

The Arab Republic of Egypt



SUMMARY

Being the most populous country in the Arab world and the third most populous country in Africa, Egypt is mostly desert, so 95% of its population is concentrated along a narrow strip of land beside the Nile River. Egypt has become an increasingly important transit and destination country for economic migrants as well as asylum seekers, and it currently holds one of the largest urban refugee populations in the world.

Chief of State: President Abdel Fattah EL-SISI (July 8, 2014)

Head of Government: Prime Minister Mostafa MADBOULY (June 7, 2018)

Capital: Cairo

Other notable cities: Alexandria, Port Said, Giza, Sidí Kurayr, Suez

Gov Type: Presidential Republic

Population: 116,000,000

Colonial History: While a unified kingdom arose around 3200 B.C., the last native dynasty fell to the Persians in 341 B.C. The Persians were eventually replaced by the Greeks, Romans, and Byzantines. In 1250, the Mamluks, a local military caste, took control and continued to govern until Egypt was conquered by the Ottoman Turks in 1517. In 1882, Britain gained control of the government, but Egypt remained aligned with the Ottoman Empire until 1914. Egypt gained partial independence from the UK in 1922 and full independence in 1952.

GEOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION

The Arab Republic of Egypt has a total area of 1,001,450 sq km, more than eight times the size of Ohio. It also has 2,612 km of coastline and borders the Gaza Strip (13 km), Israel (208 km), Libya (1,115 km), and Sudan (1,276 km).

The climate is very hot and dry in the summer, while the winters tend to be more moderate.

The Arab Republic of Egypt controls the Sinai Peninsula, which is the only land bridge between Africa and the rest of the Eastern Hemisphere. Egypt also controls the Suez Canal, a sea link between the Indian Ocean and the Mediterranean Sea.

Natural resources include petroleum, natural gas, iron ore, phosphates, manganese, limestone, gypsum, talc, asbestos, lead, rare earth elements, and zinc. Land use is mostly urbanized (96.3%), and only 3.6% is used for agriculture.

Economy and Politics

MAL FACT SHEET



DEMOGRAPHICS

Noun: Egyptian(s)

Adjective: Egyptian

Ethnic Groups: Egyptian (99.7%), and other (0.3%)

Languages: Arabic (official), English, and French (although this is mostly widely understood among educated classes).

Religions: Muslim (90% {predominantly Sunni}), Christian (10% {majority Coptic Orthodox, while others include Armenian Apostolic, Catholic, Maronite, Orthodox, and Anglican}).

Egypt is the most populous country in the Arab world, with 95% of its population concentrated along a narrow strip of land beside the Nile River (an area that represents only about 5% of Egypt's land area). Within the past decade, Egypt's total fertility rate decline stalled until dropping to under 3 as of 2022. The population growth rate is currently at 1.49%.

ECONOMY AND GDP

The Arab Republic of Egypt is Africa's second-largest economy. Using the 2030 Vision to diversify its markets and energy infrastructure, Egypt is also aiming to improve its fiscal, external, and current accounts. The private sector severely struggles under the growing economic footprint of its military.

Real GDP: \$2.23 trillion (2024)

Real GDP Growth Rate: 2.4% (2024)

Real GDP Per Capita: \$19,000 (2022)

GDP (Official Exchange Rate): \$389 billion (2024)

GDP Composition: Agriculture 11% (2023), Industry 33% (2023), Services 51% (2023), and Manufacturing 16% (2023)

Inflation Rate: 28% (2024)

Industries: Textiles, food processing, tourism, chemicals, pharmaceuticals, hydrocarbons, construction, cement, metals, light manufactures.

Labor Force: 36.1 million (2024).

Unemployment Rate: 6.8% (2024).

Population Below Poverty Line: 33.5% (2021)

Public Debt: 103% of GDP (2017)

Exports: \$76.295 billion (partners include Turkey, Italy, United States of America, Spain, and India) 2022 est.

Imports: \$97.144 billion (partners include China, United States of America, Saudi Arabia, United Arab Emirates, and Turkey) 2022 est.

MAIN POLITICAL CONTENTIONS

Egypt plays a leading role in supporting Arab policies, foremost the issues of the Arab-Israeli conflict as well as Iraq and Sudan. Currently, Egypt has diplomatic ties with Israel, although this has caused tension in the region. It plays a key role in Israeli and Palestinian relations due to its shared border with Gaza.

Egypt's diplomatic relations with Iran have been limited to the level of "Interest Sections" since the Khomeini Revolution. Relations are strained due to Egypt's relationship with Israel as well as Egypt supporting Iraq in its eight-year conflict with Iran. While unofficial dialogue has taken place, diplomatic relations have not been resumed at this time. Egypt and Sudan have strained diplomatic relations with Ethiopia as they plan to build the Grand Renaissance Dam, which would source its water from the Blue Nile. This damming of the Nile's most significant water source poses severe risks to Egyptian water security and agriculture.

Egypt's economy is struggling with high inflation and high unemployment. The private sector in Egypt struggles to compete with the rising economic influence of government and military industries. The military industries essentially drive up operation costs for smaller private companies, as they can easily outbid them to procure materials and contracts.

EGYPT: A TIMELINE

**March 22,
1945**

Egypt creates the Arab League with a couple of other member states (Syria, Lebanon, Iraq, and Transjordan) in Cairo. The aims of the league were to strengthen and coordinate all of the political, cultural, economic, and social programs of its members as well as attempt to mediate disputes between them and/or third parties. An additional treaty was signed on April 13, 1950 regarding joint defense and economic cooperation which committed the signatories to a coordination of military defense measures.

**May 15, 1948 -
July 20, 1949**

Egypt, Transjordan (now Jordan), Iraq, Syria, and Lebanon attack Israel. This was also called "the Nakba" (from the Arabic word *al-nakbah* which translates to "the catastrophe"). It is called this because of the displacement of the Palestinian people that followed after the war.

**July 23,
1952 - 1953**

The Free Officers Movement, led by Col. Gamal Abdel Nasser, take over the Egyptian government in a coup. This coup was fueled by Egyptian nationalism due to the British occupation of the Suez Canal. In 1953, Maj. Gen. Muhammad Naguib (who had been president since June 1953) declares Egypt a Republic.

March 26, 1979

Egypt signs a peace treaty with Israel. The other members of the Arab League vote to suspend Egypt's membership and transfer the League's headquarters from Cairo to Tunis.

**October 6-15,
1981**

Led by Khaled el Islambouli, a lieutenant in the Egyptian army who had connections to the Takfir Wal-Hajira, a group of men in army uniforms stopped in front of the reviewing stand and fired shots as well as threw grenades into a crowd of Egyptian government officials. President Sadat was shot four times and later passed away. Ten other people were also killed in the attack. On October 15, 1981, Mubarak is sworn in as Egypt's President. He pledges to follow the policies of President Sadat as well as carry the "sword of law" against those resorting to those violence.

May 21, 1989

Egypt rejoins the Arab League after being suspended for 10 years after its foreign minister takes his seat at an Arab foreign ministers' meeting.

2005 - 2013

The Muslim Brotherhood wins 29 seats in the second round of parliamentary voting after winning 47 seats in the first round in the 2005 elections. In 2008, military courts sentence 25 of the leading Muslim Brotherhood members to jail terms in crackdowns to target the organization's funding. President Mubarak steps down from his role as President and gives the power to the army council in 2011; his sons and he are later arrested on corruption charges during the same year. The following year, Mohammed Morsi wins the presidential election, becoming the first freely elected President in the country's history. He begins drafting a new constitution despite criticism of some of its language. In 2013, President Morsi is removed from power by a military coup, and hundreds are killed as protests begin. The Muslim Brotherhood is officially declared a terrorist group after a bomb blast that leaves 12 dead.

2014 - 2024

In 2014, a new permanent Constitution was voted in by the Egyptian government since the overthrow of the Islamist-led government. This banned parties based on religion. Also in 2014, former Egyptian military chief Abdel Fattah al-Sisi was declared the winner of the presidential election, with officials saying he won more than 96% of the vote. In 2015, Egyptian armed forces carried out airstrikes against ISIS in Libya after 21 Egyptians were kidnapped and killed in the city of Sirte. Egypt also participated in Anti-Houthi intervention in Yemen to return President Abd Rabbuh Mansur Hadi. A Human Rights Report was published by the US Department of State in 2016 regarding restrictions on peaceful assembly and expression. Since the events of October 7, 2024, Egypt has currently helped about one thousand Palestinians in treatment at hospitals, but rejects any larger influx of Palestinian refugees on Egyptian soil.