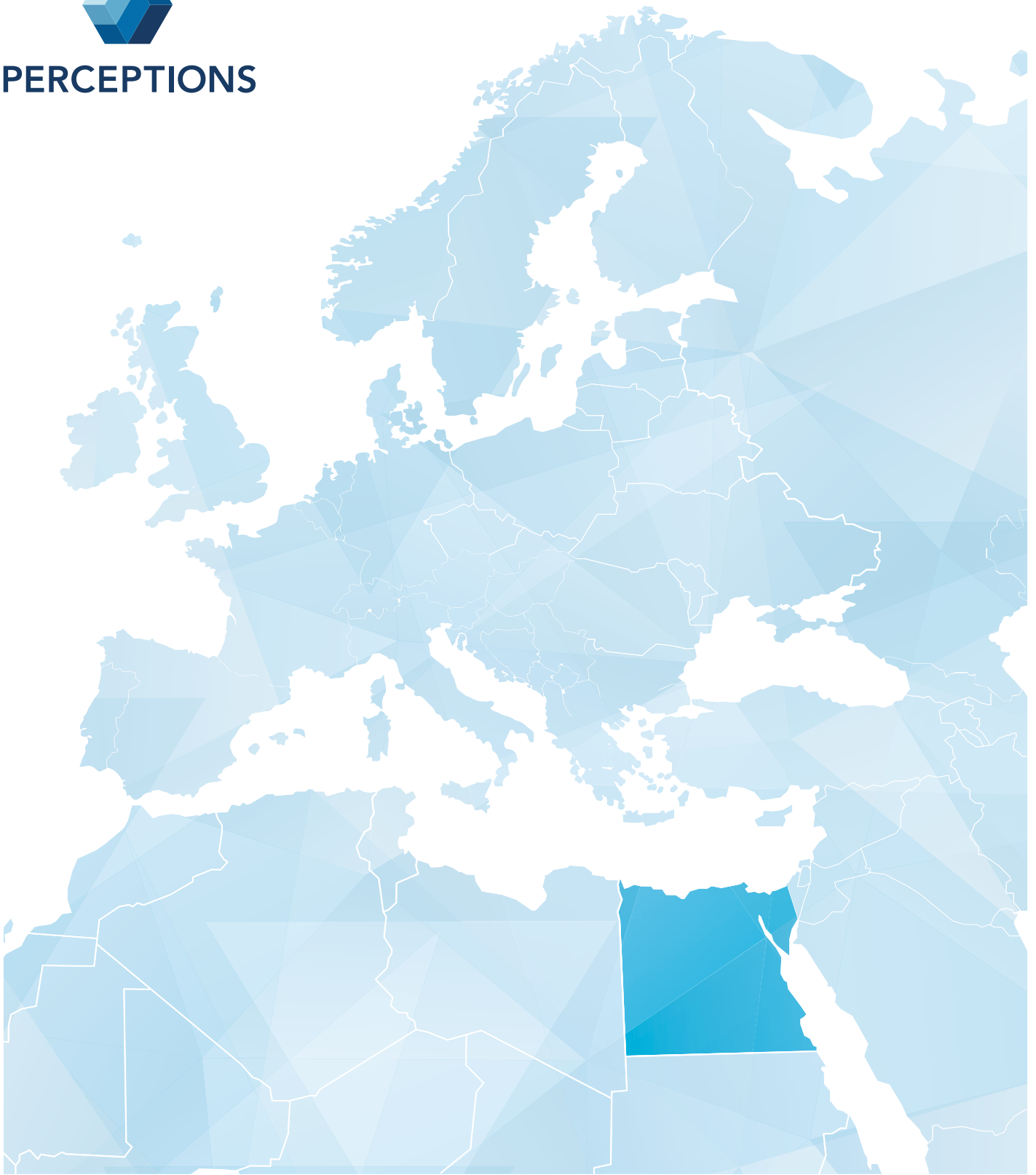




PERCEPTIONS



# Egypt

PERCEPTIONS  
Country Report

# PERCEPTIONS RESEARCH:

## Literature, studies, projects, stakeholders, solutions, tools and practices

### DISCLAIMER:

Disclaimer: This report is based on desk-research conducted between 2019 and 2022 and covers major development between the period of 2015-2019. For more updated information on the country profile, please check the additional institutional links at the end of the document.



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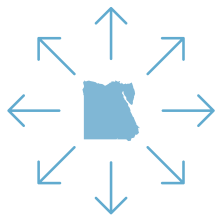
## a) Geographical map



## b) Short summary

Egypt is a major receiver of migrants and refugees in the region and has signed treaties and relating to the protection of refugees and migrants (both legal and irregular) on their territories. In March 2014, the Egyptian government formed the National Coordinating Committee on Combatting and Preventing Illegal Migration (NCCPIM), an inter-ministerial committee designed to lead on migration policy. After 2013, Egypt moved towards a more repressive strategy that involves active policing while the country also chose to redeploy resources to engage with migrants and refugees. On the other hand, restrictive measures were put into place including limitation of the obtaining a resident permit for longer than six months. Since the 2015 Valetta Summit on migration, in which Egypt led the African delegation, cooperation between Egypt and the EU has intensified. The EU has signed-off on one Egypt-specific programme under the EU Emergency Trust Fund for Africa known as Enhancing the Response to Migration Challenges in Egypt (ERMCE).

## c) Facts & figures



### Outward migration

- Vast majority of Egyptian expatriates reside in Arab countries (mainly Saudi Arabia; MPC, 2016)
- Europe (Especially Italy; increased over the past two decades accounting an almost 70% of permits holders to Italy).



### Incoming migration

- 230,340 people of 58 different nationalities were registered with UNHCR Egypt (more than half of them are from Syria; UNHCR, 2018).
- The Egyptian Refugee Multicultural Center estimated in 2015 that 10,000 Syrian refugees went to Turkey, hundreds were resettled in the West and many chose to take the perilous Mediterranean route to get to Europe.

## c) Full document

### Institutional setting

Egypt is a major receiver of migrants and refugees in the region and has signed treaties and relating to the protection of refugees and migrants (both legal and irregular) on their territories, including the 1951 Convention relating to the Status of Refugees and the 1990 International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families. Additionally, Egypt, as well as other South Mediterranean countries, are all transit-turned-destination countries along three different but popular migration routes leading to Europe (i.e., Western Mediterranean route, Central Mediterranean route and Eastern Mediterranean route).

Back in 1983, the Egyptian Ministry of foreign affairs and Ministry of international cooperation issued the liberal emigration policy, which was referred to in the 1971 Constitution and formed the basis of Law No. 111 of 1983 on Emigration and Egyptians' Welfare Abroad. This law also allows for dual citizenship, and defines temporary workers abroad and permanent migrants. The Constitution guarantees the right to emigrate, and Law No. 111 recognizes the rights of permanent migrants, such as their exemption from paying taxes in Egypt. The 2014 Constitution provides several guarantees that can be relevant to the situation of detained non-citizens, including the right to challenge detention (Article 54). However, legislation reforms are still required. The Law of Entry and Residence does not contain any provisions guaranteeing rights to detained migrants, such as access to a lawyer (CP, n.d.).

In March 2014, the Egyptian government formed the National Coordinating Committee on Combatting and Preventing Illegal Migration (NCCPIM), an inter-ministerial committee designed to lead on migration policy. Since its foundation, the NCCPIM has been tasked with drafting counter-smuggling legislation (ultimately passed in 2016) and conducting fieldwork studies on economic migration of Egyptian nationals. Today, it effectively operates as front-of-house for the Egyptian government's dealings with the EU

and other actors on migration. The NCCPIM also works alongside the IOM and other international agencies to produce awareness-raising material, principally aimed at Egyptian nationals in Egypt to dissuade them from attempting irregular crossings in the Mediterranean. In 2010, the Egyptian Ministry of foreign affairs established the National coordination committee for combatting human trafficking under the Law 64 of 2010 on combating human trafficking portrays migrants as victims and criminalises those who are complicit in the trade-in people with coercion and for exploitation. This law foresees prison sentences of up to 15 years or in some cases life, and a fine between 50,000 and 200,000 Egyptian pounds or the amount of the profit of the crime, whichever is greater. The law came into force on 10 May 2010 and it went further than UN protocol to prevent, suppress and punish trafficking in persons, especially women and children, and the convention against transnational organised crime in its definition of trafficking and in extending Egypt's jurisdiction to those involved in human trafficking.

### Short migration overview

Concerning outward migration, migration flows to Europe, and especially to Italy, they increased over the past two decades accounting an almost 70% of permits holders to Italy. More than 4 million Egyptians are living abroad. The vast majority of Egyptian expatriates resided in Arab countries, many in Saudi Arabia (MPC, 2016).

As far as incoming migration is concerned, in 2018, 230,340 people of 58 different nationalities were registered with UNHCR Egypt. More than half of them are from Syria (UNHCR, 2018c). Moreover, there is an estimated number of 500,000 unregistered Syrians in Egypt, who are not yet reflected in formal registry documents. In 2015, registered Syrian refugees decreased from 138,000 to 117,000. The Egyptian Refugee Multicultural Center estimated in 2015 that 10,000 Syrian refugees went to Turkey, hundreds were resettled in the West and many chose to

take the perilous Mediterranean route to get to Europe.

Since Egypt has a large informal economy, some migrants and refugees found ways to integrate into large informal economies, and have been able to secure employment without authorization (Farzanegan et al., 2020). In this respect, international organizations and domestic organizations intervened to provide essential services. Since the issue of migration was not yet highly politicized, it did not gain prolonged traction in media or amongst the national population. By allowing migrants and refugees to integrate through minimal government intervention and by relying on international organizations to provide primary services, host states derive international credibility while only exerting minimal state resources (Pellegrina et al., 2014; Michael, 2019).

The vast majority of refugees and migrants reside in Cairo. However, other coastal cities such as Alexandria have become popular locations as well since they are a common transit region to Europe, and - for Syrian refugees - due to historical connections between Syrian and Egyptian merchants in the area. An important element that makes Cairo an attractive destination for refugees is the existence of a large resettlement programme, both through the UNHCR presence as well as private sponsorship programmes.

After 2013, Egypt moved towards a more repressive strategy that involves active policing while the country also chose to redeploy resources to engage with migrants and refugees. On the other hand, restrictive measures were put into place including limitation of the obtaining a residency permit for longer than six months.

### **Key development since 2015**

In Egypt, the majority of asylum seekers and refugees continue to come from Syria. In 2018, UNHCR registered 140,000 Syrian refugees, followed by respectively 5,000 asylum-seekers, 15,000 refugees and 100,000 migrants from Sudan/South Sudan (UNHCR, 2018c). Other important countries of origin include Somalia, Iraq, Eritrea and Ethiopia (UNHCR, 2018c).

Since the 2015 Valetta Summit on migration, in which Egypt led the African delegation, cooperation between Egypt and the EU has intensified. The EU has signed-off on one Egypt-specific programme under the EU Emergency Trust Fund for Africa known as Enhancing the Response to Migration Challenges in Egypt (ERMCE). The 11.5 million EUR programme includes 1.5 million EUR for "strengthening Egypt's migration governance" through capacity-building projects with government agencies working on migration, as well as another 9.8 million EUR for "increasing protection and socio-economic opportunities for current or potential migrations, returnees and refugees in Egypt" in an attempt to influence migration choices (GDP, 2019).

#### **For more information, see:**

IOM Egypt:

<https://egypt.iom.int/>

Home Affairs Egypt:

<https://www.sis.gov.eg/?lang=en-us>

Foreign Affairs Egypt:

<https://ecfa-egypt.org/>



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