

## **Activity Report: Mimouna Association's Participation in the 30th Edition of the Rabat International Book Fair (2025)**

### **Introduction:**

Mimouna Association proudly participated for the third consecutive time in the Rabat International Book Fair, held from **April 18th to April 27th, 2025**. This year's theme for our participation was **"Scrolls and Texts: The Synagogue Experience at the Book Fair."** In a time of regional tensions and uncertainties, we remained faithful to our mission: to promote Moroccan Jewish heritage, advocate for coexistence, and strengthen bonds between Moroccans of all backgrounds. As it is written in the Psalms, **"How good and pleasant it is when brothers dwell together in unity"** (Psalms 133:1).

### **The Project: "Bringing a Synagogue to Rabat"**

Recognizing that the vast majority of Moroccan youth have never set foot in a synagogue, we decided to "bring the synagogue to them." Through a carefully constructed booth replicating the elements of a Moroccan synagogue, enriched with Judaica objects and a curated collection of books on Moroccan Jewish history, Mimouna created an immersive, educational experience for thousands of visitors at the heart of Morocco's capital.

Despite a challenging regional context, we firmly believe that hard times call for **doubling our efforts** to build bridges of understanding and preserve the shared memory that unites all Moroccans.

### **Visitor Numbers and Demographics:**

Between **April 18th and April 27th**, our booth welcomed approximately **8,500 visitors**:

- **62%** were **students and young professionals** aged **18 to 35**.
- **25%** were **primary and secondary school students** aged **7 to 17**.
- **13%** were visitors aged **35 and above**.

These numbers reflect a strong interest from Morocco's younger generations in learning about their country's rich Jewish heritage.

### **Nature of Visitor Interactions:**

#### **1. Religious Curiosity:**

The majority of questions visitors asked were related to Judaism as a religion. Common inquiries included:

- "What do Jews believe in?"
- "Do Jews pray, and how?"
- "Do Jews fast like Muslims?"

- "What is the Torah?"

Our team, composed of **Moroccan Muslim staff trained by Mimouna Association**, engaged with visitors **in Moroccan Arabic**, providing simple, respectful explanations about Jewish beliefs, practices, and the centrality of the Torah, while drawing cultural parallels that visitors could easily relate to.

## 2. Historical Questions:

The second most frequent category of questions related to **the history of Moroccan Jews**. Despite the recent integration of Jewish history into the national curriculum, it became clear that a significant gap remains:

- "When did Jews come to Morocco?"
- "What happened to them over history?"

Our experience indicates that although the topics are included in textbooks, **teachers are often not trained** to teach them effectively. The lack of "training of trainers" remains a major gap that affects the transmission of this essential part of Moroccan history.

## 3. Political Questions:

Interestingly, out of more than **8,000 visitors**, **only 7 discussions** touched upon the **Israeli-Palestinian conflict**. Our team, following Mimouna's communication policy, handled these situations with clarity:

- **First**, reaffirming that **Mimouna is a cultural organization**, not a political one.
- **Second**, affirming our **strong belief in peace** and the importance of dialogue.

This approach helped maintain the respectful and educational atmosphere of our booth.

Days	Visitors
Friday 18.04.2025	312
Saturday 19.04.2025	812
Sunday 20.04.2025	1220
Monday 21.04.2025	273
Tuesday 22.04.2025	815
Wednesday 23.04.2025	925
Thursday 24.04.2025	832
Friday 25.04.2025	1017
Saturday 26.04.2025	1032
Sunday 27.04.2025	1290
<b>Total</b>	<b>8528</b>

## Conclusion:

Our third participation at the Rabat International Book Fair reaffirmed Mimouna Association's central role in promoting Jewish-Moroccan heritage, fostering intercultural understanding, and offering spaces for meaningful, respectful dialogue. Despite external tensions, the thousands of young people

who visited our "Synagogue at the Book Fair" project are a powerful testament to the thirst for knowledge and coexistence that continues to characterize Moroccan society.

We are proud to have once again carried the torch of memory, dialogue, and unity on behalf of all Moroccans.