaureate or a recognised foreign equivalent have access to higher education and training. There has been a demographic boom in Algerian higher education. One in 120 young people between 20 and 30 years old attended university in the early 1970s. Today, it is one in five (Meyer and Benguerna, 2019). In the 2015–16 academic year, there were around 1,313,540 registered undergraduate students (European Commission, 2018). One third of all registered students now study at Masters’ level. Doctoral registration increased from 21,000 to 57,000 from 2010-2016 (Meyer and Benguerna, 2019). Recent gender-specific data concerning postgraduates remain lacking. However, the present study was successful in obtaining figures and statistics (see Figures 5–7) to further understanding of the gender composition in Algerian higher education, although detailed and specific data such as gender and discipline remain unavailable.

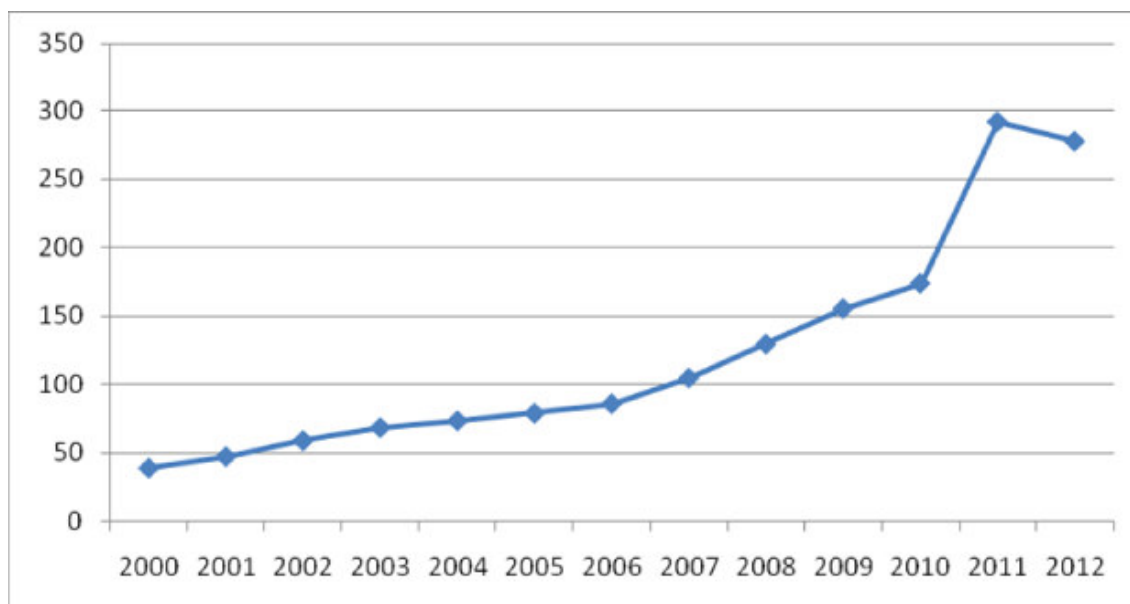
Higher education is delivered by three different types of institutions:

1. **Public scientific, cultural and professional establishments** directly supervised by the Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research
2. **Public administrative establishments** attached to other ministries but whose educational activities are supervised by the Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research
3. **Private** higher education institutions.

**Figure 3 Higher Education Composition**

Source: MESRS, 2020

All education, from primary to doctoral level, is free in Algeria. In addition to tuition fees, the government meets the costs of accommodation, food, and transport for students in the country's public universities (Bensouiah, 2018). For the year 2018, the budget allocated to the higher education sector and scientific research, was DZD 313 billion (US\$2.6 billion).

**Figure 4 Budget allocation for higher education in billion DZD**

Source: Benounissa and Benabou, 2015

Algeria's financial crisis as a result of the fall in oil prices means that the maintenance of state subsidies to this sector has come under increased pressure, especially as the creation of private universities is still new. The Algerian Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific



Research has recently begun accepting applications from private education providers for higher schools and universities (Zaghlami, 2018).

The administration of higher education remains centralised in Algeria. The Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research runs the Exceptional National Programme, which over the last ten years has awarded 4,200 grants to teachers finalising their doctoral theses and 1,500 doctoral grants to leading students.

Algeria has 10 universities in the overall *Times Higher Education World University Ranking*. The highest-ranking university in Algeria is Ferhat Abbas Sétif University, which is ranked in the 501–600 section. Concerns are mounting about the effect of the soaring demand for higher education on quality of provision.

The Algerian League for the Defence of Human Rights (LADDH - Ligue Algérienne pour la Défense des Droits de l'Homme) has highlighted a deterioration in the quality of student experience, ranging from accommodation to catering. In a statement released in late July 2018, LADDH also criticised the mismanagement of the academic process, particularly at postdoctoral levels (Bensouiah, 2018). The State HEI system is under strain from its rapid massification. A major challenge is the staff/student ratio in Algerian universities. As of 2018, there were 59,217 academics in the country, and the teacher to student ratio was 1:7 in some disciplines, such as medicine, but 1:50 in others (Bensouiah, 2018)

## 1.2 Research

There are concerns about the research culture in Algeria. The National Council of Higher Education Teachers (CNES) has highlighted the challenges facing academics in getting published, including the low number of journals approved by the ministry for the publication of scientific research by Master's and doctoral students.

The research culture in Algeria remains governed by centralised bodies and frameworks. The General Directorate for Scientific Research and Technological Development (DG-RSDT) was established in September 2009 with a brief to define five-year scientific national research plans, mobilise existing knowledge sources, develop and sustain the creativity which leads to innovation, and point towards a knowledge-based societal model founded on creative knowledge and its dissemination, renewal and absorption within society. It also aims to improve the research environment with a greater availability of equipment and documentation (Benouar, 2013).

One question is whether research is innovative, collaborative across sectors, and focussed on societal problem-solving:

*Most of the Algerian higher education institutions work separately from their surroundings, unable to open up and interact with society and industry. Therefore, they are not empowered to research and deal with the real problems affecting individuals and society, nor offering doable and feasible solutions (Benouar, 2013: 366).*

The apparent lack of interaction between universities and their external environment has been researched by Saad et al (2020), who found some evidence of collaboration but limited to training and network development. They argued that this could be explained by the universities' strong teaching orientation and low level of research capabilities. They found that spin-off collaboration seems to be associated with specialised universities or those that are focused in their academic activities.

In 2016, Algeria signed a collaboration agreement on scientific research with South Africa. In the same year, 32 universities across Algeria also launched the 'Fab lab', which is a concept for 3D printing and innovation developed by MIT in the USA (General Directorate of Scientific Research and Technological Development, DGRSDT, 2016).

## 2 Women's academic careers

Algeria ranks 132 out of 153 in the *Global Gender Gap Index* (World Economic Forum, 2020). However, gross enrolment in tertiary education in Algeria shows a gender disparity, with females outnumbering male students.

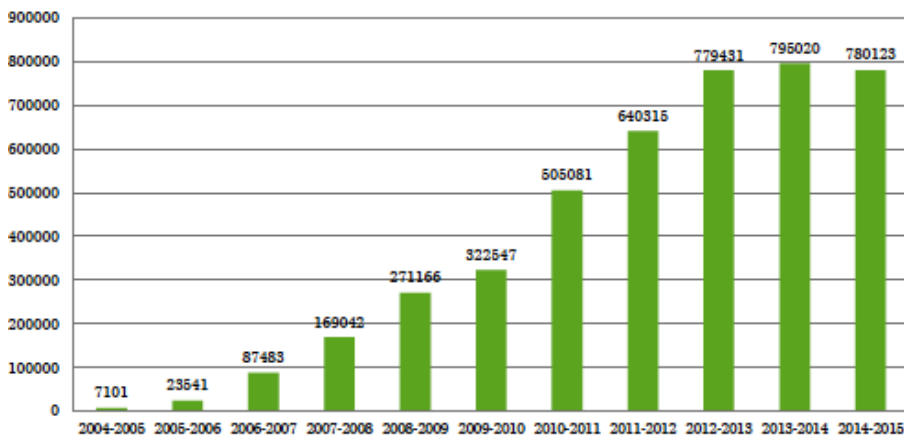
**Table 2** Gross enrolment ratio in tertiary education

TERTIARY EDUCATION	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
<b>Gross enrolment ratio (%)</b>										
Total	29.9	31.2	32.2	33.9	34.5	36.8	42.6	47.6	51.4	...
Female	35.4	37.1	38.6	40.9	41.9	45	53.6	57.2	64.4	...
Male	24.5	25.5	26	27.1	27.3	28.8	32	38.4	38.8	...

Source: UNESCO Institute for Statistics (UIS), 2020a

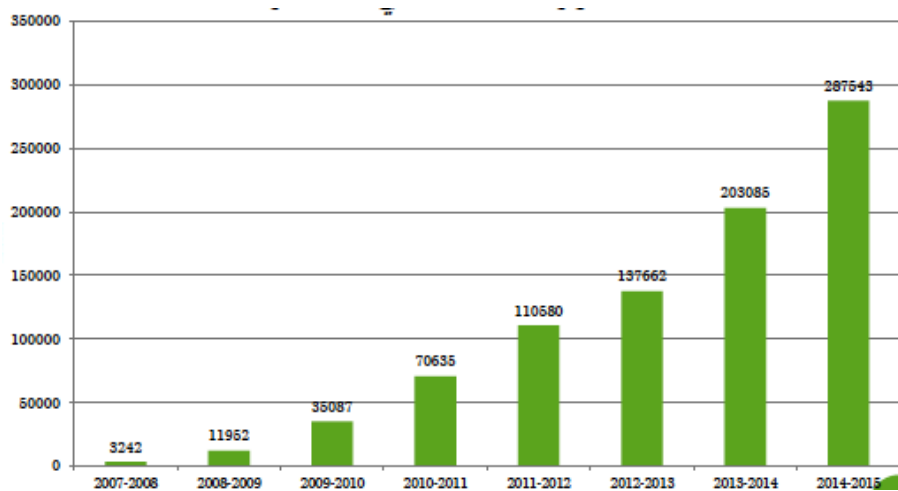
The female gross enrolment ratio in tertiary education in Algeria remains above the MENA (Middle East and North Africa) average, and shows a steady increase in gender parity in terms of access and transition through levels of tertiary education (OECD, 2020). In the academic year 2017–2018, there were 1,730,000 students enrolled in Algerian higher education. The female share was 1,081,250 (62.5 percent) (MESRS, 2017). Since the introduction of the LMD (Licence/Bachelor-Master-Doctorate) system in Algeria, a slight increase in enrolment rates has occurred across different levels of undergraduate and postgraduate studies. Recent detailed data with gender-specific scope on postgraduate study levels remain lacking.

**Figure 5 Development in enrolment in undergraduate studies**



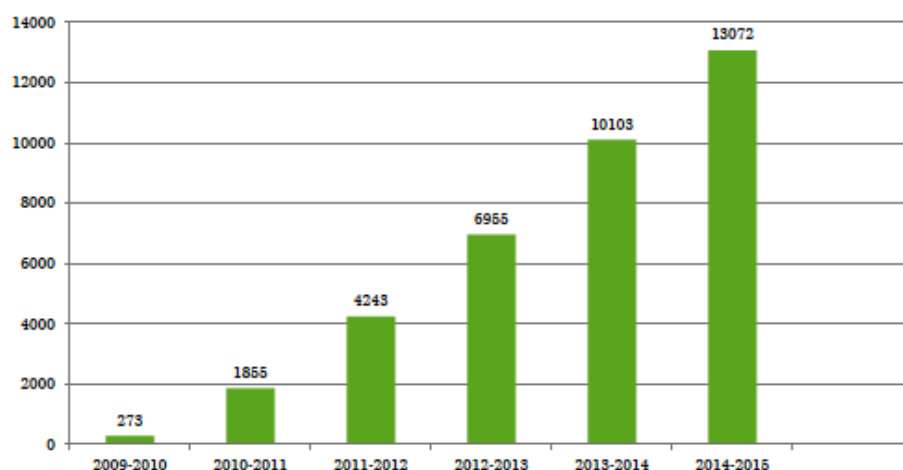
Source: MESRS, 2017

**Figure 6 Development in enrolment in postgraduate taught degrees**



Source: MESRS, 2017

The total number of enrolled students at doctoral level (PhD) grew exponentially between 2010 and 2015 – from 273 to 13,072 students. In 2010, around 48 percent of the total number of PhD students were women, up from 43 percent in 2003–2004 (SHEMERA, 2014).

**Figure 7 Development in enrolment in postgraduate research (PhD) degree**

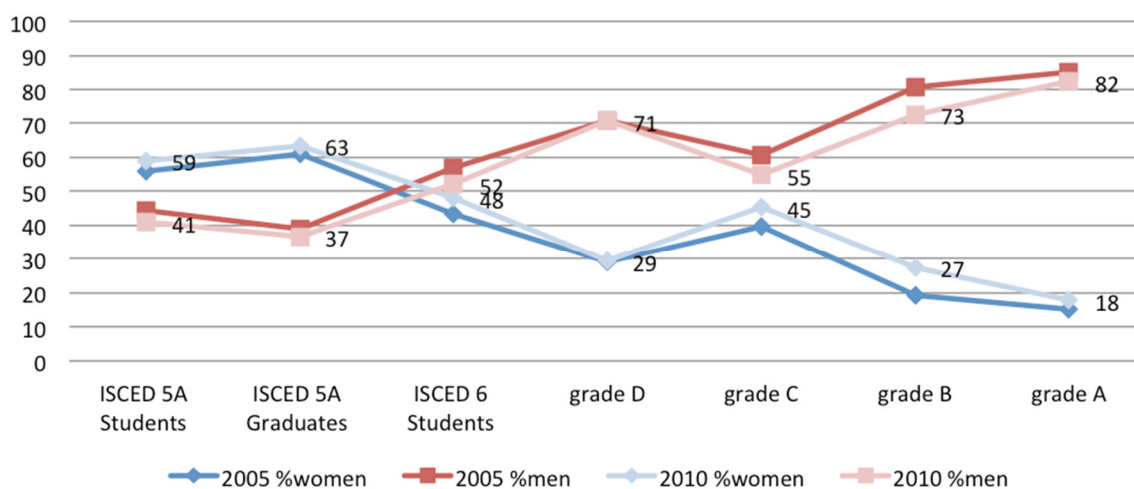
Source: MESRS, 2017

Female students outperform their male counterparts in terms of completion and graduation. The gross graduation ratio from first degree programmes in tertiary education (ISCED levels 6 and 7) among female students was 39.8 percent – almost double that of their male counterparts, at 19 percent (UNESCO Institute for Statistics, 2020a).

Gender stratification is evident in the distribution of graduates by degree and specialisation. The majority of students are registered in the humanities and social sciences (66 percent), followed by science and engineering (20 percent), natural sciences (below 10 percent) and medical sciences (5 percent). Women tend to be registered for courses in languages or natural and health sciences.

While data are available on women's share as students, very limited data are available on women's share at postgraduate levels and academic careers in Algeria. The data that are available are patchy and uneven. The SHEMERA (2014) report on women in science highlights significant data gaps for Algeria, e.g. the absence of an R&D survey. Whenever the total number of researchers aged 25–64 has been reported in the past, e.g. in UNESCO (2004), this figure has not been broken down by sex, but by main fields of science. Regarding PhD level, there are sex-disaggregated data on the number of PhD students, but no information is available on PhD graduates. The SHEMERA authors reported that it was not possible to break down the numbers of women and men academics by main field of science or by age, nor were there raw data to estimate the gender wage gap in science or research.

**Figure 8 Proportions of men and women in a typical academic career, students and academic staff**



Source: SHERA, 2014, Graph 1, p. 5

The few studies on women’s academic careers that include Algeria have often been completed using raw data – for example from university websites – since no official statistics exist or they are unavailable. For example, Karam and Afiouni (2014) found that, at the two Algerian universities that they studied (Qasntenah University and Saad Dahlab Blida), 32.3 percent and 36.8 percent of the assistant professors, respectively and 7.1 percent and 3.1 percent of the associate professors, respectively, were women, whereas women accounted for less than 3 percent (2.7 percent and 0.8 percent, respectively) of the full professors.

From the limited data that do exist, it is evident that the science research culture has traditionally been male-dominated in Algeria, despite the strong presence of women in higher education as students. This can be attributed to social pressure on women to start families and subsequently meet the demands of unpaid household labour, as well as to social prejudices about international mobility. However, according to the very limited available data, the situation appears to be gradually changing. According to UNESCO (2014), women comprised approximately one-third of science, technology, and engineering researchers in Algeria in 2014 (Greene & Richmond, 2016). The recent data on the number of faculty in higher education show that the share of female faculty increased from 37 percent (20,104) in the academic year 2014-2015 to 47 percent (28,200) in 2017-2018 (ESAGOV, 2019). UNESCO Institute for Statistics (2020) reported that, as of 2017 Algeria had the second-highest rate of female researchers in Africa (47.1 percent) after Tunisia. It is evident that there is an urgent need for more data to be collected on academic women’s career trajectories in Algeria.

**Table 3 Development in faculty size and female share**

Faculty number/Year	1999-2000	2014-2015	2015-2016	2017-2018
<b>Total faculty</b>	17, 460	50,000	54,335	60,000
<b>Female share</b>	N/A	N/A	20,104 (37 percent)	28,200 (47 percent)

Source: ESAGOV, 2019

### 3 Internationalisation in Higher Education

#### 3.1 Public Policies

International university partnerships have been established, providing support to Algerian institutions that have reorganised the architecture of university studies, deepening the LMD system, and adjusting programmes by introducing vocational training into new or revamped courses. International cooperation measures have been taken with the aim of supporting higher education reform.

The Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research has signed up for all the multilateral programmes designed to contribute to higher education reform, improved management of establishments, strengthening of institutions, development of new study programmes, networking, and the expansion of the education offer based on current demand for qualifications. The aim was also to encourage and facilitate multilateral cooperation with the higher education institutions, authorities and bodies of European Union (EU) Member States, placing emphasis on reforming and modernising higher education. For example, the University of Tlemcen in Algeria hosted one of the five hubs of the Pan African University (PAU), which focusses on the development of post-graduates, PhD candidates and applied research across Africa. In partnership with the German government, the PAU institute offers graduate students access to academic research and hands-on training in areas vital to the future of African development – water, energy and the challenge of climate change (United Nations University, 2016).

The Ministry for Higher Education and Scientific Research's cooperation programme has featured programmes to enhance internationalisation, for example, the support programme for mobility and advanced training abroad, which has provided 308,100 person-months of internships.

Over the last years, bilateral cooperation has resulted in a substantial increase in international agreements between universities. These agreements are geared towards dealing with the specific needs of Algerian universities, particularly the mobility of high-level staff and support with postgraduate studies, which accounted for an average of 1,500 agreements. They have also made it possible to initiate and develop high-level scientific collaborations and joint research projects between Algerian and foreign research teams, to establish networks between scientific communities through research partnership hubs, and to train young Algerian students and teachers through research.

Quality constitutes a challenge for the internationalisation of higher education in Algeria. Despite the massive investment in Algerian higher education, there remain significant challenges to meet global standards and to become an attractive study destination. There are currently more than 10,000 foreign nationals, from 61 different countries, studying in Algeria. However, only 1 percent of the 35,899 registered students at Algeria's top-ranked university (Ferhat Abbas Sétif University 1) are international (Times Higher Education, 2020).

A major factor in international mobility is the English language (Morley et al, 2019, 2020), which has traditionally been absent from many former French colonies. The choice and use

language as the medium of instruction remains a huge obstacle facing Algeria's efforts for internationalisation. In the educational sector, the Arabic language is the exclusive medium of instruction in Algerian primary and secondary schools and in the humanities at the university level. However, French has traditionally been the key language for studies in scientific disciplines in higher education (Benrabah, 2014). Driven by ambitious plans to join the global market of internationalised higher education, Tayeb Bouzid, the former Minister of Higher Education, announced in July 2019 the government plans to make English the primary language in Algerian universities. These plans were met with mixed responses. The dispute over the choice of official language in higher education has not yet been settled (Bensouiah, 2020).

The use of English instead of French requires more than political will. Jacob (2019) suggested that Algeria provides a valuable case study to examine the re-creation and impact of narratives of English as the language of movement and opportunities in a context where day-to-day uses of English are almost non-existent. She argued that where French had previously been used to signify access to knowledge, English was viewed as the 'language of science' (p. 9). English, in Algeria, is now equated with a 'language of the future' through its discursive association with the Internet, self-improvement, popular science and academic publishing, and emigration, and the French language is equated with the past (p. 14). English, it seems, has become an important, promoter and gatekeeper of increased opportunities through international mobility, and increasingly is equated with spatial and social mobility.

### **3.2 Patterns of mobility**

The Algerian diaspora plays a major role in the continuation of outward mobility and the choice of mobility destination. It is estimated that there are more than one million executives of Algerian origin working abroad in 2020, according to Fetah Ouazani, president of the Network of Algerian Graduates of French Universities and Colleges (REAGE). Currently, there are between 40,000 and 60,000 Algerian executives living in the United States and Canada. More than 7,000 Algerian doctors and 3,000 computer scientists are based in Europe.

Critics argue that poor quality conditions in Algerian higher education are behind the significant skills flight suffered by the country. The expansion of Algerian higher education has created an excess supply of highly-skilled Algerians. Rather than remaining unemployed at home, many of them have emigrated and joined the already substantial number of Algerians in the diaspora abroad (Mebroukine, 2015).

Well-known Algerian researchers include Belgacem Haba in the United States, who alone holds 1,457 patents for inventions in electronics, obtained mainly in the US and Japan. A graduate of the University of Science and Technology at Bab-Ezzouar, in Algiers, he is listed alongside Thomas Edison in the category for the most productive inventors in the United States. Another is Nouredine Melikechi, a professor of atomic physics at the University of Massachusetts, and affiliated with the American space agency NASA. He was part of the team that made the Curiosity robot which landed on Mars on 6 August 2012.

A challenge is how to apply the skills and experience developed from the Algerian diaspora to the development of scientific research back home. Rachid Bladehane, Secretary of State for the Diaspora Abroad and Immigration, stated that Algeria intends to attract 25,000 Algerian experts living abroad and to integrate them into the national development effort of the country.

On 1 June 2020, Bladehane told the Parliamentary Foreign Affairs Committee:

*The government intends to integrate these Algerian experts in the development of the national economy and in all the fields in which they excel; namely medicine, electronics, digital and all the sectors currently essential to the evolution of a country like Algeria. A special programme had been presented to the government to oversee their rights in Algeria.*

In addition, diplomatic services had started to establish contact with members of the Algerian community living abroad. Bladehane said an electronic portal would be set up and would include an inventory of the experts' specialisations. In this way a space for exchange and communication could be created between them and the national institutions (Bensouiah, 2020a).

France remains the most favoured destination for outward mobility among Algerian students and academics. France hosts 24,094 Algerian students, the largest share of the total number of Algerian students abroad (29,718). Malaysia comes second, followed by Canada and the United Kingdom. Germany is the 9th most favoured destination for outward students' mobility, with only 210 Algerian students (UNESCO, 2019). There are several explanations for this:

1. **French language:** Language plays an important role in the choice of study destinations and the direction of outward international students' mobility. As highlighted earlier, modules and study programmes across the Algerian higher education system are predominantly taught in the French language. An estimated 11 million Algerians read and write in French, which makes Algeria the second largest French-speaking country in the world in terms of number of speakers.
2. **Credit transfer:** The Algerian higher education system model bears a large similarity with its French counterparts. This comes with many benefits, such as credit transfer and accreditation between the two systems. Credit transfer is of utmost importance as it ensures that mobility will not cause any disruption to the length of study or any prolongation of the duration of study. It also guarantees that students have various options for outward mobility in terms of duration (short and long).
3. **Policy frameworks:** As of 2006, the Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research adopted the Bologna Process, which organised higher education into what is called the Licence/Bachelor-Master-Doctorate (LMD) structure with the aim of making Algerian higher education more compatible and comparable, more competitive and more attractive for Algerians and for students and scholars from other countries (Benouar, 2013).
4. **Study Abroad Programmes (SAP):** The most important programmes are those developed with the European Union, which are essentially:



- The Erasmus Plus programme (formerly ‘Tempus’);
  - The Erasmus Mundus programme;
  - The Horizon 2020 programme (2014-2020) and Horizon Europe (2021-2027);
  - The Higher Education Reform Support Programme (‘PAPS-ESRS’).
5. **Ease of visa procedures and integration into social life:** Algerian nationals enjoy a special status in the French immigration laws. Acquiring a study visa in France is a relatively easy and fast process for Algerian nationals compared with other nationals from the African continent. There is also the question of integration in French society, which thanks to proficiency in the French language makes France a more attractive study destination.
  6. **Diaspora:** As highlighted earlier, the diaspora plays an important role in shaping the rationale and choice of the study abroad destination. France has the largest number of Algerians in diaspora –approximately 1.7 million. According to Bensouiah (2018): “In France, of the 10,000 immigrant doctors surveyed, 7,000 are were of Algerian origin, 50 percent of them specialists. There are also 100,000 entrepreneurs from Algeria listed in Europe. These skills earn their host countries \$45 billion.”

**Employability:** The question of employability – at home or in host countries – after graduation often shapes the rationale for outward students’ mobility . Satti Osman Mohamed Nour (2019) cited a variety of drivers, including the worsening of the socio-cultural situation among high-skilled or intellectual elites, graduate unemployment, the rise of rentier and speculative market activities (the Algerian elite), in addition to other reasons such as the bureaucratisation of research.

7. **Employment opportunities:** Cheddadi (2018) studied the Fulbright Programme in Algeria and concluded that most Algerian Fulbright scholars find it difficult to re-integrate into the Algerian labour market, and end up seeking employment opportunities overseas. Not only does this contribute to brain drain/circulation, it also undermines the objectives of the Fulbright Programme, namely, to promote understanding between the USA and other countries.
8. **Immigration laws:** Recently, immigration laws have changed to welcome high-skilled migrants. Most European countries now offer students who completed a higher education degree a minimum of one year to seek employment opportunities after graduation. In France, Algerian graduates can apply for French citizenship two years after completing a higher education degree. This can provide incentives to many Algerians to choose France as a study destination. In 2016, 16 percent of those who were naturalised in France were Algerian born. There are multiple incentives to acquiring French nationality, including freedom of mobility and employability across EU countries.

### 3.3 Gender and international mobility

Questions have been posed about how gender relates to opportunities and experiences of internationalisation (Morley et al., 2019, 2020). Mobility is seen as vital in an academic’s

career because it provides scholars with opportunities for interaction with other scholars internationally and further professional development. However, opportunities can be highly gendered – especially in Africa (Prozesky & Beaudry, 2019).

Internationalisation makes visible the patriarchal premium (Bhandari, 2017; Jöns, 2011; Matus and Talburt, 2009; Myers and Griffin, 2018; Rosner, 2015). Leemann (2010) suggested that mobility is not viewed as a social experience whose value is neutral, but as something that has value precisely because it can be drawn into fields of asymmetrical gendered relations. She argued that women academics are less geographically mobile than their male counterparts, and that greater geographic immobility can put women at a disadvantage with regard to tenure.

#### **4 Study Limitations**

1. The availability of gender-disaggregated data on women’s academic careers and international mobility is scarce in Algeria. While the UNESCO Institute for Statistics (UIS) collects information on global flows of mobility at tertiary level, it lacks breakdown by gender, age, and socioeconomic status. Some gender-disaggregated data are available on postgraduate studies, but not on academic careers.
2. The lack of availability of recent and gender-disaggregated data on outward and inward international mobility in Algeria means that it is challenging to assess and evaluate gendered flows.
3. There is a notable absence of recent research studies on Algerian higher education more generally. The studies that do exist are often small-scale inquiries conducted by lone researchers using raw data.
4. Many of the policy documents are in Arabic only. We also noted variation in data across different sources, e.g. the number of universities.
5. Strong international and inter-regional collaborations in data collection and exchange remain at early stages. Most data are collected by international development organisations, and official state-sponsored data collection frameworks are absent.

#### **5 Conclusion and summary of findings**

1. Women are entering higher education at all levels as students in high numbers. They are increasing their presence as researchers and as members of university faculty. However, there are very limited data and almost no in-depth research studies on women’s academic careers.
2. There has been a massive expansion of higher education and an increase in the number of universities since independence in 1962, and more people are now qualified to enter higher education. This demographic boom has been accompanied by concerns about assuring quality in a massified system. There has been a slow development of the private sector to meet growing demands for higher education in Algeria.

3. Language: primary and secondary education is in Arabic, but many university-level disciplines are taught in French, and English is rapidly becoming the language of research – especially in the STEM disciplines – and is associated with international mobility.
4. The research culture is highly criticised, e.g. for its lack of links with industry, and lack of possibilities for publication. Low publication rates in international journals have an impact on Algeria's position in university world rankings.

## 6 Recommendations

- **Women's Academic Career Development:** Female scholars need to be supported to progress professionally, e.g. via opportunities for research and publication internationally, international mentorship and mobility. It is also important to review the collection and availability of gender-disaggregated statistical data and facilitate the development of qualitative studies on diverse aspects of gender in Algerian higher education, e.g. postgraduate study, career progression, and research opportunities. The Humboldt Foundation could consider targeted programmes for advancing gender equity in Algerian higher education, e.g. gender mainstreaming.
- **Building Research Capacity and Culture:** To consider how internationalisation opportunities could be linked to the development of skills and knowledge to build the research capacity and culture in Algerian universities – especially for women.
- **Quality Assurance and Resourcing Higher Education:** There is an urgent need to reduce the staff–student ratio in Algerian universities by ensuring and resourcing a steady flow of qualified academics, and to provide incentives for internationalised Algerian academics to return home to build capacity within the Algerian higher education sector. The Humboldt Foundation could consider research programmes for developing quality higher education in Algeria.
- **Language Opportunities:** As French tends to be the major foreign language in Algeria, any Humboldt Foundation international mobility programmes will need to provide English language support.

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