

CARIM – Consortium for Applied Research on International Migration

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CARIM – Migration Profile

Egypt

The Demographic-Economic Framework of Migration

The Legal Framework of Migration

The Socio-Political Framework of Migration

Report written by

ANNA DI BARTOLOMEO,

TAMIRACE FAKHOURY

and **DELPHINE PERRIN**

on the basis of CARIM database and publications

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The Demographic-Economic Framework of Migration

Egyptian emigration, which has never ceased since the 1970s, went through distinct phases. Until 1971, emigration from the country was subject to legal restrictions and limited numbers, especially professionals, could migrate permanently to the US, Canada, Australia and Western European countries. The largest boost to outward flows occurred, however, after the adoption of the 1971 Constitution, where “permanent” and “temporary” emigration was authorized and, especially after the 1973 War, when soaring oil prices and increasing demand for migrant labor in Gulf countries triggered massive emigration from Egypt to Saudi Arabia, Iraq and the other Gulf states as well as to Libya. After phases of greater and lesser migration in the 1980s and 1990s, Egypt is currently experiencing what has been called the permanence of temporary migration, whereby migration towards Arab countries is becoming less temporary and outnumbers long-term migration to Europe and North America.¹ Recently a rise in migration to Europe - mostly irregular - especially Italy and France, has been recorded.

In terms of immigration, Egypt is host to limited flows of migrant workers, but rising numbers of refugees and asylum seekers. In addition to some 70,000 Palestinian refugees whose families arrived in the wake of the 1948 war, tens of thousands of refugees from Sudan, Ethiopia, Eritrea and Somalia, as well as from Iraq, are now stranded in Egypt.

| Outward migration | | | | Inward migration | | | | | |
|--|------------------------|-----------------------|------------------|---|----------------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------|---------------|--------------|
| Stock | | | | Stock | | | | | |
| <p>According to the Egyptian Central Agency for Public Mobilization and Statistics (CAPMAS), in 2006 there were 2.0 million Egyptian migrants, of whom 61.2% were family members of migrant workers. This estimate, however, does not account for permanent migrants.</p> | | | | <p>In 1996, according to census data, 115,589 foreign nationals resided in Egypt representing 0.2% of the total population. They came mainly from Arab (52.7%), European (25.1%) and Asian (7.4%) countries.</p> | | | | | |
| <p>Temporary Egyptian emigrants by region of destination, 2006</p> | | | | <p>As to the employed foreign population, a majority are Arab nationals; however, their proportion decreased (-) 12% from 1996 to 2006 leading to an increased weight of other foreign workers, i.e. those from Europe (+14.9%) and Asia (+1.0%).</p> | | | | | |
| Region of destination | Migrant workers | Family members | Total | 1996 | | 2006 | | | |
| | | | | TOTAL population | EMPLOYED population | EMPLOYED population | EMPLOYED population | | |
| | | | | Number | % | % | Number | % | |
| Arab countries | 748,849 | 1,179,311 | 1,928,160 | 60,867 | 52.7 | 58.1 | 24,712 | 46.1 | |
| Europe | 29,675 | 46,273 | 75,948 | <i>28,648</i> | <i>24.8</i> | <i>n.a.</i> | <i>n.a.</i> | <i>n.a.</i> | |
| Australia | 4,660 | 7,293 | 11,953 | <i>11,004</i> | <i>9.5</i> | <i>n.a.</i> | <i>n.a.</i> | <i>n.a.</i> | |
| Africa | 912 | 1,483 | 2,395 | 28,986 | 25.1 | 21.0 | 19,236 | 35.9 | |
| Asia | 480 | 742 | 1,222 | <i>7,024</i> | <i>6.1</i> | <i>n.a.</i> | <i>n.a.</i> | <i>n.a.</i> | |
| America | 336 | 494 | 830 | <i>6,748</i> | <i>5.8</i> | <i>n.a.</i> | <i>n.a.</i> | <i>n.a.</i> | |
| Total | 784,912 | 1,235,596 | 2,020,508 | 5,542 | 4.8 | 6.0 | 2,318 | 4.3 | |
| Source: Central Agency for Public Mobilization and Statistics (CAPMAS), Egypt | | | | <i>4,840</i> | <i>4.2</i> | <i>n.a.</i> | <i>n.a.</i> | <i>n.a.</i> | |
| <p>In 2000, Egyptian permanent and temporary emigrants were 2.7 million, 3.9% of the Egyptian population. The majority resided in Arab countries (69.9%), especially in Saudi Arabia (33.7%), Libya (12.2%) and Jordan (8.3%). High proportions were also to be found in North America (15.6%) and Europe (11.9%).</p> | | | | Asian countries | 8,514 | 7.4 | 6.0 | 3,753 | 7.0 |
| | | | | African countries | 5,052 | 4.4 | n.a. | 925 | 1.7 |
| | | | | Others | 6,628 | 5.7 | n.a. | 2,619 | 4.9 |
| | | | | Total | 115,589 | 100.0 | 100.0 | 53,563 | 100.0 |
| | | | | Source: Population Census 1996 and 2006, Egypt | | | | | |

¹ It should be noted that Egyptian statistics use the terminology “temporary” and “permanent” emigration referring respectively to emigration towards “Arab countries” and the “rest of the world”. Rather than being based on comparative data on the duration of residence, this criteria may reflect a distinction between the policies pursued by destination countries, which are integration-oriented in Europe and North America, but generally not so in Arab countries.

Egyptian emigrants by region of destination according to statistics of Egypt (year 2000) and destination countries (various years)

| Temporary migration | | | Permanent migration | | |
|--|----------------------------|-------------------------------------|------------------------|----------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| Region of destination | Egyptian statistics (2000) | Statistics of destination countries | Region of destination | Egyptian statistics (2000) | Statistics of destination countries |
| Arab countries | 1,912,729 | | Europe | 326,000 | |
| of which Sau. Ara. | 923,600 | | of which Italy | 90,000 | 74,599 (2009) |
| Libya | 332,600 | 124,566 (1994) | Greece | 60,000 | 8,293 (2008) |
| Jordan | 226,850 | 112,392 (undate) | Netherl. | 40,000 | 11,137 (2009) |
| Kuwait | 190,550 | | France | 36,000 | 15,974 (1999) |
| UAE | 95,000 | | Un. King. | 35,000 | 25,000 (2009) |
| Iraq | 65,629 | | Germany | 25,000 | 11,623 (2009) |
| Qatar | 25,000 | | Spain | - | 3,048 (2009) |
| Yemen | 22,000 | | Others | 40,000 | |
| Oman | 15,000 | | Australia | 70,000 | 33,370 (2001) |
| Lebanon | 12,500 | | North America | 428,000 | |
| Bahrain | 4,000 | | of which US | 318,000 | 132,917 (2005) |
| | | | Canada | 110,000 | 40,575 (2006) |
| Total temporary | 1,912,729 | | Total temporary | 824,000 | |
| Total temporary and permanent migration | | | | 2,736,729 | |

Egyptian source: Central Agency for Public Mobilization and Statistics (CAPMAS)
Sources of destination countries: National Census (Jordan, France, Australia, US, Canada); National Statistical Institute (Germany, Greece, Italy, Netherlands, Spain, UK);

Data on Egyptians abroad, however, largely depends on where migrants are counted. Indeed, Egyptian and destination countries' statistics show significant divergences, which depend for the most part on whether naturalized Egyptians and irregular are counted or not.

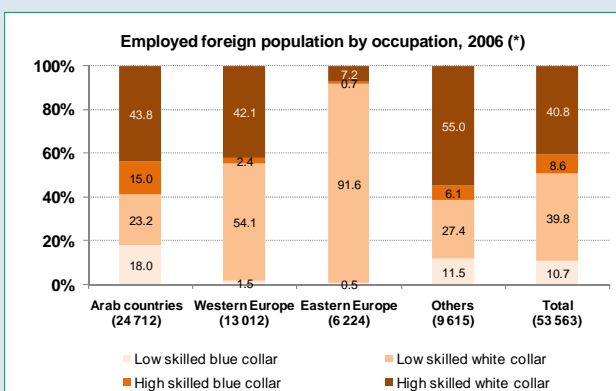
While emigration to Europe is characterized by a more gender-balanced profile (men are 58.1%), labor emigration towards Arab countries is a male phenomenon; here, in 2007, men accounted for 96.6% of the total of (employed) emigrants.

As to their educational and occupational characteristics, Egyptian emigrants tend to have an intermediate skill profile. Migration towards OECD countries is mainly skilled: in c. 2000, 78.1% had a medium-high level of education and 60.8% were employed in highly-skilled occupations (OECD.stat).² In Arab countries, despite Egyptian emigrants having an overall medium-high level of education (62.0% in 2007), their occupational profiles are highly differentiated according to the host country (in 2002). Saudi Arabia, Libya, Kuwait, the UAE, Qatar, Yemen and Oman absorb mainly professionals – here, the proportion of highly-skilled workers (defined as scientists and technicians) ranges from 69.1% (in Yemen) to 40.5% (in Saudi Arabia). Otherwise, the highest proportions of low-skilled workers are found in Lebanon (75.0%), Iraq and Jordan (both 69.2%) (CAPMAS; Min. of Manpower and Emigration).

As to their occupational profile, in 2006, foreign nationals tended to be employed in low-skilled professions (50.5%).

Arab and Western European nationals had a medium-high occupational profile, and respectively 58.8% and 44.5% were employed in highly-skilled jobs (e.g. professionals, technicians and associate professionals, etc.).

Otherwise, foreign workers from Eastern European countries were, for the most part, employed in *low-skilled white collar* occupations (91.6%), predominantly as sales and service workers (90.4%).



(*) Occupation is defined according to the ISCO-88 and the European Working Conditions Observatory (EWCO).

Source: Central Agency for Public Mobilization and Statistics (CAPMAS), Egypt.

Flows

As a whole, economic migrants are fewer than refugees, who though hardly appear in the official statistics.

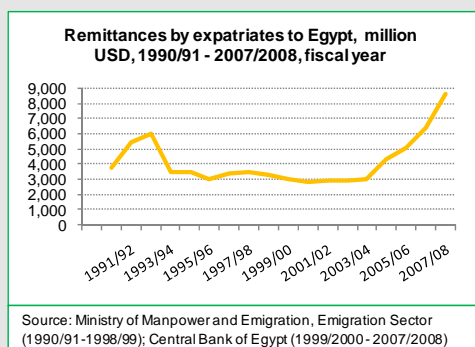
Among refugees, Palestinians form the largest group, followed by the Sudanese, Somalis and Ethiopians, who mainly arrived in the 1990s as a result of civil wars and political instability in the Horn of Africa. In addition, Iraqi refugees have increased massively especially since 2006.

² The type and level of occupation is defined respectively according to the International Standard Classification of Occupations, ISCO-88 and the European Working Conditions Observatory. Specifically, four categories of employees are distinguished: 1) high-skilled white collar (legislators, senior officials and managers, professionals, technicians and associate professionals); 2) high-skilled blue collar (skilled agricultural and fishery workers, craft and related trades workers); 3) low-skilled white collar (clerks, service workers and shop and market sales workers); 4) low-skilled blue collar (plant and machine operators and assemblers, elementary occupations).

Flows

In the last three decades, notwithstanding high fluctuations in the level of outward flows – mainly linked to wars in the Gulf and the international embargo against Libya – temporary flows towards Arab countries exceeded permanent flows to the US and Europe.

Meanwhile, in the last 15-20 years new migration streams directed to Europe have been observed. Many of them are poorly educated male migrant workers in irregular situations. Despite no estimates being currently available, two surveys conducted in 1997 (Eurostat) and 2007 (European Training Foundation) may give some idea of the rising importance of Europe for Egyptians: among those who desire to migrate, in 1997 only 6.0% chose Europe as their preferred destination, while this percentage had reached 33.7% by 2007. This pattern is probably due to an interplay of factors, such as the competition Egyptians face in the Arab Gulf from cheap South East Asian labor and geographical proximity.



Today, Egypt is the sixth main receiver of remittances in the world and the first one among MENA countries. In the fiscal year 2007/2008 the amount of remittances was 8.6 million USD, 4.1% of Egyptian GDP. In 2006/2007, 83.6% of these flows come from five countries: the US (32.9%), Kuwait (17.5%), the UAE (15.7%), Saudi Arabia (4.1%) and Switzerland (4.1%).

From 1990/91 to 2007/2008, remittances grew from 3,775 to 8,558 million USD at an annual average growth rate of 7.5%. A stable trend was evident until 2003/2004, except for a peak in the early 1990s, due to a) an upsurge in oil prices until 2007, which led to an increase in the demand for workers in Arab oil countries and b) the stability of the Egyptian pound.

Refugees and asylum seekers in Egypt, 1999 - 2008

| Refugees | 1999 | 2000 | 2001 | 2002 | 2003 | 2004 | 2005 | 2006 | 2007 | 2008 |
|-----------|-------|-------|-------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|
| Palestine | - | - | 134 | 70,195 | 70,215 | 70,245 | 70,255 | 70,198 | 70,213 | 70,174 |
| Sudan | 2,577 | 2,833 | 4,659 | 7,629 | 14,178 | 14,904 | 13,466 | 12,157 | n.a. | n.a. |
| Somalia | 2,568 | 2,610 | 1,177 | 1,639 | 3,068 | 3,809 | 3,940 | 4,317 | 5,139 | 5,600 |
| Ethiopia | 56 | 54 | 102 | 111 | 329 | 481 | 516 | 507 | 468 | 473 |

| Asylum seekers | 1999 | 2000 | 2001 | 2002 | 2003 | 2004 | 2005 | 2006 | 2007 | 2008 |
|----------------|-------|--------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|------|------|
| Sudan | 5,202 | 12,206 | 9,529 | 6,253 | 5,726 | 9,720 | 2,400 | 2,523 | n.a. | n.a. |
| Somalia | 647 | 1,822 | 2,559 | 1,977 | 224 | 340 | 538 | 1,135 | n.a. | n.a. |
| Ethiopia | - | 547 | 545 | 299 | 325 | 289 | 289 | 193 | n.a. | n.a. |
| Iraq | - | 64 | 23 | 92 | 57 | 20 | 133 | 2,870 | n.a. | n.a. |

| Acceptance and resettlement rate | 1999 | 2000 | 2001 | 2002 | 2003 | 2004 | 2005 | 2006 | 2007 | 2008 |
|----------------------------------|--------|--------|--------|-------|------|------|------|------|------|------|
| Asylum seekers | 16,217 | 13,327 | 13,176 | 8,920 | n.a. | n.a. | n.a. | n.a. | n.a. | n.a. |
| Recognized refugees | 2,984 | 3,404 | 3,921 | 4,944 | n.a. | n.a. | n.a. | n.a. | n.a. | n.a. |
| Resettled refugees | 2,529 | 3,138 | 2,057 | 1,716 | n.a. | n.a. | n.a. | n.a. | n.a. | n.a. |
| Acceptance rate (*) | 18.4 | 25.5 | 29.8 | 55.4 | n.a. | n.a. | n.a. | n.a. | n.a. | n.a. |
| Resettlement rate (**) | 84.8 | 92.2 | 52.5 | 34.7 | n.a. | n.a. | n.a. | n.a. | n.a. | n.a. |

Notes: (*) Acceptance rate: (recognized refugees/asylum seekers)*100; (**) Resettlement rate: (resettled refugees/recognized refugees)*100

Sources: UNHCR, UNRWA

Despite no reliable figures being available, it seems that, because of the difficulty in obtaining refugee status in Egypt (as indicated too by the low/high values of the acceptance/resettlement rates), many refugees do not register with UNHCR. Further, a huge gap exists between official figures and media or NGO estimates.

Sudanese refugees mainly arrived during the 1990s and 2000s as a consequence of the Civil War in Southern Sudan then in Darfur. Their true numbers are unknown and estimates are in the order of tens of thousands.

Local conflicts and political instability during the 1990s are also the cause of massive inflows of Somalis, Ethiopians and Eritrean people.

The Iraqi refugee exodus – started shortly after the 2003 invasion – began to seriously involve Egypt from 2006. According to a recent survey carried out by the Center for Migration and Refugee Studies and the Institute of Decision and Support Center of Cairo, in 2008 the number of Iraqi refugees equaled 16,853, a figure which is much lower than frequent claims reporting numbers close to 100,000-150,000.

The Legal Framework of Migration

The rules governing foreign nationals' entry, stay and exit from Egypt, which dated back to the 1960s, were modified in 2005. The reform records changes due to the United Arab Republic's dissolution in 1961 and submits Syrian and Arab citizens to the same entry conditions as other foreign nationals. Sanctions for irregular entry are slightly strengthened. Though, sentences for irregular entry or stay are much lower than those adopted during the same period by new legislation in Maghreb countries, and the emigration of nationals is not punished.

Concerning access to residence and rights, different treatment is set out for nationals and foreign nationals, foreign nationals are then treated differently according to their citizenship, and men and women are also treated differently.

Egypt tries to frame, organize and support its emigration. It also endeavours to keep important and lasting links with its diaspora, whose return is fostered by some incentives.

The 1975 Citizenship Law was reformed in 2004. It now gives women the right to transmit their nationality to their children. The implementation of the reform to children born before the adoption of the law varies, however, according to the citizenship of any foreign father.

Egypt receives a large number of refugees whose status is determined by UNHCR, since no national procedure exists. Unlike its neighbours (Syria, Lebanon, Jordan) that along with Egypt received most Palestinian refugees, Cairo ratified the 1951 Geneva Convention and UNRWA³ has no competence on its territory. Resettlement constitutes a fundamental stake for the development of asylum right in the country.

| | Outward migration | Inward migration |
|---|---|---|
| General legal references | <i>Law n°111 of 1983</i> on Emigration and Egyptians Welfare Abroad. | <i>Law 88 of 2005</i> on the entry, stay and exit of foreign nationals, modifying Law 89-1960. |
| | | <i>1990 Convention</i> ⁴ : ratified with slight reservations. <i>ILO</i> : 63 conventions ratified ⁵ |
| | | <i>Bilateral agreements</i> organization of Egyptian labour force in Jordan (2007) and in Italy (2005); technical cooperation with China (1996) and Senegal (1998); the "Four Freedom" Agreement with Sudan (2004); among others. |
| | | Member State of the <i>African Union</i> , the <i>League of Arab States</i> and the <i>CENSAD</i> ⁶ . |
| Circulation Entry and Exit | No exit visa required. But exit is submitted to the presentation of a passport and is controlled. Travel documents are delivered to refugees, stateless people and Palestinians from the Gaza Strip. | Passport and visa are required to enter the country. Citizens from Guinea Conakry and from Hong-Kong and Macao are exempted from visas. No visa is, theoretically, required from Sudanese citizens. It is necessary to pass through border posts. |

³ United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine refugees in the Near East.

⁴ Convention on the Protection of all Migrant Workers and Members of their Family.

⁵ Including conventions C111 concerning Discrimination in Respect of Employment and Occupation and C118 Equality of Treatment of Nationals and Non-Nationals in Social Security, but excluding conventions C97 concerning Migration for Employment and C143 concerning Migrations in Abusive Conditions and the Promotion of Equality of Opportunity and Treatment of Migrant Workers.

⁶ Community of Sahel-Saharan countries.

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|--|---|---|
| <p>Struggle against irregular migration</p> | <p><i>Palermo protocols</i>⁷: ratified</p> | <p>Irregular entry and exit are penalized. The migrant or the person who assists him/her is punished with up to a 6 months prison sentence and a 1000 pounds fine; 5 years prison sentence and 5000 pounds fine if the migrant comes from a country in conflict with Egypt; 2 years prison sentence for document falsification or the non respect of a deportation decision.</p> <p>Irregular stay is punished with fines.</p> <p>Possible administrative detention of foreign nationals awaiting deportation. No judicial framework.</p> |
| <p>Rights and settlement</p> | <p>The Constitution guarantees the right to emigrate.</p> <p>Law n°111: state commitment to links with the diaspora; registration of people willing to emigrate and distribution to them of emigration opportunities; emigration permits delivery to “permanent migrants”, and recognition of some rights (tax exemption from investments, right to be reintegrated in civil service)</p> | <p>Stay permits: special (10 years) and regular (5 years) residence permits handed out in very specific situations (persons of Egyptian origin or long-lasting residence from before 1952). Three other permit categories: 5 years residence (e.g. for investors and the wives of Egyptians); 3 years residence (e.g. for the husbands of Egyptians, some Palestinians, refugees); temporary residence (e.g. for students, people whose bank account is at least \$50,000).</p> <p>Family reunification: yes (spouse and children, sometimes parents). Different treatment of men and women.</p> <p>Access to Employment: based on reciprocity. Submitted to residence and work permits. 10% maximum of foreign workers by company. National preference. Preferential treatment for some nationalities (e.g. Greece, Italy, Palestine, Sudan, Jordan, Syria). Proof of absence of HIV required.</p> <p>Civil service reserved to nationals, and to Arab citizens issued from countries guaranteeing reciprocity. No access to liberal professions, with exceptions.</p> <p>Access to public services: no equal access to public education, except for some nationalities. Equal access to health service. Access to social security</p> |

⁷ Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, especially women and children, and Protocol against the Smuggling of Migrants by Land, Sea and Air, supplementing the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime, 15 November 2000.

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|-----------------|--|--|
| | | <p>after ten years residence. High cost of access to university.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Access to estate ownership: for investment or residence.</p> |
| | <p>Nationality: dual citizenship allowed for long-term emigrants (law n°111). The acquisition of another nationality is submitted to ministerial leave.</p> <p>Law n°154 of 2004 gives women the right to transmit their nationality to their children. <i>Jus sanguinis</i> by descent of father or mother, whatever the birthplace. <i>Jus soli</i>: nationality on request at the age of majority for children born in Egypt, if the foreign father was also born in Egypt and belongs to an Arab speaking and Muslim community; and for persons of “Egyptian origin”. Access to nationality for foreign women after 2 years of marriage with a male citizen. No right to nationality through marriage with an Egyptian woman. Possible naturalization of foreign children born and raised in the country.</p> | |
| Refugees | | <p>1951 Convention⁸: ratified with reservations.</p> <p>1969 Convention⁹: ratified.</p> <p>Party to the Protocol for the Treatment of Palestinians in Arab States, 1965.</p> <p>No national procedure. Agreement with UNHCR in 1954. Recognition of the UNHCR RSD¹⁰, delivery of a residence permit which has to be checked every 6 months.</p> |

⁸ Geneva Convention relating to the status of refugees.

⁹ OAU Convention governing specific aspects of refugees in Africa.

¹⁰ Refugee Status Determination.

The Socio-Political Framework of Migration

Standing at the crossroads between Africa and the Mediterranean Egypt has a key role in migration governance. An important regional player in migration-agenda setting, Egypt has embarked upon cooperation initiatives with Arab and OECD countries. Yet, Egypt's position as a nexus between the turbulent Middle East, Northern and Sub-Saharan Africa routes has also added further challenges to an already encumbered migration agenda.¹¹ Egypt has, in the last years, received massive inflows of refugees and undocumented migrants whose mobility is to a large extent conflict-induced.¹² We cite for example the case of Iraqi, and Sudanese migrants, but also Somali and Eritrean refugees, the magnitude and desperateness of such flows having attracted much international attention in the last years.

In emigration-related fields, Egypt has made sure – at least in its political stances – that Egyptian emigration flows are linked to Egypt's internal development and national imperatives. The dynamic Ministry of Manpower and Emigration (MME) has consolidated cooperation frameworks with international organizations and Arab as well as EU countries with a view to: (a) organizing legal emigration flows; (b) stimulating demand for Egyptian labor; (c) curbing irregular emigration from Egypt to Europe; and (d) sharing information on irregular migration patterns with selected destination countries.¹³ In the longer term however, tackling the root causes behind the irregular emigration of Egyptians (unemployment, poverty etc.) is a challenge.¹⁴

Whereas Egypt has achieved high levels of institutionalization in its emigration policies, the institutional framework regulating its immigration apparatus remains frail. For instance, openness to labour immigration contributes to the growth of the informal sector (particularly in low skilled workforce sectors such as domestic work). Moreover, the absence of a clear framework regarding refugees means large numbers of stranded migrants and *de facto* refugees in the country. Furthermore, while various initiatives in the local associative sector have attempted to improve the lot of refugees in the greater Cairo area, there is some question over whether civil society initiatives succeed in altering governmental policies.¹⁵ Improving Egypt's policy response to refugee issues is at stake.

| Egypt's socio-political framework (1) | Outward migration | Inward migration |
|---------------------------------------|---|---|
| Governmental Institutions | The Emigration Sector of the Ministry of Manpower and Emigration; the Ministry of Foreign Affairs; the Ministry of Interior; and the Higher Committee for Migration ¹⁶ | The Ministry of Interior; the Ministry of Foreign Affairs; the Ministry of Manpower and Emigration; and the Higher Committee for Migration. |
| Governmental Strategy | Design action plans and policies to facilitate and encourage successful and legal Egyptian emigration; enhance links with the Egyptian Diaspora; sponsor Egyptians abroad and | Set up rules concerning the entry and residence of foreign nationals; regulate residence in Egypt for legal periods of time; establish recruitment procedures with regard to economic immigrants; establish |

¹¹ A case in a point are the border tensions between Egypt and Israel as irregular migrants originating from Sub-Saharan Africa attempt to cross Egyptian borders to Israel.

¹² See Shahira Samy, "The Impact of Civil Society on Refugee Politics in Egypt", *CARIM Research Reports* 2009, http://cadmus.eui.eu/dspace/bitstream/1814/11414/1/CARIM_RR_2009_07.pdf

¹³ See Howaida Roman, "Irregular Migration of Egyptians", *CARIM Synthetic Notes* 2008, http://cadmus.eui.eu/dspace/bitstream/1814/10113/1/CARIM_AS%26N_2008_68.pdf, p. 8.

¹⁴ Ibid, p. 8-9.

¹⁵ See Samy, "The Impact of Civil Society", op.cit.

¹⁶ Created by Presidential Decree number 2000/1997

| | | |
|------------------------------------|--|--|
| | <p>encourage them to establish unions and associations; benefit from Egyptian potential abroad in the field of development and technology; encourage remittances; establish an integrated database on Egyptians abroad; set up bilateral agreements for the management of labour emigration; link emigration policies with social and economic development in Egypt; create training centers for would-be migrants; organise information and awareness-raising campaigns so as to dissuade Egyptians from irregular emigration; provide migrants with information on legal migration possibilities.</p> | <p>recruitment agencies for hiring skilled foreign labour; cooperate with other bodies to fight illegal immigration through joint technical, security, policy-making and legislative mechanisms; identify refugees and define their status and rights; devise action plans regarding their presence and stay in Egypt.</p> |
| <p>Civil Society Action</p> | <p>(a) Initiatives of Egyptian migrant associations as well as professional and student Diaspora networks aimed at:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Protecting emigrants' rights (e.g. The Egyptian Organisation for Human Rights); - Reinforcing ties among Egyptian emigrants (e.g. Egyptian Association in the United Kingdom); <p>(b) Initiatives of research institutions aimed at:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Probing into questions related to Egyptian emigration (e.g. The Egyptian centre for Economic Studies), collecting data on the Diaspora and carrying out research studies on the potential role of Egyptian expatriates in their country's development. | <p>(a) Civil society networks and initiatives aimed at:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Improving regular and irregular immigrants' socio-economic and cultural rights (e.g. Tadamon (Living together Project), Caritas, Egyptian Initiative for Personal Rights); - Assisting refugees and developing integration projects (e.g. Africa and Middle East Refugee Assistance; Tadamon, the South Center for Human Rights (SCHR); the Somali Association for Refugee Affairs) <p>(b) Research institutions initiatives aimed at :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Filling in knowledge gaps concerning the presence of refugees on Egyptian territory, e.g. the survey carried out by the American University of Cairo together with the Government Decision and Support Center (GDSC) on Iraqi households in Egypt. |
| <p>Challenges</p> | <p>The necessity to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Increase inter-ministerial coordination in emigration related matters and ensure that the different policy plans proposed by Egyptian ministerial bodies remain coherent and achieve complementary objectives;¹⁷ - Harmonise Egyptian labour emigration with major international treaties concerning trade (such as the GATS);¹⁸ - Efficiently address the phenomenon of irregular emigration to Europe (in particular to Italy)¹⁹ by adopting an | <p>The necessity to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Improve the coherence of the institutional framework regulating immigration which often leads to blurred and overlapping immigrant categories (e.g. overlapping illegal immigrants' and refugees' categories hinder appropriate policy response and humanitarian assistance); - Enhance Egypt's humanitarian stance towards refugees in general as security motives override the former by: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Developing clearer and less discriminative procedures regarding refugees' stay and integration;²⁰ |

¹⁷ See Ahmad Ghoneim, "Evaluating the Institutional Framework Governing Migration in Egypt." International Conference on Irregular Migration in the Mediterranean Region, 4-5 May. Cairo: PID, 2009.

¹⁸ See Sika, "Highly-Skilled Migration Patterns and Development", p.12

¹⁹ See Roman, "Irregular Migration of Egyptians", op. cit., p.8.

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| | <p>integrated approach towards the problem e.g. embedding cooperation frameworks in the migration sector within broader partnerships stimulating development in Egyptian society so as to address the root causes of irregular emigration.</p> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. Empowering local civil society networks, so that they can feed and influence policy-making; 3. Extending the outreach of Egyptian NGOs so that these can assist vulnerable migrant groups;²¹ 4. Cooperating more efficiently with international NGOs (e.g. Save the Children) in order to improve the socio-economic status and rights of irregular migrants and refugees in Egypt; 5. Designing strategies with international organisations (UN agencies) so as to provide comprehensive solutions for refugees. |
| <p>International Cooperation</p> | <p>Establishing bilateral agreements or frameworks so as to organize and facilitate legal emigration flows to the Arab world²² and to OECD countries (e.g. the IMIS Program with Italy) and to stimulate the demand for Egyptian labour²³; negotiating policy plans with other destination countries so as to legalise irregular Egyptian emigration through regularisation; cooperating with international stakeholders so as to collect information on Egyptian diasporas and their profiles; improving Egyptian migrants' integration in receiving contexts: e.g. cooperation between the Ministry of Manpower and Emigration with the IOM for the development of an Integrated Migration Information System (IMIS and IMIS Plus) between Egypt and Italy; developing information-sharing mechanisms with international stakeholders in order to mitigate the effects of irregular emigration (For instance, the Egyptian-Italian IDOM project whose objective is to disseminate information regarding the dangers of irregular migration, helping thereby to curb irregular emigration from Egypt).</p> | <p>Developing collaborative mechanisms with international organisations (namely UNHCR-Cairo) so as to deal with refugees' stay in Egyptian territory; consolidating cooperation with IOM so as to resettle Egypt-based Iraqis in the US (the "Direct Access Program" launched in 2008); establishing cooperative mechanisms²⁴ with a view to improving the socio-economic conditions of African refugees in Egypt, e.g. the Four Freedoms Agreement with Sudan with respect to Sudanese refugees; consolidating bilateral cooperation with external parties for the recruitment of skilled foreign workforce.</p> |

(1) This socio-political framework does not claim exhaustive coverage but intends rather to provide a synthetic picture of the socio-political facets and policy developments shaping migration developments and governance in, across, and from Egypt.

²⁰ For an account of Egypt's restrictive policies towards refugees, see for example Howaida Roman, "Iraqi Refugees in Egypt: Socio-Political Aspects", *CARIM Research Report* 2009/06, EUI, http://cadmus.eui.eu/dspace/bitstream/1814/11413/1/CARIM_RR_2009_06.pdf.

²¹ One of the most effective civil society initiatives dealing with refugees, Tadamon, does not tackle the issue of Iraqi refugees. See Roman, op.cit.

²² New agreements have been signed with Libya, Qatar, and Jordan.

²³ See Nadina Sika, "Highly-Skilled Migration Patterns and Development: The Case of Egypt", *CARIM Analytical and Synthetic Notes* 2010, forthcoming, p.12.

²⁴ It is worth noting that their applicability is controversial.