



Home Office

# Country Background Note Egypt

Version 1.0

December 2020

# Preface

## Purpose

This note provides a summary of and links to country of origin information (COI) for use by Home Office decision makers handling particular types of protection and human rights claims. It is not intended to be an exhaustive survey of a particular subject or theme.

It is split into two main sections: (1) general background to the country concerned, including demography and geography; and (2) issues which may be relevant to protection claims. Unlike country policy and information notes, it does **not** contain an assessment of risk, availability of protection or reasonableness of internal relocation.

Decision makers **must**, however, still consider all claims on an individual basis, taking into account each case's specific facts.

## Country of origin information

The country information in this note has been carefully selected in accordance with the general principles of COI research as set out in the [Common EU \[European Union\] Guidelines for Processing Country of Origin Information \(COI\)](#), dated April 2008, and the Austrian Centre for Country of Origin and Asylum Research and Documentation's (ACCORD), [Researching Country Origin Information – Training Manual, 2013](#). Namely, taking into account the COI's relevance, reliability, accuracy, balance, currency, transparency and traceability.

The structure and content of the country information section follows a [terms of reference](#) which sets out the general and specific topics relevant to this note.

All information included in the note was published or made publicly available on or before the 'cut-off' date in the country information section. Any event taking place or report/article published after this date is not included.

All information is publicly accessible or can be made publicly available and is from generally reliable sources. Sources and the information they provide are carefully considered before inclusion.

Factors relevant to the assessment of the reliability of sources and information include:

- the motivation, purpose, knowledge and experience of the source
- how the information was obtained, including specific methodologies used
- the currency and detail of information, and
- whether the COI is consistent with and/or corroborated by other sources.

Multiple sourcing is used to ensure that the information is accurate, balanced and corroborated, so that a comprehensive and up-to-date picture at the time of publication is provided of the issues relevant to this note.

Information is compared and contrasted, whenever possible, to provide a range of views and opinions. The inclusion of a source, however, is not an endorsement of it or any view(s) expressed.

Each piece of information is referenced in a brief footnote; full details of all sources cited and consulted in compiling the note are listed alphabetically in the [bibliography](#).

## Feedback

Our goal is to continuously improve our material. Therefore, if you would like to comment on this note, please email [the Country Policy and Information Team](#).

## Independent Advisory Group on Country Information

The [Independent Advisory Group on Country Information](#) (IAGCI) was set up in March 2009 by the Independent Chief Inspector of Borders and Immigration to support him in reviewing the efficiency, effectiveness and consistency of approach of COI produced by the Home Office.

The IAGCI welcomes feedback on the Home Office's COI material. It is not the function of the IAGCI to endorse any Home Office material, procedures or policy. The IAGCI may be contacted at:

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Information about the IAGCI's work and a list of the documents which have been reviewed by the IAGCI can be found on the Independent Chief Inspector's pages of the [gov.uk website](#).

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# Background information

Section 1 updated: 15 December 2020

## 1. History

- 1.1.1 For a brief history of Egypt, including the recent the past, see the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) World Factbook, Egypt - [Background](#), the [BBC's Egypt Profile](#) and [Britannica Encyclopaedia](#).

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Section 2 updated: 15 December 2020

## 2. Geography and demography

### 2.1 Country snapshot

<b>Full country name</b>	Arab Republic of Egypt <sup>1</sup>
<b>Area</b>	Total: 1,001,450 sq km <sup>2</sup> (approximately 4 times the area of the UK <sup>3</sup> )
<b>Flag</b>	 <sup>4</sup>
<b>Population</b>	Estimates vary between 102.3 million <sup>5</sup> to 104,124,440 (July 2020) <sup>6</sup> Encyclopaedia Britannica stated that: '...The rapidly growing population is young, with roughly one-third of the total under age 15 and about three-fifths under 30...' <sup>7</sup>
<b>Life Expectancy</b>	Encyclopaedia Britannica noted that: '...Life expectancy averages about 72 years for men and 74 years for women.' <sup>8</sup>

<sup>1</sup> BBC, '[Egypt Country Profile](#)', 7 January 2019.

<sup>2</sup> CIA World Factbook, '[Egypt](#)' (Geography), 17 June 2020.

<sup>3</sup> CIA World Factbook, '[United Kingdom](#)' (Geography), 21 July 2020.

<sup>4</sup> CIA World Factbook, '[Egypt](#)', 17 June 2020.

<sup>5</sup> UNPFA, '[Egypt – Overview](#)' (Population), no date

<sup>6</sup> CIA World Factbook, '[Egypt](#)' (People and Society), 17 June 2020.

<sup>7</sup> Encyclopaedia Britannica, '[Egypt](#)' (Demographic trends), no date

<sup>8</sup> Encyclopaedia Britannica, '[Egypt](#)' (Demographic trends), no date

<b>Capital city</b>	Cairo <sup>9</sup>
<b>Other key places</b>	See: <a href="#">Main population centres</a>
<b>Position</b>	The CIA Factbook noted: ‘Northern Africa, bordering the Mediterranean Sea, between Libya and the Gaza Strip and the Red Sea North of Sudan and includes the Asian Sinai Peninsula’ <sup>10</sup>
<b>Languages</b>	Arabic (official) while ‘English and French widely understood by educated classes’ <sup>11</sup>
<b>Ethnic groups</b>	‘Estimated to be: Egyptian’ 99.7 percent, other 0.3 percent <sup>12</sup> Egyptians are a mixture of ‘indigenous African population with those of Arab ancestry’ as well descendants of Persians, Romans, Greeks, Crusaders, Turks, and Circassians invaders and migrants <sup>13</sup>
<b>Religion groups</b>	Approximately 90 percent are Sunni Muslims, 10 percent Christian and a very small number of other faiths and religious groups <sup>14</sup>

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## 2.2 Map

<sup>9</sup> CIA World Factbook, [‘Egypt’](#) (Government), 17 June 2020.

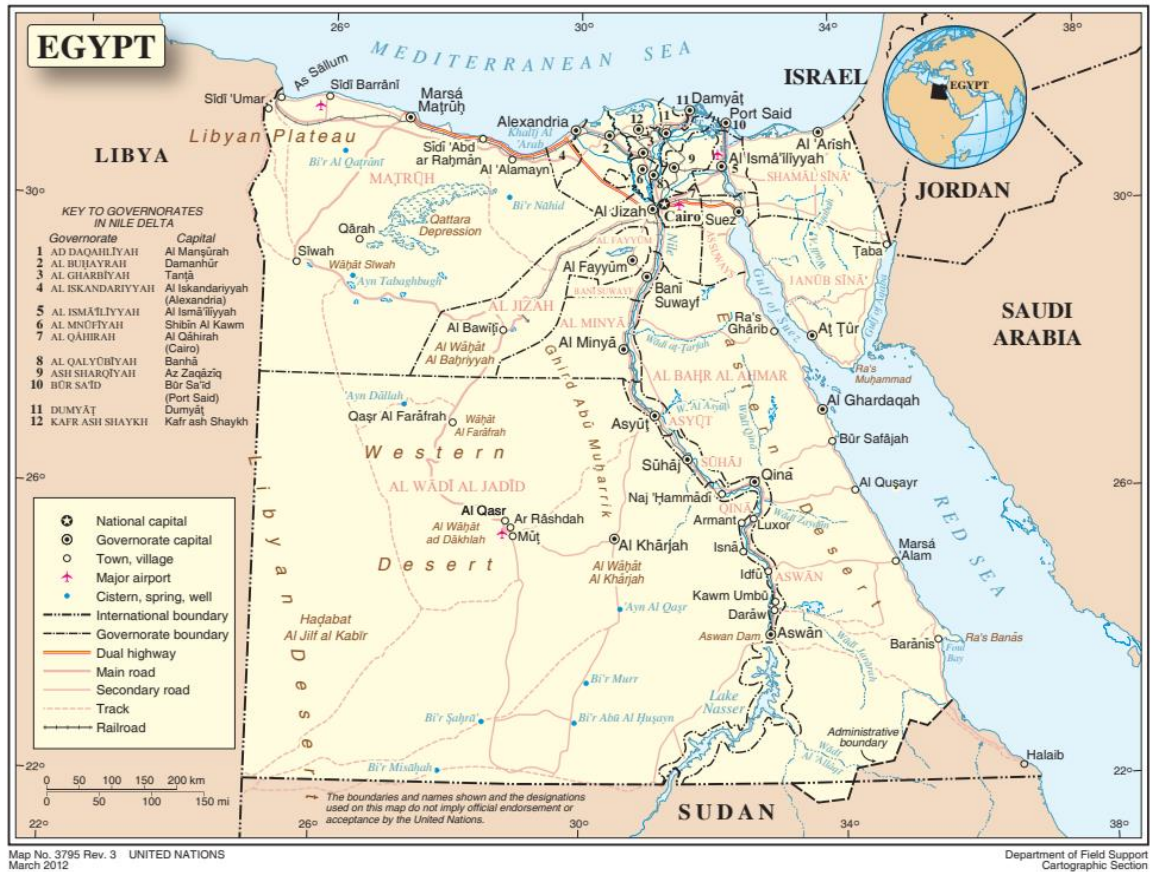
<sup>10</sup> CIA World Factbook, [‘Egypt’](#) (Geography), 17 June 2020.

<sup>11</sup> CIA World Factbook, [‘Egypt’](#) (People and Society), 17 June 2020.

<sup>12</sup> CIA World Factbook, [‘Egypt’](#) (People and Society), 17 June 2020.

<sup>13</sup> EB, ‘Egypt’ (People), updated 17 March 2020

<sup>14</sup> USSD, [‘2019 Report on International Religious Freedom: Egypt’](#) (Section 1), 10 June 2020.



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## 2.3 Administrative divisions

2.3.1 The CIA World Factbook stated that Egypt is divided into:

'27 governorates (Muhafazat, singular - Muhafazat); Ad Daqahliyah, Al Bahr al Ahmar (Red Sea), Al Buhayrah, Al Fayyum, Al Gharbiyah, Al Iskandariyah (Alexandria), Al Isma'iliyah (Ismailia), Al Jizah (Giza), Al Minufiyah, Al Minya, Al Qahirah (Cairo), Al Qalyubiyah, Al Uqsar (Luxor), Al Wadi al Jadid (New Valley), As Suways (Suez), Ash Sharqiyah, Aswan, Asyut, Bani Suwayf, Bur Sa'id (Port Said), Dumyat (Damietta), Janub Sina' (South Sinai), Kafr ash Shaykh, Matruh, Qina, Shamal Sina' (North Sinai), Suhaj.'

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## 2.4 Main population centres

2.4.1 The CIA World Factbook stated that the largest cities are the capital, Cairo, with a population of 20.901 million and Alexandria, with 5.281 million, in 2020.<sup>17</sup> The same source also noted that:

'Approximately 95 percent of the population lives within 20 km of the Nile River and its delta; vast areas of the country remain sparsely populated or

<sup>15</sup> UN Geospatial Information Section, 'General Maps' (Egypt), March 2012

<sup>16</sup> CIA World Factbook, 'Egypt' (Government), 17 June 2020.

<sup>17</sup> CIA World Factbook, 'Egypt' (People and Society), 17 June 2020.



uninhabited. Urban population: 42.8 percent of the total population (2020)... Egypt is the most populous country in the Arab world and the third most populous country in Africa, behind Nigeria and Ethiopia. Most of the country is desert, so about 95 percent of the population is concentrated in a narrow strip of fertile land along the Nile River, which represents only about 5 percent of Egypt's land area. Egypt's rapid population growth – 46 percent between 1994 and 2014 – stresses limited natural resources, jobs, housing, sanitation, education and health care.<sup>18</sup>

- 2.4.2 Encyclopaedia Britannica noted that: 'Most of Egypt's people live along the banks of the Nile River and more than two-fifths of the population lives in urban areas. Along the Nile, the population density is one of the highest in the world, in excess of 5,000 persons per square mile (2,000 per square km) in a number of riverine governorates...'<sup>19</sup>

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## 2.5 Transportation

- 2.5.1 Egypt has extensive road, air and water transport networks, see the [CIA World Factbook – Egypt \(Transportation\)](#) and [Encyclopaedia Britannica – Egypt \(Transportation and telecommunications\)](#) for detail.

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Section 3 updated: 15 December 2020

## 3. Constitution

- 3.1.1 The latest version of the [constitution](#) was approved by a referendum and ratified by the (then) interim president in January 2014<sup>20</sup>. The CIA World Factbook noted that amendments are

'... proposed by the president of the republic or by one fifth of the House of Representatives members; a decision to accept the proposal requires majority vote by House members; passage of amendment requires a two-thirds majority vote by House members and passage by majority vote in a referendum; articles of reelection of the president and principles of freedom are not amendable unless the amendment "brings more guarantees;" amended 2019.'<sup>21</sup>

- 3.1.2 The 2020 Freedom House report, covering events in 2019, noted that: 'The 2019 constitutional amendments added two years to Sisi's current term, extending it through 2024, at which point he would be allowed to seek an additional six-year term.'<sup>22</sup>

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<sup>18</sup> CIA World Factbook, '[Egypt](#)' (Geography and People and Society), 17 June 2020.

<sup>19</sup> Encyclopaedia Britannica, '[Egypt](#)' (Demographic trends), n.d.

<sup>20</sup> CIA World Factbook, '[Egypt](#)' (Government), 21 July 2020

<sup>21</sup> CIA World Factbook, '[Egypt](#)' (Government), 21 July 2020

<sup>22</sup> Freedom House, '[2020 Report](#)' (Section B), 4 March 2020.

## 4. Political system

- 4.1.1 The 2020 Freedom House report, covering events in 2019, noted that: 'President Sisi, who was not freely elected, dominates the policymaking process. The parliament plays a modest role in forming and debating laws, but it does not provide a meaningful check on executive power... Since the 2013 coup, the military has dominated the political system, with most power and patronage flowing from Sisi and his allies in the armed forces and security agencies. Most of Egypt's provincial governors are former military or police commanders...' <sup>23</sup> Bertelsmann Stiftung, in their BTI 2020 Country Report, covering the period February 2017 to January 2019, published on 29 April 2020 noted: 'For many Egyptians, democracy is not a goal in itself. Achieving justice and welfare are priorities, whereas the political system is deemed less important. Moreover, the level of trust in political and administrative institutions is low, given the decades-long experience of authoritarian rule...' <sup>24</sup>
- 4.1.2 In October 2020 President Sisi extended Egypt's state of emergency by three months, the 13<sup>th</sup> time it has been renewed since it was first declared in April 2017. <sup>25</sup>
- 4.1.3 For further information on this and treatment of opposition groups, see the Country Policy and Information Note, [Egypt: Opposition to the state](#).

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## 5. Economy

- 5.1.1 Economic snapshot:

<b>Currency</b>	Egyptian Pound (EGP) <sup>26</sup> , 100 Piastre make 1 EGP <sup>27</sup>
<b>Exchange rate</b>	1 GBP (£) = 20.30 EGP (as of 16 October 2020) <sup>28</sup>
<b>Gross Domestic Product (GDP) per person</b>	US \$2,537.5 (around £1,908 <sup>29</sup> ) in 2020 <sup>30</sup>
<b>GDP growth</b>	5.6% in 2019 but expected to drop to 3.5% in 2020 and projected to drop further to 2.3 in 2021 <sup>31</sup>

<sup>23</sup> Freedom House, '[2020 Report](#)' (Section B), 4 March 2020.

<sup>24</sup> Bertelsmann Stiftung, '[BTI 2020 Country Report Egypt](#)' (page 14), 29 April 2020.

<sup>25</sup> Egypt Independent, '[President Sisi extends Egypt's state of emergency by...](#)', 26 October 2020

<sup>26</sup> UN Data, '[Egypt](#)', no date

<sup>27</sup> xe.com, '[EGP – Egyptian Pound](#)', no date

<sup>28</sup> xe.com, '[EGP – Egyptian Pound](#)', no date

<sup>29</sup> xe.com, '[USD to GBP conversion](#)', conversion on 16 October 2020

<sup>30</sup> UN Data, '[Egypt](#)', no date

<sup>31</sup> World Bank, '[Egypt](#)' (Overview), 1 October 2020

<b>Inflation</b>	5.7% on average in 2020 <sup>32</sup>
<b>Unemployment rate</b>	9.7% (October 2020) <sup>33</sup> However, 'the informal sector makes the employment rate difficult to measure accurately...[unemployment is likely to be] considerably higher.. with under-employment a significant issue' <sup>34</sup>
<b>Labour force by occupation</b>	Agriculture 23.34%, Industry 28.2%, Services 48.6% <sup>35</sup>
<b>Poverty rate</b>	16.1% (living on less than US\$3.20 a day at 2011 prices in 2019) <sup>36</sup>

5.1.2 A Congressional Research Service (CRS) paper of May 2020, citing various sources, observed:

'Prior to the [Covid 19] outbreak, macroeconomic trends had appeared to be moving in a somewhat positive direction, and financial analysts considered Egypt to be one of the most promising emerging market destinations for foreign investment worldwide... As the COVID-19 pandemic spreads throughout Egypt, the International Monetary Fund (IMF) projects that in 2020 Gross Domestic Product (GDP) will grow 2%, a figure well below pre-pandemic forecasts of over 5.5% growth... The pandemic is depressing a number of economic sectors in Egypt, such as tourism, which accounts for 9.5% of employment and 5.5% of GDP... Lower natural gas prices and drops in worker remittances also are expected to depress government revenue and household incomes.'<sup>37</sup>

5.1.3 The World Bank, in their Egypt Overview, 1 October 2020, observed:

'The disruptions caused by the COVID-19 pandemic started in Egypt in March 2020, and has since interrupted a period of macroeconomic stability, characterized by relatively high growth, improved fiscal accounts, and a comfortable level of foreign reserves. The pandemic hit as longstanding challenges continued to persist, notably the government's elevated debt-to-GDP ratio (despite its significant reduction in recent years), sluggish revenue-mobilization, and a budget structure unfavorable to the nature of the crisis, with limited allocation scheduled for key sectors such as health and education, limited job-creation in the formal sector, and the below-potential performance of non-oil merchandise exports and non-oil [foreign direct investment] FDI. Economic activity slowed with social distancing measures and the temporary suspension of air traffic... The number of employed individuals declined by 2.7 million during the same period, pushing unemployment to 9.6% from 7.7% the previous quarter, with job losses,

<sup>32</sup> World Bank, '[Egypt](#)' (Overview), 1 October 2020

<sup>33</sup> World Bank, '[Egypt](#)' (Overview), 1 October 2020

<sup>34</sup> DFAT, '[Country Information Report – Egypt](#)' (Section 2), 17 June 2019

<sup>35</sup> UN Data, '[Egypt](#)', no date

<sup>36</sup> Bertelsmann Stiftung, '[BTI 2020 Country Report Egypt](#)' (page Section 3), 29 April 2020.

<sup>37</sup> CRS, '[Egypt: Background and U.S. Relations](#)' (page 1), 27 May 2020

especially among informal workers, reported mainly in retail and wholesale trade, manufacturing, tourism, transport and construction.

'The government allocated an emergency response package worth LE100 billion (1.7% of GDP) to augment health expenditure, scale-up social protection, and provide financial relief for individuals and businesses. Key measures included a one-off monetary grant to irregular workers and the expansion of existing cash transfer programs. Forbearance measures were introduced in the form of delayed tax filing and loan repayments, in addition to subsidized credit for targeted sectors. The Central Bank of Egypt slashed policy rates by a cumulative 350 basis-points since March 2020 to ease liquidity. Inflation has been declining since end-2019 and has remained rather contained, registering an average of 5.7% in the fiscal year 2020 (from an average 19.6% in the previous three), reflecting subdued demand and the general decline of global commodity prices, including oil.'<sup>38</sup>

- 5.1.4 For information about the welfare system, see the [BTI 2020 Country Report – Egypt](#), the [World Bank – Egypt \(Welfare Regime\)](#). More detailed and updated information about the economy generally, see the [CIA World Factbook – Egypt \(Economy\)](#), the [BTI 2020 Country Report – Egypt](#), the [World Bank – Egypt \(Overview\)](#), and the UN's [Human Development Report - Egypt](#).

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Section 6 updated: 15 December 2020

## 6. Healthcare

### 6.1 General medical facilities

- 6.1.1 The Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office's (FCDO) guidance on living in Egypt for UK citizens updated January 2014 observed:

'The Egyptian health care system is varied and diverse with a wide range of public and private providers.

'The quality of hospital care in Egypt is not always up to NHS standards. Private hospitals usually offer a higher level of medical care than government ones, most have outpatient clinics. Consistently using private clinics and hospitals can be very costly... If you decide to seek care at a public hospital then it is advisable to seek facilities attached to university medical schools. These usually have higher quality equipment and better trained staff. Emergency treatment in government hospitals is generally free. Follow up treatment however, may be charged and can be expensive.

'Expats remain generally healthy in Egypt; minor illnesses however, are common... Remedies are available from local pharmacies which are plentiful and usually well stocked.'<sup>39</sup>

- 6.1.2 According to the 2019 DFAT Report:

'Responsibility for the provision of health is divided. The Ministry of Health funds primary care clinics and the Ministry of Higher Education funds

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<sup>38</sup> World Bank, '[Egypt](#)' (Overview), 1 October 2020

<sup>39</sup> FCDO, '[Living in Egypt](#)' (Health), 15 January 2014

university hospitals. A third strand of public health care is provided by various independent ministries, including defence, transport, aviation, electricity and interior and the Health Insurance Organisation. Many Egyptians lack access to affordable public health care, particularly in rural areas, and the standard of public hospitals is very low. Quality in the private sector is better but limited to those few who can afford it... The government is in the process of introducing a compulsory universal health insurance scheme that will provide basic healthcare coverage to around 30 percent of the population who could not previously afford any. Fees are set based on income level, with the state covering participation by the poorest. The government launched the first stage of the scheme in July 2018.’<sup>40</sup>

6.1.3 The United Nations, in their report dated 21 August 2019, noted that:

‘Between 2015 and 2018 ... 20 new hospitals, medical centres and health units were constructed in 20 governorates, while 38 existing hospitals, medical centres and health units were expanded. A total of 22,334 beds were added to hospitals of the General Authority for Health Insurance and 401,082 patients received treatment. In order to provide care for the needy, 5,586,404 orders were issued for the treatment of 3,136,445 persons at State expense between 2016 and 2018. Measures were put in place to ensure the prompt delivery of medical services to persons receiving such treatment, thanks to which the period between making the application and the issuance of the treatment order has been reduced to 48 hours for urgent cases and 72 hours for other cases. Furthermore, the specialized medical councils are now linked to the 13 medical sub-councils in a video-conferencing network for the examination and confrontation of cases.

‘The Universal Health Insurance Act has been passed, as mandated by the Constitution. The Act, which represents an important part of the strategic plan to develop the health-care system up to 2030, will be applied gradually to all citizens in parallel with gradual improvements in the quality and capacity of health institutions, before the new system begins to be implemented. This will favour the delivery of outstanding health care to needy persons and provide insurance cover for all maladies as well as ensuring sustainability of funding and respect for the freedom of insured persons to choose their health-care provider. The system will be rolled out across the governorates over six phases, the first of which was launched in 2018, covering five governorates at a cost of LE 1.8 billion.’<sup>41</sup>

6.1.4 Allianz Care stated in undated advice aimed at ex patriates living in Egypt that:

‘The Egyptian healthcare system consists of two sectors: public and private. In general, the public healthcare system is of a low standard due to a lack of funding and poor staffing levels... There are significant differences between the availability of health services in the basic institutions in rural areas and those found in a big city like Cairo. Most specialist procedures are carried out in the capital.

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<sup>40</sup> DFAT, ‘[Country Information Report – Egypt](#)’ (paragraphs 2.14 to 2.15), 17 June 2019.

<sup>41</sup> UN, ‘[National Report submitted...](#)’ (paragraphs 40 to 41), 21 August 2019.

Although public healthcare has been subject to the government's attempts at reform, the system is of a poor quality and certainly not on par with anything that a Western expat would be accustomed to. Even though it is provided free of charge to locals..., many Egyptians avoid public hospitals due to factors such as outdated equipment, long queues for treatment, inadequate staff training and poor sanitation levels...

'Private healthcare facilities in Egypt are of a high standard... Pharmacies are widely available throughout Egypt. Larger chains, such as El Ezaby, even operate 24-hour services while the majority of pharmacies also provide home delivery, which can be arranged over the phone. International brands of medications are not always available in Egypt...'<sup>42</sup>

6.1.5 The USSD Country Report for 2019 stated that: 'The government provided services, such as free health care, to all citizens but the quality of services was often poor. Other benefits, such as social insurance, were available only to employees in the formal sector.'<sup>43</sup> The USSD Overseas Security Advisory Council Crime and safety report of April 2020 for US citizens visiting Egypt noted 'Medical care generally falls short of U.S. standards, but there are many Western-trained medical professionals. While medical facilities are adequate for non-emergency matters, particularly in areas tourists visit frequently, emergency and intensive care facilities are limited... Hospital facilities in Luxor, Aswan, and Sharm El-Sheikh are not to U.S. standards, and are inadequate at most other ports of call.'<sup>44</sup>

6.1.6 For further information see the [World Health Organisation and the US Embassy in Cairo's website which provides lists for US citizens in Egypt of healthcare facilities and professionals, and pharmacies.](#)

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**Official – sensitive: Start of section**

Also check [Horizon for COI responses](#) for information on medical treatment and healthcare that may also be relevant.

**Official – sensitive: End of section**

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## 6.2 Mental health care

6.2.1 The World Health Organisation's (WHO) Mental Health Atlas 2017 reported that the country has a standalone plan for mental health, 18 mental health hospitals, 2 psychiatric units attached to general hospitals, and over 7,800 mental health professionals in government and non government sectors including 200 child psychiatrists, a rate of 0.21 per 100,000 of the population<sup>45</sup>.

6.2.2 However, the 2019 DFAT Report observed that: 'The availability of mental health care is limited. Most mental health resources are allocated to a small number of centralised psychiatric hospitals rather than being integrated into

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<sup>42</sup> AllianzCare, '[Healthcare in Egypt](#)', no date

<sup>43</sup> USSD, '[Country Report for 2019](#)' (section 7), 11 March 2020.

<sup>44</sup> USSD OASC, '[Egypt 2020 Crime & Safety Report](#)' (Medical Emergencies), 30 April 2020

<sup>45</sup> WHO, '[Mental Health Atlas 2017](#)' (Egypt), 1 January 2018



primary health care; the number of beds available for psychiatric patients requiring acute inpatient care is insufficient to meet demand and medical schools and health institutions do not devote a significant number of hours given to covering mental health issues.<sup>46</sup> The Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office’s (FCDO) travel advice for UK citizens updated in September 2020 noted ‘[a]ccess to specialised treatment for psychiatric illness is limited and may not be available outside major cities.’<sup>47</sup>

6.2.3 For more information see the Egypt profile on the [WHO World Health Atlas 2017](#).

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## 6.3 Covid-19

6.3.1 The WHO reported that as of 8 October 2020, Egypt had over 104,000 confirmed cases and 6,000 deaths from Covid-19, with an infection rate estimated to be over 1,000 cases per 100,000 people<sup>48</sup>.

6.3.2 For updates on the numbers of cases, see the [WHO website](#), and the State Information Service, Your Gateway to Egypt, [Coronavirus](#) (COVID-19) website.

6.3.3 For information on measures and policies introduced by the government in response to the outbreak, see the International [Monetary Fund’s website](#).

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Section 7 updated: 15 December 2020

## 7. Media and telecommunications

7.1.1 The BBC media profile for Egypt of October 2018 noted: ‘Egypt is a major regional media player. Its press is one of the most influential and widely-read in the region, and its TV and film industry supplies much of the Arab-speaking world with shows from its Media Production City.’<sup>49</sup>

7.1.2 Internet and media snapshot:

<b>International dialling code</b>	+20 <sup>50</sup>
<b>Internet domain</b>	.eg <sup>51</sup>
<b>Broadcast media</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">National Media Authority</a> (NMA) - state-run, operates domestic and satellite networks, including Nile News, Nile TV International and Nile TV thematic channels</li> <li>• <a href="#">Dream TV</a> - private, via satellite</li> <li>• <a href="#">Al-Mihwar</a> - private, via satellite</li> </ul>

<sup>46</sup> DFAT, ([Section 2](#)), 17 June 2019.

<sup>47</sup> FCDO, ‘[Travel Advice](#)’ (Health), updated 19 September 2020

<sup>48</sup> WHO, ‘[Egypt](#)’, updated 8 October 2020

<sup>49</sup> BBC News, ‘[Egypt profile – Media](#)’, 23 October 2018

<sup>50</sup> Countrycode.org, ‘[Egypt Country Code](#)’, no date

<sup>51</sup> CIA World Factbook, ‘[Egypt](#)’ (Communications), updated 21 July 2020

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">Al-Nahar</a> - private, via satellite</li> <li>• <a href="#">ON E</a> - private, via satellite</li> <li>• Al-Hayah - private, via satellite</li> <li>• CBC - private, via satellite</li> </ul>
<b>News agencies</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">Middle East News Agency</a> (MENA) - state-run</li> <li>• <a href="#">Masrawy</a> - news portal</li> <li>• <a href="#">Mada Masr</a> - news, in English</li> <li>• <a href="#">Egyptian Streets</a> - news, in English</li> </ul>
<b>Newspapers</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">Al-Ahram</a> - state-owned daily, the oldest newspaper in the Arab world</li> <li>• <a href="#">Al-Ahram Weekly</a> - in English</li> <li>• <a href="#">Al-Jumhuriyah</a> - state-owned daily</li> <li>• <a href="#">Al-Misri al-Yawm</a> - private daily</li> <li>• <a href="#">Al-Shuruq</a> - private daily</li> <li>• <a href="#">Al-Yawm al-Sabi</a> - private daily</li> <li>• <a href="#">Egypt Independent</a> - in English, sister paper of Al-Misri al-Yawm</li> <li>• <a href="#">Daily News Egypt</a> - private, in English</li> </ul>
<b>Radio</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">National Media Authority</a> (NMA) - state-run, operates national, regional and external services including flagship General Programme</li> <li>• <a href="#">Nile FM</a> - private, Western pop</li> <li>• <a href="#">Nogoum FM</a> - private, Arabic pop <sup>52</sup></li> </ul>

7.1.3 For more information about the media and treatment of media workers, see the [Country Policy and Information Note, Opposition to the state](#).

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Section 8 updated: 15 December 2020

## 8. Citizenship and nationality

8.1.1 Citizenship is legislated for in [Law No. 26 of 1975 Concerning Egyptian Nationality](#), amended in [Law No. 154 of 14 July 2004 amending Law No. 26 of 1975](#) and [Decree No. 12025 of 26 July 2004 concerning certain provisions enforcing Law No. 154](#).

<sup>52</sup> BBC News, '[Egypt profile – Media](#)', 23 October 2018.



- 8.1.2 The USSD Country Report for 2019 noted: ‘Children derive citizenship through their parents. The mother or the father transmits citizenship and nationality.’<sup>53</sup>
- 8.1.3 For more information on dual citizenship, naturalisation and revocation of citizenship, see the nationality law above and the Open Society Foundations report, [Citizenship Law in Africa – A Comparative Study \(search the document for ‘Egypt’\)](#), January 2016.

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Section 9 updated: 15 December 2020

## 9. Corruption

- 9.1.1 Egypt was ranked 106 out of 198 countries in Transparency International’s (TI) corruption perception index 2019<sup>54</sup> based on a range of sources released in 2018 and 2019<sup>55</sup> (a lower ranking indicates a greater level of corruption).
- 9.1.2 The DFAT country information report of June 2019 noted:  
‘Despite [...a] strong official framework, corruption is widespread throughout Egypt. The payment of baksheesh, or tips, in order to receive basic services is part of everyday life. A weak legal framework and a widespread culture of corruption leave businesses reliant on strong connections and the use of intermediaries to operate, and well-connected businesses enjoy privileged treatment. Legislation is enforced unevenly, leading government officials to act with impunity... One official report calculated the cost of corruption in Egypt between 2012 and 2015 as being USD 67.6 billion [52.5 billion GBP].’<sup>56</sup>
- 9.1.3 The USSD report for 2019 noted ‘The law provides criminal penalties for corruption by officials, but the government did not consistently implement the law effectively, and officials sometimes engaged in corrupt practices with impunity.’<sup>57</sup> While Freedom House noted in its report of events in 2019:  
‘Corruption is pervasive at all levels of government. Official mechanisms for investigating and punishing corrupt activity remain weak and ineffective. Under a 2015 amendment to the penal code, defendants in financial corruption cases can avoid imprisonment by paying restitution, and punishments are typically light in practice. The Administrative Control Authority (ACA), the body responsible for most anticorruption initiatives, often pursues politically motivated cases and operates opaquely.’<sup>58</sup>
- 9.1.4 For more information see the Bertelsmann Stiftung, [Transformation Index, BTI 2020 Egypt](#).

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<sup>53</sup> USSD, ‘[Country Report for 2019](#)’ (Section 6), 11 March 2020.

<sup>54</sup> TI, ‘[Corruption Perceptions Index](#)’ (Egypt), no date

<sup>55</sup> TI, ‘[Corruption Perceptions Index](#)’ (Methodology details), no date

<sup>56</sup> DFAT, ‘Country Information Report – Egypt’ ([section 2](#)), 17 June 2019.

<sup>57</sup> USSD, ‘[Country Report for 2019](#)’ (Section 1), 11 March 2020.

<sup>58</sup> Freedom House, ‘[Freedom in the World 2020](#)’ (Egypt), March 2020

## 10. Official documents

### 10.1 Passports

#### 10.1.1 According to the 2019 DFAT Report:

‘Current requirements for adult passport applicants include a valid national identity card and four photographs. Male adults (except those born prior to March 1941) additionally require proof of completion of military service, a military service exemption certificate, an expired passport with a recorded exemption from military service or a permission to travel obtained from the Conscription Department. Children under 12 years of age require a computerised copy of their birth certificate, which includes the child’s national identification number and four photographs. Children between 12 to 16 years of age additionally require an educational enrolment certificate. Children over 16 years of age require all of the above, but with the substitution of a valid national identity card instead of a birth certificate.

‘The Egyptian Passports, Immigration and Nationality Department, which is responsible for issuing passports, has access to a travel warning list and would be able to check the person’s travel ban status. If the person is on the list, they would not be issued a passport.’<sup>59</sup>

#### 10.1.2 The USSD, Egypt – Reciprocity Schedule, no date, stated:

‘The Ministry of Interior prints all passports. The Ministry of Interior issues passports to Egyptians living within Egypt. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs issues passports to Egyptians living abroad. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs issues all diplomatic, official and service passports for Egyptians, regardless of where those Egyptians live...

‘Forms to request Egyptian passports or other travel documents are available free of charge at the Egyptian Immigration Office.

‘In order to obtain a passport, applicants must present a valid national ID card.

- Applicants must present original documents to validate the information contained in the Egyptian passport biographical page, such as documents verifying the applicant’s profession or employment and a marriage certificate if the applicant applies for an Egyptian passport after marriage.
- Children under 16 years old at the time of application must present an original birth certificate.

‘Only the father can obtain a passport for his children.

- In some limited instances, the mother can obtain a passport for her children, if she has the father’s permission or is able to present court orders documenting a divorce.’<sup>60</sup>

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<sup>59</sup> DFAT, ‘[Country Information Report – Egypt](#)’ (paragraphs 5.50 to 5.51), 17 June 2019.

<sup>60</sup> USSD, ‘[Egypt – Reciprocity Schedule](#)’ (Passports), no date

- 10.1.3 The USSD Reciprocity Schedule additionally noted ‘Egypt also issues travel documents for Palestinians. These documents are generally light blue in color. However, this travel document does not guarantee Palestinians may enter or reside in Egypt’<sup>61</sup>.
- 10.1.4 For more information about for Palestinians moving into/out of Egypt from the Gaza strip, see [Country Policy and Information Note, Occupied Palestinian Territories: Background information, including actors of protection, and internal relocation](#).
- 10.1.5 For a copies of Egyptian passports, see the European Council’s [Public Register of Authentic travel and identity Documents Online](#).

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## 10.2 Identity cards

- 10.2.1 The 2019 DFAT Report further noted that:

‘National identity cards, which include the religion of the cardholder, are mandatory for adults in Egypt. Many key transactions are essentially impossible to conclude without them, including renting or buying property or vehicles, applying for passports and opening bank accounts. Some banks require clients to provide national identity cards to access their accounts. It can be difficult finding employment without an identity card. Failure to obtain a national identity card does not usually result in prosecution. According to in-country sources, an estimated 5 million women do not have national identity cards.

‘Egyptians are eligible for national identity cards from 16 years of age. To issue the card, authorities require an original birth certificate and a declaration (in person) from either of the parents that the applicant is their child. The applicant must submit evidence of study (a recent certificate issued and endorsed by a school or university confirming enrolment and the applicant’s photo and identity). A digital photo of the applicant is taken at the time of submitting the application. An electronic record of the identity card and associated documentation is kept at the Civil Registration Authority (CRA) and is verified against and linked to the applicant’s and parents’ birth records.’<sup>62</sup>

- 10.2.2 The same source continued that:

‘The address on the identity card should be the holder’s residence. Out-of-date or incorrect addresses may go undetected, as there are no checks on the residence records by the CRA. It is a requirement that the address is updated when a person relocates, but this requires the holder to actively make the change. There is no penalty for not updating one’s address. Lost cards must be reported to the police, and their replacement is a straightforward process.’<sup>63</sup>

- 10.2.3 See also the Immigration and Refugee Board response, [Egypt: Information on national identity cards, including appearance; requirements and](#)

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<sup>61</sup> USSD, ‘[Egypt – Reciprocity Schedule](#)’ (Passports), no date

<sup>62</sup> DFAT, ‘[Country Information Report – Egypt](#)’ (paragraphs 5.46 to 5.47), 17 June 2019.

<sup>63</sup> DFAT, ‘[Country Information Report – Egypt](#)’ (paragraph 5.48), 17 June 2019.

[procedures to obtain the card, and whether documents required to apply for a card can be obtained by a proxy \(2010-June 2016\), 26 May 2016.](#)

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### 10.3 Birth, marriage, divorce and death certificates

#### 10.3.1 The 2019 DFAT Report stated that:

‘The Central Civil Registration Office (CCRO) holds information in relation to births, deaths and marriages. Persons experiencing or affected by these events would generally report them to local authorities in the first instance through the CCRO’s local and field offices. Local health units may register births and deaths.

‘A birth is reported by an informant, who must produce identification, and an additional witness is also needed. Births have to be registered within 15 days. A birth may be registered by a hospital or local health unit.

‘Christians, Jews and Muslims can register marriages with documentation from a cleric. Marriage registration requires both parties and witnesses to present identification and to pay fees. Divorces may be registered by a court. Both marriages and divorces must be registered within 15 days. Adherents of non-officially recognised religions (that is, non-Muslims, non-Christians and gentiles) may have difficulty having their marriages recognised and recorded. This may also affect some sects or denominations of Christianity who are not recognised by the state, including Jehovah’s witnesses...

‘An informant of a death requires identification and a medical certificate, but health authorities can register a death. The procedure is the same for foetal and neonatal deaths: parents are required to produce identification when reporting the death along with a medical certificate. Deaths must be notified to authorities within 24 hours.

‘Births are required to be registered within 15 days; deaths, including foetal and neo-natal deaths are to be registered within 24 hours after the event occurs; marriages and divorces.’<sup>64</sup>

#### 10.3.2 For information about the process for obtaining various certificates, see the [USSD Egypt – Reciprocity schedule](#).

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### 10.4 Fraudulent and forged documents

#### 10.4.1 According to the 2019 DFAT Report:

‘Identity fraud is uncommon. The penalties for engaging in identity fraud are severe which discourages the practice. Fraudulently obtained genuine documents are also uncommon due to cross checking by various ministries.

‘If a non-Egyptian is found with fraudulent documents by front line official, then a second level investigation will occur. This may result in criminal prosecution and may result in administrative detention for an indefinite period. DFAT assesses that identity fraud does occur and that it is possible to obtain an identity card fraudulently, but these cases are not common

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<sup>64</sup> DFAT, ‘[Country Information Report – Egypt](#)’ (paragraphs 5.41 to 5.45), 17 June 2019

because of the risk of prosecution and heavy penalties. Cases of identity fraud that are referred to or discovered by authorities are investigated and prosecuted.<sup>65</sup>

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<sup>65</sup> DFAT, '[Country Information Report – Egypt](#)' (paragraphs 5.52 to 5.53), 17 June 2019

# Human rights issues relevant to protection claims

Section 11 updated: 15 December 2020

## 11. Human rights - summary

11.1.1 The issues below are not meant to be exhaustive. Rather they are the main topics which may be relevant to protection claims.

11.1.2 The USSD in its human rights report for 2019 noted in its executive summary:

‘Significant human rights issues included: unlawful or arbitrary killings, including extrajudicial killings by the government or its agents and terrorist groups; forced disappearance; torture; arbitrary detention; harsh and life-threatening prison conditions; political prisoners; arbitrary or unlawful interference with privacy; the worst forms of restrictions on free expression, the press, and the internet, including arrests or prosecutions against journalists, censorship, site blocking, and the existence of unenforced criminal libel; substantial interference with the rights of peaceful assembly and freedom of association, such as overly restrictive laws governing civil society organizations; restrictions on political participation; violence involving religious minorities; violence targeting lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and intersex (LGBTI) persons; use of the law to arbitrarily arrest and prosecute LGBTI persons; and forced or compulsory child labor.’<sup>66</sup>

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### Official – sensitive: Start of section

Also check [Horizon](#) for COI Responses that may also be relevant to asylum claims.

### Official – sensitive: End of section

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Section 12 updated: 15 December 2020

## 12. Children

12.1.1 UNICEF in their report, Partnerships for Children 2018-2022, JANUARY 2018, observed that:

‘Egypt has made recent gains in the reduction of child mortality and nearly universal access to education. However, a rapidly growing population and increasing levels of poverty and inequality are exacerbating health, nutrition, education and protection risks for boys, girls and women throughout the country. In 2018, UNICEF and the Government of Egypt, with other partners, are embarking on a new five-year programme to expand opportunities for the poorest children and mitigate the inter-generational transmission of poverty and inequity.’<sup>67</sup>

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<sup>66</sup> USSD, [Human rights report 2019](#) (Executive summary), March 2020

<sup>67</sup> UNICEF, [Partnerships for Children 2018-2022](#) (Foreword), January 2018

- 12.1.2 The USSD human rights report for 2019 noted that ‘Education is compulsory, free, and universal until the ninth grade. The law provides this benefit to stateless persons and refugees. Public schools enrolled Syrian refugees, but they largely excluded refugees of other nationalities.’ The same report stated: ‘The constitution stipulates the government shall protect children from all forms of violence, abuse, mistreatment, and commercial and sexual exploitation. According to a local rights group, authorities recorded hundreds of cases of alleged child abuse each month. The quasi-governmental [National Council for Childhood and Motherhood] NCCM works on child abuse issues, and several civil society organizations assisted runaway and abandoned children.’<sup>68</sup>
- 12.1.3 For more detail information about education, child abuse - including child labour and child marriage - see the [UN Human Development Index - Egypt \(Education\)](#), [USSD human rights report for 2019 \(section 6\)](#), DFAT Country Information Report 2019 (Education), [28 Too Many – Egypt](#), [BTI 2020 Country Report Egypt \(Welfare Reform and Sustainability\)](#), Centre for Economic & Social Rights report, ‘[Egypt: Rights and Regression](#)’, HRW, “[No One Cared He Was A Child](#)”; UNICEF, [A Familiar Face](#), October 2017, and [UNICEF’s country page on Egypt](#), US Department of Labor’s [Child Labour and Forced Labour Reports](#) on Egypt.
- 12.1.4 For further information on FGM, see [Country Policy and Information Note on Egypt: Women](#)

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Section 13 updated: 15 December 2020

### 13. Civil society, including human rights defenders

- 13.1.1 For information about the treatment of members of civil society, including human rights defenders and lawyers representing critics of the government, see [Country Policy and Information Note on Egypt: Opposition to state](#).

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Section 14 updated: 15 December 2020

### 14. Criminal justice system

#### 14.1 Penal code

- 14.1.1 The Constitution of 2014 states in articles 94 and 95 that the ‘rule of law is the basis of governance of the state’ and that ‘[c]rimes and penalties may only be based on the law’<sup>69</sup>.
- 14.1.2 The CIA World Factbook noted Egypt has a ‘mixed legal system based on Napoleonic civil and penal law, Islamic religious law, and vestiges of colonial-era laws...’<sup>70</sup> The Egyptian penal code was promulgated in 1937<sup>71</sup> but has since been amended.

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<sup>68</sup> USSD, ‘[Country Report for 2019](#)’ (Section 6), 11 March 2020

<sup>69</sup> Government of Egypt, ‘[Constitution, 2014](#)’, unofficial translation by Constitute Project, August 2020

<sup>70</sup> CIA, ‘[World Factbook](#)’ (Egypt), updated 14 October 2020

<sup>71</sup> Government of Egypt, ‘[Penal Code, No 58 of 1937](#)’, August 1937, unofficial translation



## 14.2 Security forces

### 14.2.1 The 2019 DFAT Report observed that:

‘Articles 206 and 207 of the Constitution set out the roles and responsibilities of the police force, namely ensuring safety and security to citizens, and preserving public order and morality. The Supreme Police Council, which is composed of senior police officers and the State Council’s Chief Legal Officer, assists the MOI in organising police affairs.

‘Police in Egypt are divided into two main forces: the Egyptian National Police (ENP), and the Central Security Forces (CSF). The ENP is a regular police force with approximately 350,000 personnel. It is responsible for law enforcement and maintaining public order nation-wide. It has a number of specialist agencies, including the General Directorate of Criminal Investigation and the General Administration of Criminal Evidence Verification. All police cadets are trained at the Cairo-based Mubarak Police Academy. The paramilitary CSF, which includes conscripts and whose estimated numbers vary considerably, is responsible for security at key infrastructure sites, diplomatic missions, and public events.’<sup>72</sup>

### 14.2.2 The 2019 DFAT Report continued that:

‘The military comprises an Army, Navy, Air Force and Air Defence Force. Most Egyptians view the military as an institution that offers stability and it enjoys considerable power, prestige, independence, and popular support. The majority of Egyptian males will serve in the military at some stage... The military has long played a prominent role in Egyptian political and economic life. It held interim power in Egypt from February 2011 (Mubarak’s resignation) until June 2012 (Morsi’s election), removed Morsi from power in July 2013, and again held interim power until Sisi’s election in May 2014.

‘Law 136/2014 allows the military to assist police in the protection of vital public facilities, including roads, bridges, railroads, power stations and universities, and provides military personnel with arrest authority during periods of significant turmoil. Any crimes committed against these facilities fall within the jurisdiction of the military judiciary... The Parliament voted unanimously in August 2016 to extend the application of the law for a five-year period commencing 28 October 2016.’<sup>73</sup>

### 14.2.3 The USSD Country Report for 2019 stated that:

‘The Interior Ministry supervises law enforcement and internal security, including the Public Police, the Central Security Force (CSF), the National Security Sector (NSS) and Customs and Immigration. The Public Police are responsible for law enforcement nationwide. The CSF protects infrastructure and is responsible for crowd control. The NSS is responsible for internal security threats and counterterrorism along with other Egyptian security services. The armed forces report to the minister of defence and are responsible for external defence, but they also have a mandate to “assist” police in protecting vital infrastructure during a state of emergency. Military personnel were granted full arrest authority in 2011 but normally only use

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<sup>72</sup> DFAT, ‘[Country Information Report – Egypt](#)’ (parageaphs 5.5 to 5.6), 17 June 2019.

<sup>73</sup> DFAT, ‘[Country Information Report – Egypt](#)’ (parageaphs 5.2 to 5.3) , 17 June 2019.



this authority during states of emergency and “periods of significant turmoil.” Defence forces operate in the Sinai as part of a broader national counterterrorism operation with general detention authority. The Border Guard Forces, under the Ministry of Defence, are responsible for border control. Civilian authorities maintained effective control over the security forces.<sup>74</sup>

14.2.4 According to the 2020 Global Fire Power Index, Egypt’s military strength was ranked 9th in the world out of 138 countries.<sup>75</sup> The same source estimated the total military strength to be 920,000 with 440,000 active personnel and 480,000 reserves.<sup>76</sup>

14.2.5 See also the [Country Policy and Information Note on Egypt: Military service](#).

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### 14.3 Police effectiveness

14.3.1 The 2019 DFAT report stated that:

‘Professionalism varies across the police. The effectiveness of the police in general is limited by a shortage of equipment, a lack of training, low pay and poor investigative skills, particularly in relation to investigating cases of sexual assault. In May 2015, the Ministry of Interior commenced a new policing strategy aimed at improving responses to violence against women, including through human rights training and the deployment of more female physicians to hospitals. Human rights groups report, however, that many women will not report crimes due to a lack of trust in the police.

‘The police do not enjoy the same high public esteem as the Egyptian military. The police’s ability to deal with evidence is widely mistrusted, particularly in relation to politically sensitive cases...’<sup>77</sup>

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### 14.4 Security forces: human rights violations

14.4.1 The 2019 DFAT report stated that:

‘... Police mistreatment and impunity was a particular focus of protesters in the January 2011 revolution. Calls for investigations into incidents of police brutality remain common. The Ministry of Interior announced in February 2017 the formation of committees to evaluate police officers on ethics, behaviour and psychological condition; while in March 2017 it signed a joint protocol with the NCHR [National Council for Human Rights] to train 300 police officers on human rights.’<sup>78</sup>

14.4.2 The USSD Country Report for 2019:

‘There were numerous reports the government or its agents committed arbitrary or unlawful killings, including incidents that occurred while making arrests or holding persons in custody or during disputes with civilians. There

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<sup>74</sup> USSD, ‘[Country Report for 2019](#)’ (Executive Summary), 11 March 2020

<sup>75</sup> Global Fire Power, ‘[Egypt Military Strength \(2020\)](#)’, no date

<sup>76</sup> Global Fire Power, ‘[Egypt Military Strength \(2020\)](#)’ (Manpower), no date

<sup>77</sup> DFAT, [Country Information Report – Egypt](#) (paragraph 5.7), 17 June 2019.

<sup>78</sup> DFAT, [Country Information Report – Egypt](#) (paragraphs 5.8), 17 June 2019

were also reports of civilians killed during military operations in Sinai. Impunity was a problem.

‘There were instances of persons tortured to death and other allegations of killings in prisons and detention centers... There were reports of suspects killed in unclear circumstances during or after arrest... There were several reports of groups of suspected terrorists and other suspected criminals killed during security raids conducted by security forces... International and local human rights groups reported continuing large numbers of enforced disappearances, alleging authorities increasingly relied on this tactic to intimidate critics... Authorities also detained individuals without producing arrest or search warrants... Authorities held detainees incommunicado and denied their requests to contact family members and lawyers... There were reports military authorities continued to hold civilians in secret at al-Azouly Prison inside al-Galaa Military Camp in Ismailia. Authorities did not charge the detainees with crimes or refer them to prosecutors or courts. They also denied detainees access to their lawyers and families.’<sup>79</sup>

#### 14.4.3 The USSD report also noted

‘Local rights organizations reported hundreds of incidents of torture throughout the year, including deaths that resulted from torture... According to domestic and international human rights organizations, police and prison guards resorted to torture to extract information from detainees, including minors. Reported techniques included beatings with fists, whips, rifle butts, and other objects; prolonged suspension by the limbs from a ceiling or door; electric shocks; sexual assault; and attacks by dogs...’<sup>80</sup>

#### 14.4.4 The 2020 Freedom House Report noted that: ‘Police brutality and impunity for abuses by security forces were catalysts for the 2011 uprising against Mubarak, but no reforms have since been enacted A 2015 antiterrorism law provided a vague definition for terrorism and granted law enforcement personnel sweeping powers and immunity. Reports of torture, alleged extrajudicial killings, and forced disappearances continued through 2019, with NGOs documenting numerous cases.’<sup>81</sup>

#### 14.4.5 See also [Corruption](#) for prevalence of corruption within government generally.

#### 14.4.6 For more information about abuses by the security forces see Amnesty International reports, ‘[Permanent State of Exception: Abuses by the Supreme State Security Prosecution](#)’, 27 November 2019, and ‘[Human Rights in the Middle East and North Africa](#)’ (Egypt); Bertelsmann Stiftung Transformation Index, ‘[BTI 2020: Egypt](#)’, April 2020; the DFAT Country Information Report – Egypt’, June 2019; Human Rights Watch’s ‘[World Report 2020](#)’ (Egypt), January 2020, ‘[Egypt: Security Forces Disappear, Torture Children](#)’, March 2020 and ‘[“No One Cared He Was A Child” Egyptian Security Forces’ Abuse of Children in Detention](#)’, 23 March 2020;

#### 14.4.7 For information about state treatment of critics of the government, see [Country Policy and Information Note on Egypt: Opposition to state](#) and

<sup>79</sup> USSD, ‘[Country Report for 2019](#)’ (section 1a), 11 March 2020

<sup>80</sup> USSD, ‘[Country Report for 2019](#)’ (section 1c), 11 March 2020

<sup>81</sup> Freedom House, ‘[2020 Report](#)’ (Section F), 4 March 2020

information about state treatment and assistance to women, see [Country Policy and Information Note on Egypt: Women](#).

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#### 14.5 Security forces: accountability and impunity

14.5.1 Bertelsmann Stiftung Transformation Index Egypt report of April 2020, stated that ‘...Article 204 of the 2014 constitution states that only military courts have the authority to prosecute military and intelligence service personnel, and new legislation from July 2018 effectively grants senior officers immunity for crimes they may have committed in the aftermath of the 2013 coup.’<sup>82</sup>

14.5.2 DFAT noted in its June 2019 report:

‘There have been cases of police officers being successfully prosecuted for sexually assaulting or fatally beating detainees. In October 2017, the Court of Cassation confirmed prison sentences for six officers found guilty of beating a detainee to death in a Luxor police station. Human rights observers report, however, that impunity for the police (and other security forces) remains a significant ongoing issue. Authorities do not investigate all complaints of police abuse and many prosecutions have resulted in acquittals due to insufficient or contradictory evidence.’<sup>83</sup>

14.5.3 The USSD Country Report for 2019 stated:

‘The government inconsistently punished or prosecuted officials who committed abuses, whether in the security services or elsewhere in government. In most cases the government did not comprehensively investigate allegations of human rights abuses, including most incidents of violence by security forces, contributing to an environment of impunity...

‘There were instances of persons tortured to death and other allegations of killings in prisons and detention centres. The government charged, prosecuted and convicted perpetrators in some cases. A local human rights NGO reported 302 unlawful killings by the government from January through June [2019]... At year’s end the government had not held accountable any individual or governmental body for state violence in 2013, including the deaths of hundreds of civilians during the dispersals of the sit-ins at Rabaa al-Adawiya Square in Cairo and Nahda Square in Giza.’<sup>84</sup>

14.5.4 However the USSD report did not that ‘On 24 April [2019], press reported that a Cairo Criminal Court sentenced six police officers to one to eight years in jail in connection with the June 2018 death of Ahmed Zalat due to physical abuse in custody at a police station in Hadayek al-Qobba District, East Cairo. An appeal was pending.’<sup>85</sup>

14.5.5 For more information see Human Rights Watch reports, ‘[Egypt: Constitutional Amendments Entrench Repression](#)’, 20 April 2019 ‘[World Report 2020](#)’ (Egypt), January 2020, ‘Egypt: Security Forces Disappear,

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<sup>82</sup> Bertelsmann Stiftung, ‘[BTI 2020 Country Report Egypt](#)’ (section 3), 29 April 2020.

<sup>83</sup> DFAT, [Country Information Report – Egypt](#) (paragraphs 5.9), 17 June 2019

<sup>84</sup> USSD, ‘[Country Report for 2019](#)’ (Executive summary and section 1a), 11 March 2020.

<sup>85</sup> USSD, ‘[Country Report for 2019](#)’ (section 1c), 11 March 2020.

Torture Children', March 2020 and "[No One Cared He Was A Child](#)" [Egyptian Security Forces' Abuse of Children in Detention](#)', 23 March 2020.

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## 14.6 Judiciary: structure

### 14.6.1 The USSD Country Report for 2019 noted:

'Military courts are not open to the public. Defendants in military courts nominally enjoyed the same fair trial assurances but the military judiciary has wide discretion to curtail these rights in the name of public security. Military courts often tried defendants in a matter of hours, frequently in groups, and sometimes without access to an attorney, leading lawyers and NGOs to assert they did not meet basic standards of due process. Consequently, the quick rulings by military courts sometimes prevented defendants from exercising their rights. Defendants in military courts have the right to consult an attorney but sometimes authorities denied them timely access to counsel. According to rights groups, authorities permitted defendants in military trials visits from their attorneys only once every six months, in contrast with the civilian court system, where authorities allowed defendants in detention attorney visits every 15 days.'<sup>86</sup>

### 14.6.2 Bertelsmann Stiftung Transformation Index Egypt report of April 2020, stated that:

'...The judiciary system contains three major strands. The common court system deals with basic civil and criminal matters. It is spearheaded by the Court of Cassation, which is the final opportunity for an appeal and in addition, rules over the validity of membership in Parliament. The State Council, again, has sole competence to settle administrative disputes, with the Supreme Administrative Court being the highest instance. Finally, the Supreme Constitutional Court has exclusive competence to rule on the constitutionality of laws and to interpret legislative texts. While all citizens are granted the right to appeal decisions handed down by civil courts, this is not applicable to military courts, which have jurisdiction over all crimes committed by military personnel and over civilians who have attacked the military or public facilities.'<sup>87</sup>

### 14.6.3 According to AI, in their report, 'Human Rights in the Middle East and North Africa...', 18 February 2020: 'In April [2019], constitutional amendments expanded the role of military courts in prosecuting civilians...'<sup>88</sup>

### 14.6.4 For more information about the judicial system see International Commission of Jurists, '[Egyptian Judiciary: A Tool of Repression, September 2016](#)' (Overview of the courts) and the DFAT '[Country Information Report – Egypt](#)' (paragraphs 5.10 to 5.21), June 2019.

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<sup>86</sup> USSD, '[Country Report for 2019](#)' (section 1), 11 March 2020.

<sup>87</sup> Bertelsmann Stiftung, '[BTI 2020 Country Report Egypt](#)' (section 3), 29 April 2020.

<sup>88</sup> AI, '[Human Rights in the Middle East and North Africa...](#)' (page 20), 18 February 2020.

## 14.7 Judiciary: fair trial and independence

- 14.7.1 The USSD Country Report for 2019 noted that: ‘The Constitution provides for an independent judiciary, and the government generally respected judicial independence and impartiality. Individual courts sometimes appeared to lack impartiality and to arrive at outcomes that were politically motivated or without individual findings of guilt...’<sup>89</sup>
- 14.7.2 Bertelsmann Stiftung stated that ‘Traditionally, the judiciary is acknowledged as a respected institution and has long enjoyed a degree of independence, with the 2014 Constitution entailing further improvements. By and large, all judicial bodies administer their own affairs and have an independent budget.’<sup>90</sup>
- 14.7.3 The Freedom House report covering events in 2019 noted:  
‘...The 2019 constitutional amendments further strengthened the President’s supervisory powers over the judiciary and undermined its independence. The changes allow the President to appoint the heads of judicial bodies and authorities, choosing from among several candidates nominated by their governing councils. The President will also serve as the veto-wielding head of the Supreme Council for Judicial Bodies and Authorities, which controls appointments and disciplinary matters for the judiciary. The Chief Justice of the Supreme Constitutional Court will be chosen by the President from among its most senior members.’<sup>91</sup>
- 14.7.4 For more information about the judiciary, including its effectiveness and availability of legal aid, see Amnesty International, ‘[Human Rights in the Middle East and North Africa...](#)’ the DFAT ‘[Country Information Report – Egypt](#)’ (paragraphs 5.10 to 5.28), June 2019, Equal Rights Trust, ‘[A Past still Present](#)’ (Legal Aid System), December 2018. Human Rights Watch, ‘[Egypt: Constitutional Amendments Entrench Repression](#)’, 20 April 2019; and [World Report 2020](#)’ (Egypt); International Commission of Jurists, ‘[Egyptian Judiciary: A Tool of Repression, September 2016](#)’; UN General Assembly, ‘[National report submitted in accordance with paragraph 5 of the annex to Human Rights Council resolution 16/21\\*](#)’, 21 August 2019 Egypt, USSD, ‘[Investment Climate Statements for 2019 – Egypt](#)’ (Section 3) and [the human rights report for 2019](#) (section 1e).
- 14.7.5 For further information on Military Courts, see [Country Policy and Information Note on Egypt: Military service](#).

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## 14.8 Death penalty

- 14.8.1 The DFAT ‘Country Information Report – Egypt’, June 2019, noted  
‘Under the Criminal and Military Codes, 104 offences are punishable by execution, including a number of offences not resulting in death. Executions are carried out by hanging, although military personnel can be executed by

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<sup>89</sup> USSD, ‘[Country Report for 2019](#)’ (Section 1e), 11 March 2020.

<sup>90</sup> Bertelsmann Stiftung, ‘[BTI 2020 Country Report Egypt](#)’ (Section 3), 29 April 2020.

<sup>91</sup> Freedom House, ‘[2020 Report](#)’ (Section F), 4 March 2020.



firing squad. All death sentences are referred to the Grand Mufti, who issues non-binding legal opinions based on sharia. Appeals against death sentences are referred to the Court of Cassation, except in the case of military trials that preclude the possibility of appeal.<sup>92</sup>

- 14.8.2 The Freedom House report covering events in 2019 noted that: ‘...Use of the death penalty has increased dramatically since Sisi took power, despite serious concerns about due process violations and politicized prosecutions.’<sup>93</sup> Amnesty International in April 2020 reported that Egypt had executed at least 32 people and sentenced at least 435 people in 2019<sup>94</sup>.
- 14.8.3 Human Rights Watch reported in October 2020 that 49 people were executed in ten days<sup>95</sup>.

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## 14.9 Prison conditions

- 14.9.1 Amnesty International (AI), in their review of events in 2019 noted: ‘Torture remained rife in formal and informal places of detention...Overcrowded and unhygienic cells, lack of ventilation, prolonged solitary confinement and denial of family visits contributed to inhumane conditions of detention across the country.’<sup>96</sup> While the USSD human rights report for 2019 observed: ‘Conditions in prisons and detention centers were harsh and potentially life threatening due to overcrowding, physical abuse, inadequate medical care, poor infrastructure, and poor ventilation...The large number of arrests and the use of pretrial detention during the year exacerbated harsh conditions and overcrowding, contributing to a significant number of deaths in prisons and detention centers.’<sup>97</sup>
- 14.9.2 Freedom House in its report of events in 2019 similarly noted: ‘Prison conditions are very poor; inmates are subject to physical abuse, overcrowding, a lack of sanitation, and denial of medical care.’<sup>98</sup>
- 14.9.3 For further information on prison conditions, see: US Department of State Country Report on Human Rights Practices, Section 1, [Prison and Detention Centre Conditions](#) HRW, Egypt: Apparent [Covid-19 Outbreaks in Prisons and World Prison Brief, Egypt](#). And Country Policy and Information Note, Opposition to State, Section 4.4, [Conditions in Detention](#).

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Section 2 updated: 15 December 2020

## 15. Freedom of movement

### 15.1 Internal and external travel

- 15.1.1 The 2019 DFAT Report noted:

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<sup>92</sup> DFAT, ‘[Country Information Report – Egypt](#)’ (paragraph 4.8), 17 June 2019

<sup>93</sup> Freedom House, ‘[2020 Report](#)’ (section F), 4 March 2020.

<sup>94</sup> Amnesty International, ‘[Death sentences and executions 2019](#)’ (page 34), 21 April 2020

<sup>95</sup> HRW, ‘[Egypt: 49 Executions In 10 Days](#)’, 22 October 2020

<sup>96</sup> AI, ‘[Human Rights in the Middle East...](#)’, 18 February 2020.

<sup>97</sup> USSD, [Country Report for 2019](#) (section 2), 11 March 2020.

<sup>98</sup> Freedom House, ‘[Freedom in the World 2020](#)’ (Egypt), 4 March 2020

‘Article 62 of the Constitution guarantees freedom of movement, residence and emigration. There is no legal impediment to internal movement within Egypt, and Egyptians can and do relocate for a variety of reasons. Major cities, such as Cairo and Alexandria, offer Egyptians greater opportunities for employment. Some Egyptians from the poorer parts of Upper Egypt have moved to the north coast of the country in search for better jobs and living conditions. Urban middle-class Egyptian women will likely have a greater ability to find work and shelter and will likely have better access to support networks, than Egyptian women from poor and more conservative areas.’<sup>99</sup>

#### 15.1.2 The USSD Country Report for 2019 reported:

‘The law provides for freedom of internal movement, foreign travel... and repatriation, and the government generally respected these rights, albeit with some exceptions, including the handling of potential refugees and asylum seekers. The government co-operated with the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and other humanitarian organisations in providing protection and assistance to refugees, asylum seekers, stateless persons, and other persons of concern. Authorities maintained a “no-fly” list that prevented some defendants in court cases from fleeing the country.

‘Authorities required citizens between ages 18 and 40 to obtain permission from the Interior Ministry to travel to 16 countries: Georgia, Guinea, Indonesia, Iraq, Jordan, Lebanon, Libya, Malaysia, Qatar, South Africa, South Korea, Sudan, Syria, Thailand, Turkey and Yemen. Enforcement of these regulations was sporadic. The government stated it intended these regulations to make it more difficult for citizens to join terrorist groups and to stop flight of criminals. These regulations also affected the ability of other individuals to travel outside the country.’<sup>100</sup>

#### 15.1.3 According to the USSD Country Report for 2019:

‘Citizens and foreigners may not travel freely in areas of the country designated as military zones. The government sought to prevent private individuals, journalists, civil society figures and international organisations from entering North Sinai, stating it was to protect their safety, although it began organising some supervised visits for journalists to North Sinai in July [2019]...

‘The government-imposed travel bans on human rights defenders and political activists under investigation or formally charged. Local human rights groups maintained that authorities used travel bans to intimidate and silence human rights defenders, including individuals connected with NGOs facing investigation as part of the reopened NGO foreign-funding case. A September 2018 court ruling stated a travel ban “does not require the investigation of certain facts and their certainty,” but there must be “serious evidence that there are reasons for it and that the decision to prevent travel is due to security reasons and the interests of the state.”’<sup>101</sup>

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<sup>99</sup> DFAT, ‘[Country Information Report – Egypt](#)’ (paragraph 5.32), 17 June 2019

<sup>100</sup> USSD, ‘[Country Report for 2019](#)’ (Section 2), 11 March 2020.

<sup>101</sup> USSD, ‘[Country Report for 2019](#)’ (Section 2), 11 March 2020.

- 15.1.4 The 2020 Freedom House report, covering events in 2019, observed that: 'The Constitution guarantees freedom of movement, but internal travel and access are restricted tightly in North Sinai and to a lesser extent in other governorates along Egypt's borders. Sinai residents are subject to curfews, checkpoints, and other obstacles to travel.'<sup>102</sup>

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## 15.2 Exit and entry procedures

### 15.2.1 According to the 2019 DFAT Report:

'The Passport Control Department of the Interior Ministry is responsible for conducting exit checks, which are strictly enforced. When leaving Egypt, Egyptians must present a valid passport and a valid visa for their destination country, if required. Egyptian males are required to show evidence of their military service status (including proof of exemption, if relevant). Such proof could be an exemption certificate; an expired passport noting exemption from military service; or a permission to travel issued by the Conscription Department.

'Egypt keeps records of entries and exits from the country, and security services have the capacity to find out if an individual is in Egypt or abroad. Egyptian law prevents persons from leaving the country if they have criminal charges against their names. These names are recorded on a 'warning list', amended by judges and the Prosecutor-General, against which all travellers are checked prior to departing from the country. Credible human rights organisations have reported that the Interior Ministry and the Egyptian General Intelligence Service can amend this 'warning list' to include persons of interest to the security apparatus, including for political reasons...'<sup>103</sup>

### 15.2.2 The same source noted that:

'Not all people with charges against their names (or trials or appeals pending) are automatically put on the warning list and it is up to the Prosecutor-General to add their names. It is possible for names to be taken off the list, even if trials are pending. Should a person's lawyer request a name be taken off the list, it is the responsibility of the Prosecutor-General to show why the name should remain on it. There have been numerous cases where a person facing trial has had his or her name removed from the list, and subsequently travelled abroad without incident.

'Children travelling with only their mothers must present proof of their father's approval to leave the country. This can take the form of: in-person approval by the father, written approval from the father presented by a paternal uncle or grandfather, written approval from the father signed and stamped by the Notary Office or written approval from the father stamped by an embassy or consulate.'<sup>104</sup>

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<sup>102</sup> Freedom House, '[2020 Report](#)' (Section G), 4 March 2020.

<sup>103</sup> DFAT, '[Country Information Report – Egypt](#)' (paragraphs 5.33 to 5.34), 17 June 2019

<sup>104</sup> DFAT, '[Country Information Report – Egypt](#)' (paragraphs 5.35 to 5.36), 17 June 2019



- 15.2.3 For more information on exit and entry procedures, see Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada, Egypt: [Exit and entry procedures at airports and land borders](#) (2017-September 2019).

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## 15.3 Returnees

- 15.3.1 The 2019 DFAT Report noted:

‘The International Organization for Migration (IOM) runs a program in Egypt that assists voluntary returnees, in co-operation with the country from which they are returning. Egyptian authorities co-operate with the IOM in these arrangements. DFAT assesses that people who return to Egypt after several years’ absence will not face any adverse attention on their return due to their absence. Likewise, DFAT assesses that failed asylum seekers will not face adverse attention because of their failed application for asylum when they return to Egypt.

‘Egypt accepts involuntary returnees. Egyptian officials generally pay little regard to failed asylum seekers upon their return to the country, although it is possible that some individuals will be questioned upon entry or will have their entry delayed. Many thousands of Egyptians enter and leave the country every day. Egyptians who out-stay their work or tourist visas in other countries are regularly returned to Egypt with no attention paid to them by authorities. DFAT is not aware of failed asylum seekers being reported by airport authorities to the Ministry of Interior or any of the security services beyond the normal processes for returning Egyptian nationals.

‘DFAT assesses that Egyptian embassies or other officials usually take note of political activities conducted by Egyptians abroad. However, only particularly high-profile cases (i.e. those that gain media notoriety in Egypt) are generally of interest to Egyptian authorities. Lower profile political activists may be questioned on return to Egypt but are unlikely to be detained or otherwise mistreated.’<sup>105</sup>

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Section 16 updated: 15 December 2020

## 16. Media workers and bloggers

- 16.1.1 For information about the treatment of critics of the state, including people affiliated with political parties and groups, see [Country Policy and Information Note, Opposition to state](#).

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Section 17 updated: 15 December 2020

## 17. Political opposition

- 17.1.1 For information about the treatment of critics of the state, including people affiliated with political parties and groups, see [Country Policy and Information Note on Egypt: Opposition to state](#).

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<sup>105</sup> DFAT, ‘[Country Information Report – Egypt](#)’ (paragraphs 5.38 to 5.40), 17 June 2019

## 18. Religious minorities

18.1.1 For information about Christians, see [Country Policy and Information note on Egypt: Christians](#).

18.1.2 The DFAT country report of June 2019 noted:

‘No official statistics exist in relation to the breakdown of Egypt’s religious population. While estimates vary, most observers agree that Sunni Muslims comprise approximately 90 per cent of the population, Coptic Christians make up between eight and ten per cent, and the remainder consists of small numbers of other religious minorities, including Shi’a Muslims, Sufi Muslims (officially considered Sunni) non- Coptic Christians, Baha’i, and Jews. The government officially recognises three religions: Islam, Christianity, and Judaism.’<sup>106</sup>

18.1.3 Freedom House observed that

‘While Article 2 of the 2014 constitution declares Islam to be the official religion, Article 64 states that “freedom of belief is absolute.” Most Egyptians are Sunni Muslims. Coptic Christians form a substantial minority, and there are smaller numbers of Shiite Muslims, non-Coptic Christian denominations, and other groups. Religious minorities and atheists have faced persecution and violence, with Copts in particular suffering numerous cases of forced displacement, physical assaults, bomb and arson attacks, and blocking of church construction in recent years.’<sup>107</sup>

18.1.4 However, the US Commission on Religious Freedom noted on its country page for Egypt that:

‘Religious freedom conditions in Egypt are trending tentatively in a positive direction. The country has seen a decrease in radical Islamist violence and anti-Christian mob attacks, some progress in implementing the registration process for unlicensed churches and related buildings, and the launch of a government program to address religious intolerance in rural areas. However, systematic and ongoing religious inequalities remain affixed in the Egyptian state and society, and various forms of religious bigotry and discrimination continue to plague the country’s Coptic Christians and other religious minorities.’<sup>108</sup>

18.1.5 The US Department of State, 2019 Report on International Religious Freedom has stated that:

‘The Constitution states “freedom of belief is absolute” and “the freedom of practicing religious rituals and establishing worship places for the followers of divine (i.e. Abrahamic) religions is a right regulated by law.” The constitution states citizens “are equal before the Law,” and criminalizes discrimination and “incitement to hatred” based upon “religion, belief, sex, origin, race...or any other reason.” The Constitution also states, “Islam is the

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<sup>106</sup> DFAT, ‘[Country Information Report – Egypt](#)’ (paragraph 3.2), June 2019

<sup>107</sup> Freedom House, ‘Freedom in the World [2020](#)’ (Egypt), 4 March 2020.

<sup>108</sup> USCIRF, ‘[Countries](#)’ (Egypt), no date

religion of the state...and the principles of Islamic sharia are the main sources of legislation.” The government officially recognizes Sunni Islam, Christianity, and Judaism, and allows only their adherents to publicly practice their religion and build houses of worship...<sup>109</sup>

- 18.1.6 For further information on about religious minorities including atheists in Egypt see the [USSD IRF report for 2019](#); the [USCIRF annual report for 2020](#) (Egypt chapter), DFAT’s [Country Information Report – Egypt, June 2019](#); Minority Rights Group International (MRGI), [Justice Denied, Promises Broken: The Situation of Egypt’s Minorities Since 2014](#), January 2019; Equal Rights Trust, [A Past Still Present: Addressing Discrimination and Inequality in Egypt](#), December 2018; and Christian Solidarity Worldwide’s [‘General Briefing: Egypt’](#), May 2020, and [‘Two men sentenced to prison for “spreading and promoting” Shi’a Islam’](#), June 2020.

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Section 19 updated: 15 December 2020

## 19. Sexual orientation and gender identity and expression

- 19.1.1 The DFAT Country Information Report – Egypt, June 2019 noted:

‘Although Egyptian law does not explicitly outlaw homosexuality, it is nevertheless a strict social taboo across socio-economic backgrounds and geographic locations. A 2013 study by the Pew Research Center found that 95 per cent of Egyptians surveyed believed society should reject homosexuality. As such, the overwhelming majority of LGBTI (lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender or intersex) Egyptians hide their identity as far as possible. According to local interlocutors, if an individual is discovered to be LGBTI, or is perceived to be so, they are likely to face significant hostility in both urban and rural areas that may include violence. An October 2018 report by the UN Special Rapporteur on the Right to Adequate Housing found that gay Egyptians face “horrific” discrimination and harassment when looking for somewhere to live, and that they were frequently evicted, denied housing, and harassed because of their sexual orientation. Both gay men and lesbians come under considerable social pressure to enter into heterosexual marriages, and to produce children.

While there are no laws that specifically prohibit homosexual acts, many LGBTI people have been charged with “habitual debauchery” under Law 10/1961 (a law that has also been used to prosecute women for prostitution). Human rights organisations report a considerable increase in instances of arrest, harassment and mistreatment of LGBTI individuals by police under the Sisi government. While most individuals arrested on suspicion of homosexuality are arrested from the street, local NGOs have also reported cases of entrapment via dating apps. Police reportedly seize the phones of those arrested and search data to find other LGBTI individuals, while some detainees have reported being tortured to provide names of others. Human rights groups report that detainees accused of homosexuality are regularly subjected to rape and assault in prisons and police stations by both guards

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<sup>109</sup> USSD, [‘2019 Report on International Religious Freedom’](#) (Executive Summary), 10 June 2020.

and other inmates informed of their ‘crimes’, while authorities often deny HIV+ detainees medication.”<sup>110</sup>

19.1.2 DFAT when on to conclude ‘... that LGBTI people face a high risk of official discrimination, including through entrapment, arrest, harassment and mistreatment by police; and a high risk of societal discrimination, with ongoing traditional views about sexuality and gender restricting their participation in the community and workforce. High profile or highly visible LGBTI individuals, particularly trans women, face a high risk of violence, from both police and the public.’<sup>111</sup>

19.1.3 The USSD country report for 2019 stated:

‘While the law does not explicitly criminalize consensual same-sex sexual activity, it allows police to arrest lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex (LGBTI) persons on charges such as “debauchery,” “prostitution,” and “violating the teachings of religion” and provides for prison sentences if convicted of up to 10 years. According to a local rights group, there were more than 250 reports of such arrests since 2013. Authorities did not use anti-discrimination laws to protect LGBTI individuals. Legal discrimination and social stigma impeded LGBTI persons from organizing or advocating publicly in defense of their rights. Information was not available on official or private discrimination in employment, occupation, housing, statelessness, or access to education or health care based on sexual orientation and gender identity. There were no government efforts to address potential discrimination. A Supreme Media Council (a semigovernmental body) ban on media supporting LGBTI persons and their rights continued... Intimidation and the risk of arrest greatly restricted open reporting and contributed to self-censorship.’<sup>112</sup>

19.1.4 Human Rights Watch reported in an article of 1 October 2020 that:

‘Egyptian police and National Security Agency officers arbitrarily arrest lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) people and detain them in inhuman conditions, systematically subject them to ill-treatment including torture, and often incite fellow inmates to abuse them... Security forces routinely pick people off the streets based solely on their gender expression, entrap them through social networking sites and dating applications, and unlawfully search their phones. Prosecutors use this content to justify prolonged detentions as they rubber-stamp police reports and bring unjustified prosecutions against them... Human Rights Watch documented cases of torture, including severe and repeated beatings and sexual violence, in police custody, often under the guise of forced anal exams or “virginity tests.” Police and prosecutors also inflicted verbal abuse, extracted forced confessions, and denied detainees access to legal counsel and medical care.’<sup>113</sup>

19.1.5 For more information about LGBTI persons see the ‘DFAT Country Information Report – Egypt’, June 2019 (paragraphs 3.90 to 3.97); HRW’s

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<sup>110</sup> DFAT, country Information Report – Egypt’ (paragraphs 3.90 to 3.91) 17 June 2019

<sup>111</sup> DFAT, country Information Report – Egypt’ (paragraph 3.97) 17 June 2019

<sup>112</sup> USSD, ‘[Country Report for 2019](#)’ (Section 6), 11 March 2020.

<sup>113</sup> HRW, ‘[Egypt: Security Forces Abuse, Torture LGBT People](#)’, 1 October 2020

[‘Egypt’s Denial of Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity’](#), 20 March 2020 and [‘Egypt: Security Forces Abuse, Torture LGBT People’](#), 1 October 2020; Human Dignity Trust, [Egypt page](#), no date; Bertelsmann Stiftung Transformation Index, [‘BTI 2020: Egypt’](#), April 2020; Amnesty International, [‘Transgender Activist Released’](#), 27 March 2020; the International Lesbian and Gay Association’s [‘State-Sponsored Homophobia 2019’](#) report, December 2019; USSD’s [human rights report for 2019 \(section 6\)](#), March 2020.

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Section 20 updated: 15 December 2020

## **20. Women**

20.1.1 See the [Country Policy and Information Note on Egypt: Women](#).

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# Terms of Reference

A 'Terms of Reference' (ToR) is a broad outline of what the CPIN seeks to cover. They form the basis for the [country information section](#). The Home Office's Country Policy and Information Team uses some standardised ToRs, depending on the subject, and these are then adapted depending on the country concerned.

For this particular CPIN, the following topics were identified prior to drafting as relevant and on which research was undertaken:

- History
- Geography and demography
  - Main geographic and demographic points
  - Map
  - Administrative decisions
  - Main population centres
  - Transport networks
- Constitution
- Political system
- Economy
- Media and communication
- Citizenship and nationality
- Corruption
- Official documents
  - Passports
  - Identity cards
  - Birth, Marriage, Divorce and Death certificates
  - Fraudulent and forged documents
- Healthcare
- Human rights issues
- Children
- Criminal justice system
  - Security apparatus
  - Effectiveness
  - Human rights abuses by security forces
  - Accountability and impunity
  - Judiciary
  - Independence and effectiveness

- Death Penalty
  - Prison conditions
- Freedom of movement
  - Exit and Entry Procedures
  - Returnees
  - Treatment on returns
- Religious minorities
- SOGIE
- Women

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# Version control

## Clearance

Below is information on when this note was cleared:

- version **1.0**
- valid from **14 December 2020**
- 

## Changes from last version of this note

New Country of information.

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