

# Research Landscape in Tunisia

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- 1. Cartography of the Tunisian National Research System**
- 2. Current performance of Tunisian National Research System**
- 3. Research and Innovation Strategy toward 2035**

# 1. Cartography of the Tunisian National Research System

## Scientific Research activities

- 542 Laboratories
- 40 Research Centers
- 13 Techno-parks.

## Human resources

- 22 000 FT researchers
- 12 000 PhD students
- 270 000 students

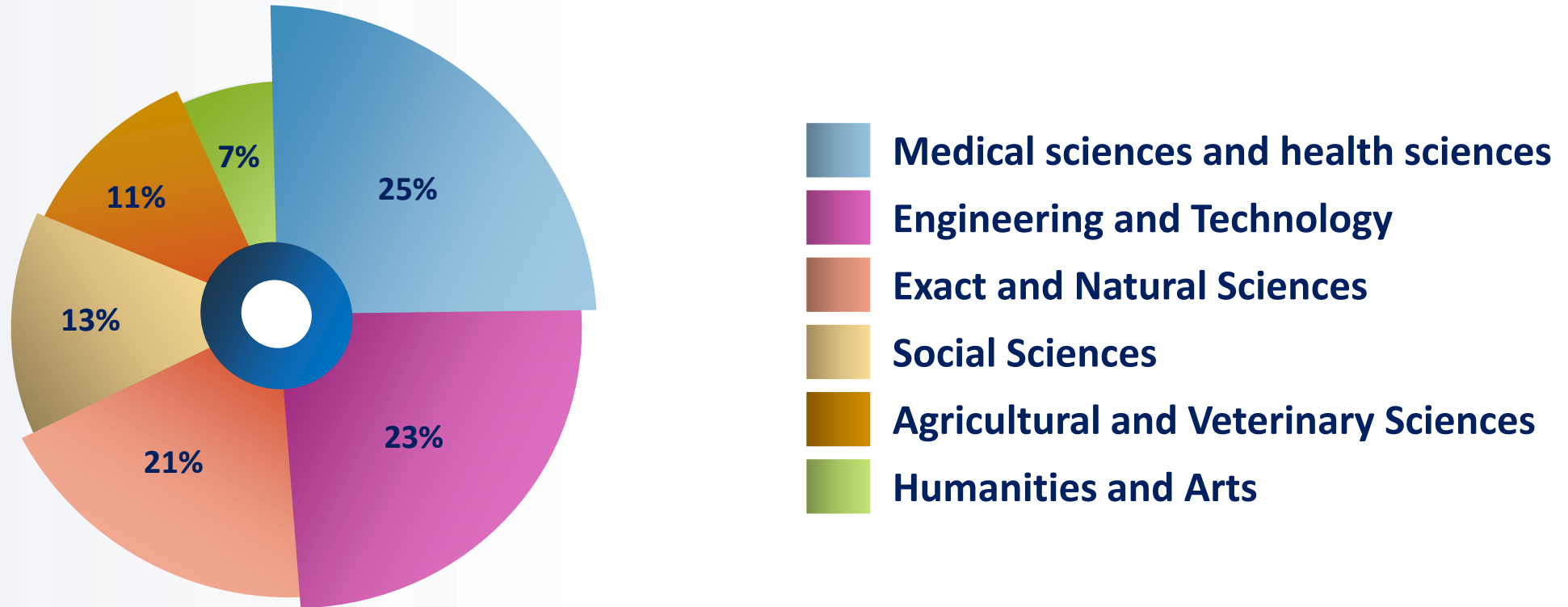
## Higher Education

- 13 Universities
- 207 Institution of higher education
- 42 Doctoral Schools

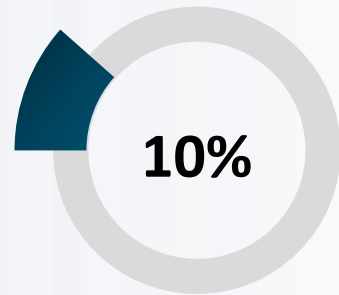
## Support structures

- ATEA, ANPR,
- CCK, CNUDEST,
- Cité des sciences,....

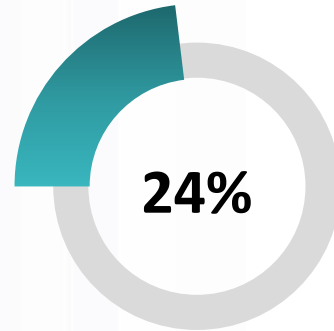
**Tunisia already has a strong research system, supported by universities, laboratories, research centers, and dedicated support structures.**



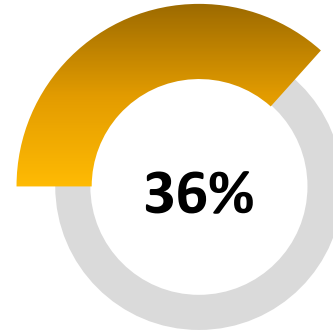
**This diverse scientific portfolio underscores Tunisia's commitment to advancing knowledge and driving innovation across a broad spectrum of disciplines.**



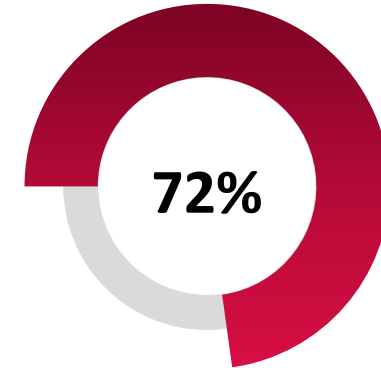
**Social Sciences**



**Medical Sciences**



**Engineering**



**Natural Sciences**

- In terms of scientific production, Tunisia demonstrates strong specialization in fields such as engineering, medical sciences, and life sciences.
- These areas represent both traditional strengths and strategic opportunities for innovation.



1. Energy, water and food security
2. Societal project: Education, Culture and Youth
3. Citizen's health
4. Digital transformation
5. Governance and decentralization
6. Circular economy and environment

- To address country's most pressing challenges
- To enhance the sustainable development

**Mission**

**Contribute to improving the competitiveness of the economy growth and socio-economic development**

**Improve the excellence and influence of Tunisian scientific research**

**Improve the impact of R&D on the economy, society and sustainable development by creating value**

**Contribute to improving the employability of graduates**

**Our mission is clear:** to build a research system that is not only excellent academically, but also impactful economically and socially. This requires a shift toward results, value creation, and employability.

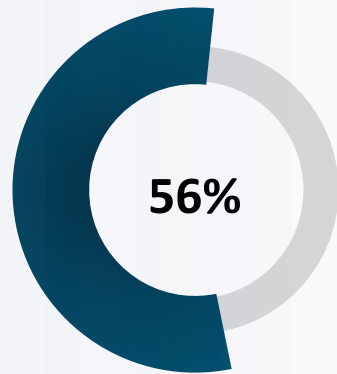


Tunisia benefits from international funding programs through partnerships and global initiatives, helping it stay connected to the global scientific community.

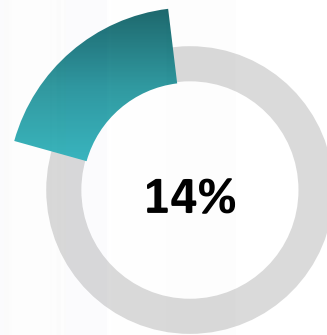


Recent efforts have further strengthened Tunisia's participation in international partnerships, positioning it as an active and credible player in regional and global research ecosystems.

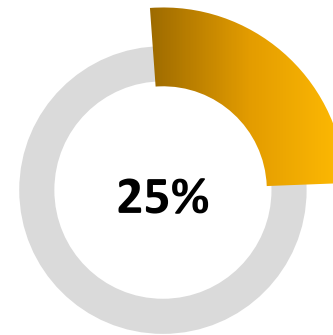
Another key feature of our system is the high level of international collaboration, reflected in the large share of publications co-authored with international partners.



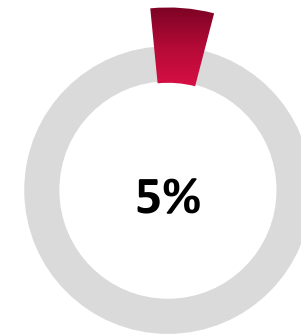
International collaboration



National collaboration



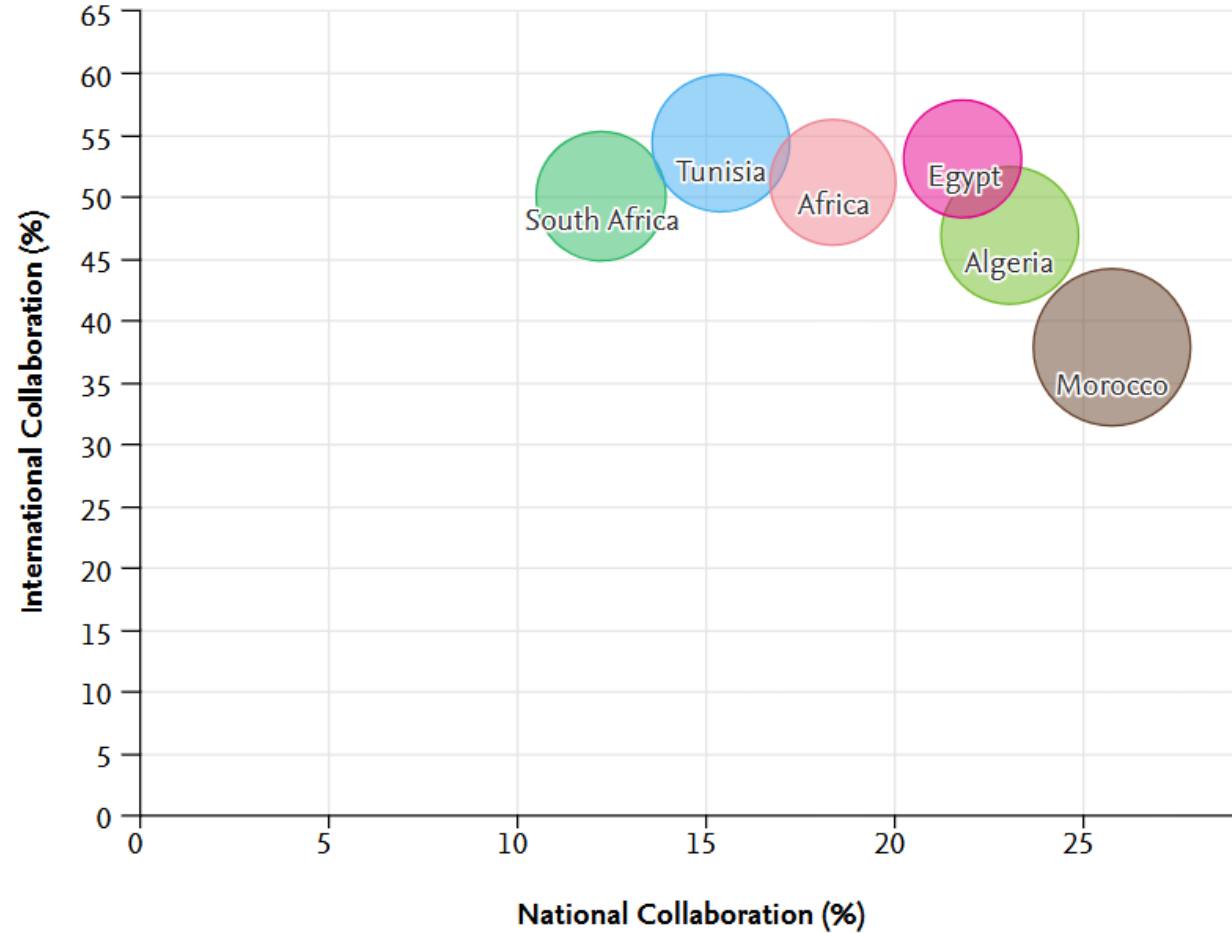
Institutional collaboration



Single authorship

Tunisian researchers are actively engaged in global networks, co-authoring publications with partners across Europe, Africa, and beyond.

**This openness contributes significantly to improving research quality, increasing visibility, and facilitating access to international funding and infrastructure.**

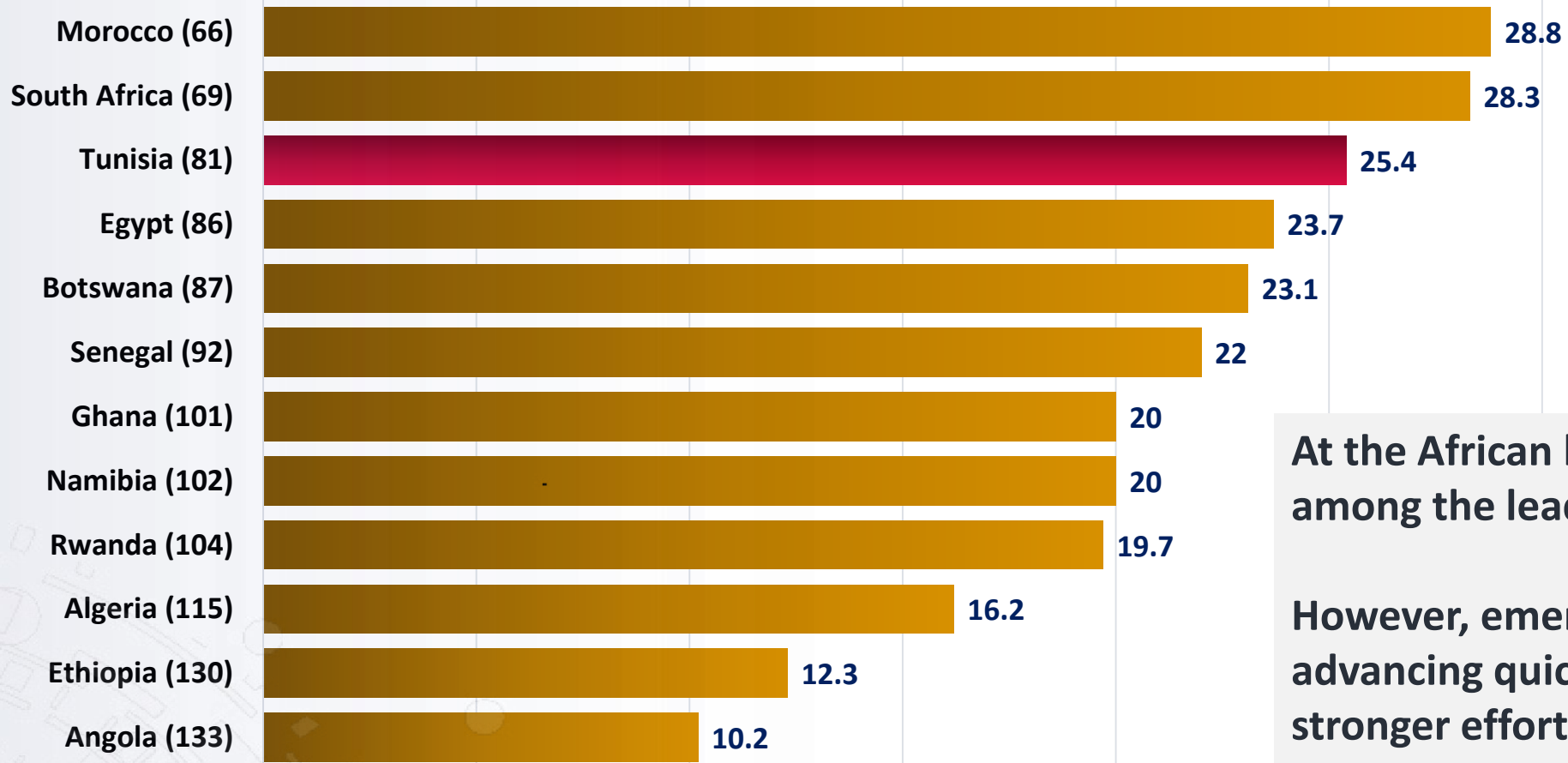


## 2. Current performance of the Tunisian Research System



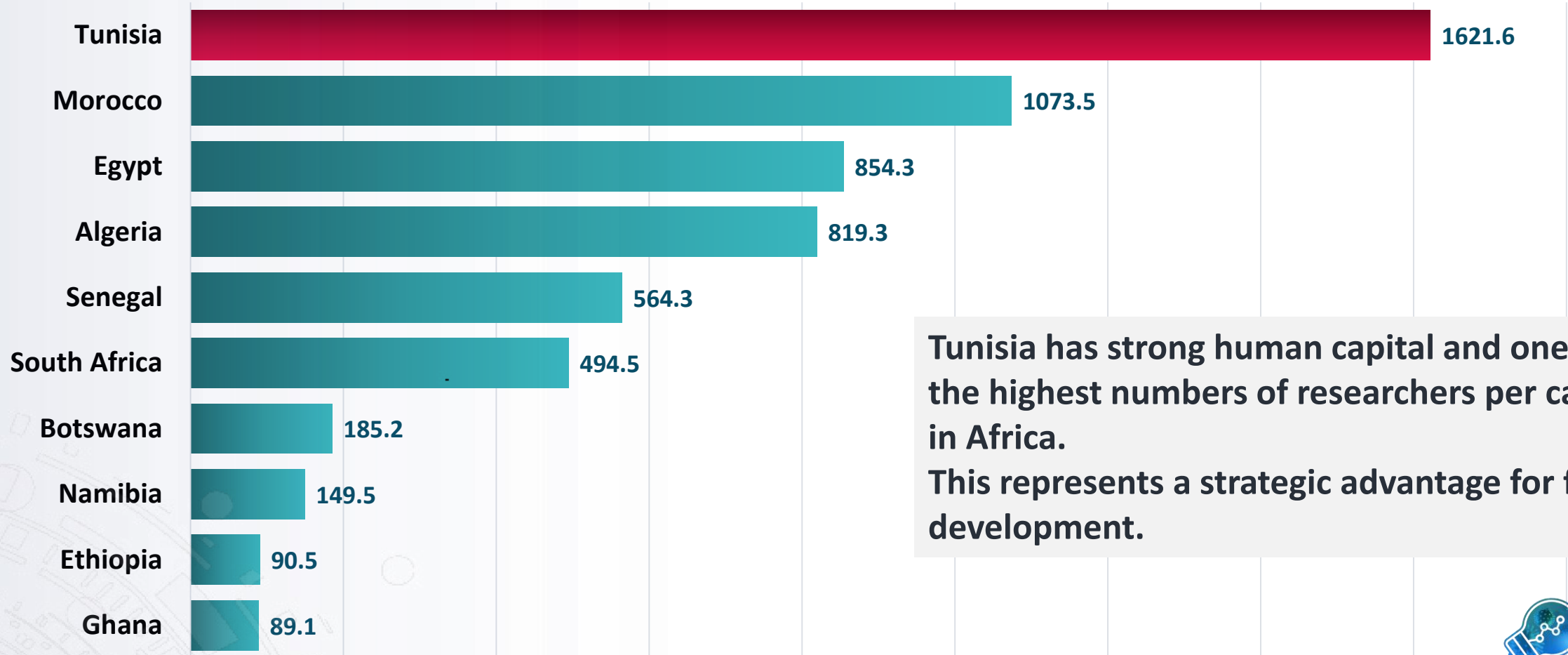
The Global Innovation Index 2024 captures the innovation ecosystem performance of **133 economies** and tracks the most recent global innovation trends.

According to the GII, Tunisia ranks around 81st worldwide. This ranking reflects a solid research base, but also highlights a structural gap between knowledge production and innovation output.

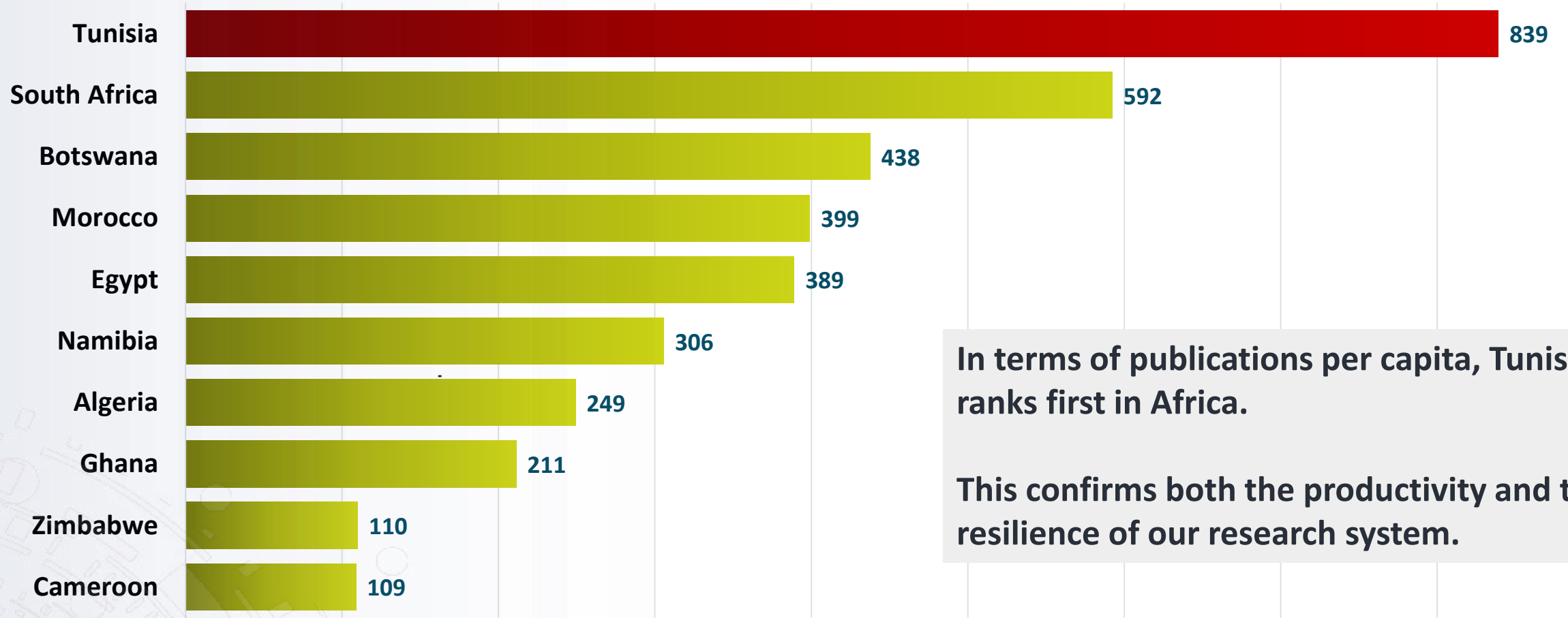


At the African level, Tunisia remains among the leading countries.

However, emerging economies are advancing quickly, which requires stronger efforts to stay competitive.

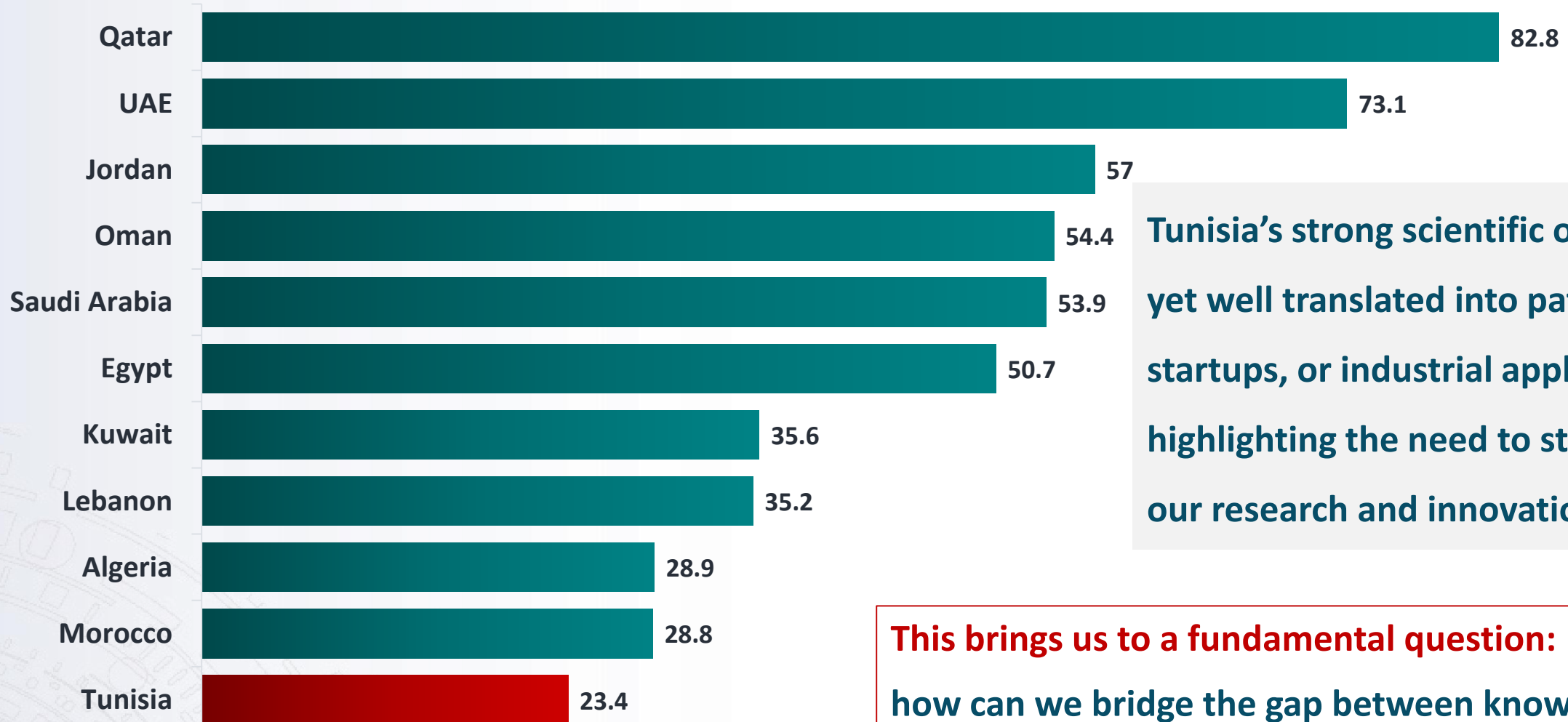


Tunisia has strong human capital and one of the highest numbers of researchers per capita in Africa. This represents a strategic advantage for future development.



In terms of publications per capita, Tunisia ranks first in Africa.

This confirms both the productivity and the resilience of our research system.



Tunisia’s strong scientific output is not yet well translated into patents, startups, or industrial applications, highlighting the need to strengthen our research and innovation system.

**This brings us to a fundamental question:**  
how can we bridge the gap between knowledge production and value creation?

## 3. Research and Innovation Strategy toward 2035

## Sustainable Development

Research and innovation must now be aligned with SDG, ensuring that growth is inclusive, environmentally responsible, and socially beneficial.



- A national R&I strategy helps align research with global and societal needs.
- It treats research funding as an investment, not a cost.
- It helps address environmental challenges.
- It supports the development of future industries and technologies.

A new R&I strategy lies at the heart of Tunisia's ambition to become a regional hub for science, technology, and innovation.

In a constantly evolving world, a clear and forward-looking strategy ensures that Tunisia can:

By setting strategic priorities and guiding investments, the R&I Strategy is not only a roadmap for scientific excellence but also a lever for Tunisia's long-term development and international visibility.

- **Maximize its scientific potential:** By leveraging the excellence of its researchers and institutions to generate knowledge that addresses national challenges.
- **Foster innovation-driven growth:** By transforming research outcomes into solutions, technologies, and startups that strengthen economic development.
- **Strengthen regional leadership:** By positioning Tunisia as a regional center of excellence in emerging scientific and technological fields, attracting partnerships and investment.
- **Support sustainable development:** By aligning research priorities with national social, economic, and environmental development goals.

Despite significant potential and emerging initiatives, Tunisia's R&I ecosystem faces several challenges that need to be addressed to achieve its strategic ambitions:

These challenges, low funding, market disconnect, and limited global reach, must be addressed to unlock Tunisia's potential.

- **Limited Research Funding and Investment:** R&D expenditures remain low and below regional and international benchmarks. The state accounts for about 80% of GERD, while the private sector contributes less than 18%.
- **Weak Linkages Between Research and Industry:** Support structures such as Technology Transfer Offices, innovation spaces, and incubators exist but remain limited in impact due to unclear status and lack of specialized staff.
- **Fragmentation of Research Institutions:** The NRS is characterized by a high institutional density, with many small research structures. This has led to fragmented financial and human resources.
- **Governance and Policy Coordination Gaps:** Innovation and development policies are still emerging and often fragmented.

Our vision for 2035 is to build an integrated, high-performing, and impact-driven ecosystem, capable of transforming research into innovation and innovation into growth.

The Tunisian vision for the future national R&I strategy for 2035 must incorporate several key orientations:

- **Prioritize strategic scientific domains:** The six priorities identified in the 2017 consultation should be updated to address emerging challenges and align with national development objectives.
- **Strengthen the national research ecosystem:** by developing structures capable of ensuring a more effective interface between universities and the socio-economic sector.
- **Promote innovation and technology transfer:** Stimulate innovation and technology transfer in order to transform knowledge into value and concrete solutions.

Through this vision, Tunisia aims to fully use its human capital, strengthen scientific excellence, and become a regional model for innovation-led development.

To achieve this vision, the new strategy will rest on three strategic pillars:  
**flexibility; international visibility, and economic impact,**

## A high-performing, flexible and results-oriented ecosystem

Building Agility for the Future

- Efficient governance and coordination,
- Dynamic funding mechanisms,
- Open and collaborative structures,
- Continuous evaluation and adaptation.

## Visible and competitive scientific research on an international scale

Excellence and International Presence

- High-quality, impactful research,
- Global collaboration,
- Enhanced visibility,
- Attracting partnerships

## Research connected to the economy and creating impact for society

Driving Impact

- Innovation-driven economic growth
- Alignment with national priorities
- Strengthened links between research, industry, and society
- Monitoring and evaluation mechanisms

Together, these three pillars aim to elevate Tunisia's research ecosystem, ensuring that research and innovation become key levers for national prosperity and global competitiveness.

- Tunisia has **the talent, the institutions, the productivity,** and the strategic vision to succeed.
- What we need now is **collective commitment**, from government, universities, research centers, the private sector, and our international partners, to bridge the remaining gaps and fully activate our innovation ecosystem.
- The 2035 Research and Innovation Strategy is not just a document. It is a **national ambition** to make research and innovation true drivers of Tunisia's development.





**Thank you for your attention**