

# Weekly highlights by L'ECONOMISTE



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EDITORIAL

Image

Mohamed CHAUI

**W**ILL anyone go higher? The Moroccan women's football team won its ticket to participate in the Australian World Cup in 2023. Not long ago, no one would have bet a penny on the team for the enterprise was so gigantic. And for good reason, the Moroccan women's team comes a long way: it never went to the World Cup, and never won a single match in the African Cup where it participated only once in 2000. And then, this feat of the Lionesses of the Atlas (as the Moroccan women's team is nicknamed) seems to have reconciled Moroccans with this sport and made people forget the distressing post-match shows, with unheard-of violence often carried out by minors who can't stand the failure of their club. This time, the female footballers played in a very full stadium, with more than 40,000 spectators, made up mainly of families, with women and children. This is the other masterful lesson that these Moroccan women have given. In this case, it is also the image of Moroccan women, young and modern, who continue

to gain places and stripes within society, because with this qualification, Morocco enters majestically in the history of women's football. It is the first Arab country to set foot on the lawns of the World Cup. Neither the Egyptians, nor the Lebanese, nor the Algerians, ... will have this historic privilege of appearing on this shortlist. Translated on the ground, this means that on women's issues, Morocco is ahead. The country's specificity consisting in putting women at the forefront materializes a societal choice, initiated by the King with the great reform of the Moudawana, the Moroccan Family Code. It is therefore a question of giving to this feat the cultural dimension which it deserves, but it is also the concrete result of the in-depth work carried out by the FMRF, the Royal Moroccan Football Federation. After the establishment of a development plan for women's football, the FMRF decided to pay these footballers a monthly salary and to recruit top-notch technical staff. Seriousness eventually pays off. □

## Weekly highlights

# Investment: The new package

**A**FTER dozens of initial versions were drafted, the Investment Charter has finally come into being. The draft framework law was adopted on Tuesday, July 19 by the Government Council meeting, the day before the Council of Ministers meeting on Wednesday which approved the draft law. A real parliamentary marathon was awaiting Mohsine El Jazouli. Indeed, the Minister Delegate for Investment, Convergence, and the Evaluation of Public Policies was expected to quickly convince the two chambers of Parliament to speed up the approval of the draft law, especially since this draft framework law, eagerly awaited by the business world, had been recommended by the King. This project intervenes within the framework of the implementation of the recommendations of the New Model of Development and in application of the content of the government program, according to the presentation note which accompanies this text of 42 articles. More than 26 years after the enactment of the old charter, it was imperative to carry out a reform of the Government's policy as regards development and investment promotion. It is a matter of adapting the charter to the requirements of the New Model of Development and to the profound institutional, economic, so-



More than 26 years after the publication of the former charter, it was imperative to carry out a reform of the policy of the Government as regards development and investment promotion

cial, environmental, and technological changes taking place at the national and international level. Moreover, this project is part of a range of reforms such as that of the CRIs (Regional Investment Centers) with the establishment of unified regional investment commissions, the creation of the Mohammed VI Fund for Investment, the development of the public-private partnership, and the overhaul of taxation. Added to this is the restructuring of the sector of state-owned enterprises (SOEs) and agencies, with the appointment of Director Ge-

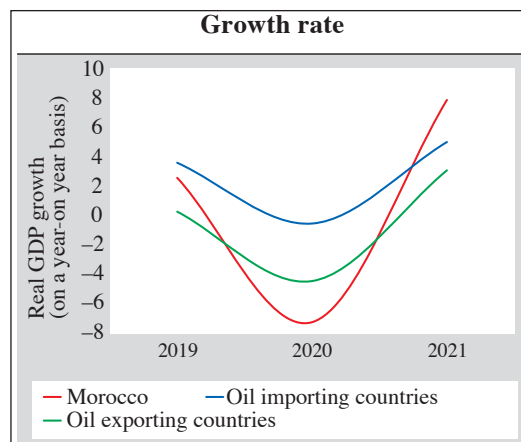
neral Abdellatif Zaghoun as head of the new National Agency for the Strategic Management of State Holdings. With a view to making investment the main engine of economic growth in Morocco, the draft framework law targets the fundamental goals of Government action in the area of development and investment promotion, in the prospect of establishing Morocco as an attractive continental and international hub for investment. It is undeniable that the implementation of these parallel reforms will not fail to strengthen the

country's attractiveness and increase the share of private, national, and foreign investment in the total investments made, marked by the predominance of public investments. The idea is to reverse the current trend in the distribution of these investments with a view to enabling the private sector to make two-thirds of the overall investment by 2035, and this in accordance with the content and ambitions of the New Model of Development, as explained by the presentation note that accompanies the draft framework law establishing an investment charter. In addition to the creation of stable jobs and the reduction of disparities between the provinces in terms of attracting investment, the Government wants to direct investment towards priority sectors and professions of the future. On the menu is also the fostering of exports and the development of Moroccan companies internationally. The goal is to strengthen the economic influence of Morocco at the global level, particularly in Africa, in perfect harmony with the royal vision of this continent. Added to this is the incentive to substitute imports with local production, the improvement of the business environment, and the facilitation of investment. □

M.C.

## Growth, inflation, deficit... The warnings of the World Bank

**A** few days after the diagnosis of the HCP (High Commission for Planning), the World Bank seems to confirm the difficult situation of the post-Covid Moroccan economy. This year, economic recovery in Morocco is running dry, as shown by the latest report from this Bretton Woods institution. After the effects of the Covid crisis and the war in Ukraine, the recovery was hard hit by the shock of the drought, according to the explanations of World Bank experts, during the round table held to present the conclusions of this document. Experts from this institution insisted on the systemic nature of the problem of water scarcity in Morocco. Admittedly, the country has succeeded in sustaining strong growth in agricultural added value, "but this model could show signs of running out of steam". Hence the importance of "better managing water demand". Especially since currently, "rainfall



Source: World economic outlook June 2022, World Bank calculation

According to the World Bank, Morocco shows a higher growth rate compared to the MENA region in 2021, reaching 7.9%, but the GDP remains lower than the pre-pandemic trends

shocks are an important source of economic volatility".

In detail, the observation is clear: after a good year in 2021, having enabled the achievement of a real GDP growth rate of 7.9%, Morocco "is once again suffering the impact of a series of negative shocks". The beginning of the agri-

cultural campaign was impacted by drought. A poor cereal harvest is expected for 2022, according to the World Bank. This situation coincides with a slowdown in the global economy and an increase in international commodity prices. According to this report, "these shocks turned out to be mutually reinforcing, given that with the drought, Morocco would have to import larger volumes of cereals, at significantly higher prices due to the war in Ukraine". As a result, the growth forecasts are revised downwards. World Bank experts predict a growth rate of 1.3% in 2022. "This is one of the sharpest falls on the international scene", said Javier Diaz Cassou, senior economist at the World Bank.

For the next few months, World Bank forecasts predict a sharp contraction in the agricultural sector, with cereal production projected at 32 million quintals,

a drop of 69% compared to last year. At the same time, international shocks should continue to fuel pressure on prices, with repercussions on consumption and on external and budgetary balances. In this context of uncertainty, «where it is difficult to make forecasts», according to World Bank experts, the growth rate, which will drop to 1.3% in 2022, will have to rebound the following year to stand at 4.3%, as agricultural production normalizes, and global shocks begin to subside. The budget deficit, for its part, must remain above 5% of GDP. Ditto for the current account deficit which should widen to 5.2% in 2022, before reducing in the medium term. Nevertheless, the performance of the Moroccan economy in the long term "could be boosted by the structural reforms announced in recent years", except that a "loss of dynamism could also weaken potential growth". □

M.A.M.

## Healthcare reform

## The marathon of the Parliament return

**T**HE Minister of Health and Social Protection has his work cut out for him. In addition to the draft framework law on the reform of the health system, Khalid Aït Taleb must have five other pieces of legislation adopted which are in the final phase, such as the one relating to territorial health groupings or the public health service. This is the price to pay to ensure support for the royal project relating to the generalization of social protection. All these projects do not require, as would be the case for a framework law, to be reviewed during a Council of Ministers meeting. In this case, only the Government Council meeting will suffice. However, the Government does not seem to be in a hurry when it comes to the legislative agenda. It will therefore be necessary to wait until the next parliamentary term to be able to start the examination of this draft framework law, because the closing of the spring session of Parliament is scheduled for July 27 but the bureaus of the two Chambers have not scheduled a meeting of the Specialized Committee to launch the debate relating to the proposed legislation. In the meantime, the draft framework law which has just been adopted by the Council of Ministers aims to reinforce the achievements, correct the dysfunctions, and fill in the gaps in order to implement a comprehensive reform of the national healthcare system. It is a question of meeting the aspirations and expectations of the citizens and to restore confidence in the system, according to the presentation note of the draft framework law. For its advocates, the



The framework law aims to improve the status of the human resources working in the health sector through a public health service aimed at stimulating human capital in the public sector (Ph. L'Economiste)

draft framework law aims to improve the status of the human resources working in the health sector through a public health service aimed at stimulating human capital in the public sector. The central idea consists in adopting a salary system based in part on the performance of professional work in addition to the improvement of health training systems.

#### Goals of the healthcare project

According to Article 2 of the bill, the action of the Government in the field aims to protect the health of the population and to protect it against diseases, epidemics, and against any

risk threatening the life of individuals while guaranteeing their life in a healthy environment. To this end, the Government is working to achieve several goals, including facilitating citizens' access to quality services and guaranteeing a balanced and equitable distribution of the healthcare offering throughout the national territory.

#### Territorial provision of healthcare services

The other goal relates to the consolidation of the territorial distribution of the supply of care in the public sector, with an improvement of its governance through the creation of health groupings of territories. Also on the

menu is the guarantee of sovereignty in terms of medicines and the development of means of monitoring and prevention against risks threatening health. In addition to the implementation of partnership, cooperation, and complementarity mechanisms between the public and private sectors, it will also be necessary to encourage scientific research and innovation in the field of health. Achieving the goals set out in Article 2 above is a national priority and a collective responsibility incumbent on the national Government, local authorities, the private sector, civil society, the various professional bodies, the population, and other actors in the field of health. □

M.C.

## LA NEWSLETTER

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L'ECONOMISTE  
LA RÉFÉRENCE AU QUOTIDIEN

## Weekly highlights

### WAFCON

# Now legendary, the Atlas Lionesses easily qualified for the finale

Photo report by A. Bziouat

**T**HE Moroccan women's football team has qualified for the finale of the Women's African Cup of Nations (WAFCON) football. The Lionesses won on penalty shootouts against the Nigerians who were eleven times African champions in fourteen competitions. The Nigerians opened the scoring thanks to Yasmin Mrabet who sent the ball into her own net in the 62nd minute, before Sanaâ Mssoudy answered immediately in the

66th minute with an equalizer. The first leg of the match was marked by possession of the ball by the Nigerians, but did not allow them to score, because of Moroccan goalkeeper Khadija Er-Rmichi's mindfulness. In the second leg of the match, the change made by coach Reynald Pedros by introducing striker Samya Hassani to take over from Salma Amani (at the 61st minute) boosted the offensive line of the Atlas Lionesses who were more aggressive, like Rosella Ayane who seriously

threatened goalkeeper Chiamaka Nnadozie's net on many occasions. At the end of the extra time dominated by the Moroccan team, the two teams headed for the penalty shootout, an exercise that turned in favor of the Atlas Lionesses who posted a good performance with this qualification. In the finale, they will face their South African counterparts who won in extremis against Zambia with the score of 1 goal to 0. □



## Jidar reenchants the walls of Rabat

**T**WELVE national and international artists from seven countries, nine monumental frescoes, a collective wall, a screen-printing workshop, and an artistic performance are part of the seventh edition of the "Jidar, Rabat Street Art Festival" which is back in force from July 21 to July 31, 2022. The capital city once again becomes, for about ten days, an open-air place of creation with artists from Morocco, Senegal, Spain, the Czech Republic, Portugal, Canada, and Japan. This is an opportunity to build bridges between urban space and artistic practices through in situ works, intended for the general public and the inhabitants of the neighborhoods that host them in particular. As usual, the festival invites a host of young talents to learn about murals and contribute to Jidar's usual "Collective Wall". On the other side, artists Ed Oner, Reda Boudina, Tima, Beaugraff, Manolo Mesa, Juraj Duriš, Pantonio, Bryan Beyung and Twoone, will compete in terms of audacity to take us on a journey through

different lands and different expressions and through a dozen cleverly scattered facades in the city. These works will complete the mosaic of frescoes of prestigious artists, which have adorned the capital since 2015, when the EAC-L'boulevard association started this venture. As a reminder, the association is also in charge of the other street-art event in the country, the Sbagha Bagha festival in Casablanca. Since then, the Jidar festival has continued to mature and improve. The cosmopolitan capital has welcomed nearly a hundred artists who, with distinct backgrounds, have striven to transpose their imagination onto the walls of the capital. Within seven years, around sixty city walls have been transformed, to such an extent that this festival quickly established itself as one of the unmissable events of its kind on a global scale, while making Rabat a laboratory of international urban art. In 2017, Morocco was referenced by the very specialized site Artsy, which lists the world capitals of urban art. □

Amine BOUSHABA

### ■ Bryan Beyung (Canada)

Born in Montreal to a Sino-Cambodian family, Bryan develops an intuitive pictorial approach where raw lines, solid colors and realistic shapes are deconstructed to give a second approach to an image, an idea, or a memory. In his unstructured and dynamic pieces, the freedom of gesture meets the precision of technique. Also, the strength of his works is part of a constant duality between figuration and abstract art, colorful explosions and sobriety, formal art and graphic design.



### ■ Juraj Duriš (Czech Republic)

Born in 1992 in Nitra, Slovakia, this graduate of the Faculty of Fine Arts in Brno devotes himself not only to painting but also to experimenting with objects and street-art. He produces realistic portraits, if not mature and thoughtful works, on the edge of abstraction. His clear and expressive brushstrokes or his subtle color modeling allow him to get to the bottom of things. Duriš immerses himself in the pop-art heritage with a view to showing fantastic universes with compositions in colors that are bright, clean, and full of life. Such an energetic style!

### ■ Beaugraff

Born in 1987 in Guédiawaye in the suburbs of Dakar, Senegal, Beaugraff, whose real name is Birame Mbaye, discovered the world of graffiti in 2008 thanks to his love for painting and art in general. This meeting allowed him to freely express in drawing his artistic desires. Strongly influenced by hip-hop culture, his works testify to this universe. During the coronavirus pandemic, Beaugraff became involved with the Radikl Bomb Shot (RBS: grouping of artists who are very active in the promotion and enhancement of graffiti as a form of artistic expression) in the fight against the spread of the virus in Senegal through preventive graffiti. □

