

Egypt

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For other uses, see [Egypt \(disambiguation\)](#).

<p>Arab Republic of Egypt</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • جمهورية مصر العربية (Arabic) <i>Jumhūrīyat Miṣr al-‘Arabīyah</i> 	
<div>  <p>Flag</p>  <p>Coat of arms</p> </div>	
<p>Anthem: "Bilady, Bilady, Bilady" "بلادي، بلادي، بلادي" (English: "My country, my country, my country") Duration: 1 minute and 26 seconds1:26</p>	
	
Capital and largest city	Cairo  30°2′N 31°13′E
Official languages	Arabic
National language	Egyptian Arabic ^[a]
Religion	See Religion in Egypt ^[b]
Demonym(s)	Egyptian

<u>Government</u>	Unitary <u>semi-presidential republic</u>
<u>President</u>	<u>Abdel Fattah el-Sisi</u>
<u>Prime Minister</u>	<u>Moustafa Madbouly</u>
Legislature	<u>Parliament</u>
<u>Upper house</u>	<u>Senate</u>
<u>Lower house</u>	<u>House of Representatives</u>
Establishment	
Unification of <u>Upper and Lower Egypt</u> ^{(1)(2)(c)}	c. 3150 BC
<u>Muhammad Ali dynasty</u> inaugurated	9 July 1805 ^[3]
<u>Independence</u> from <u>United Kingdom</u>	28 February 1922
<u>Revolution Day</u>	23 July 1952
Republic declared	18 June 1953
<u>Current constitution</u>	18 January 2014
<u>Area</u>	
Total	1,010,408 ^{[4][5]} km ² (390,121 sq mi) ^(29th)
Water (%)	0.632
<u>Population</u>	
2023 estimate	110,000,000 ^[6] ^(15th)
Density	103.56/km ² (268.2/sq mi) ^(118th)
<u>GDP (PPP)</u>	2023 estimate
Total	▲ \$1.809 trillion ^[7] ^(18th)
Per capita	▲ \$17,123 ^[7] ^(93rd)
<u>GDP</u> (nominal)	2023 estimate
Total	▼ \$398.397 billion ^[7] ^(38th)
Per capita	▼ \$3,770 ^[7] ^(127th)
<u>Gini</u> (2017)	▼ 31.5 ^[8] medium
<u>HDI</u> (2021)	— 0.731 ^[9] high · ^{97th}
Currency	<u>Egyptian pound</u> (LE/E£/£E) (<u>EGP</u>)
Time zone	<u>UTC+2</u> ^[d] (<u>EGY</u>)
Summer (<u>DST</u>)	<u>UTC+3</u>

Driving side	right
Calling code	+20
ISO 3166 code	EG
Internet TLD	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • .eg • .مصر
<p>a. [^] Literary Arabic is the sole official language.^[10] Egyptian Arabic is the spoken language. Other dialects and minority languages are spoken regionally.</p> <p>b. [^] While Islam is the majority and official religion of the country, the size of the country's historic Christian minority is highly controversial and disputed by various entities and groups. Estimates range from as low as 5% to as high as 20%. Since 2006, religion has been omitted from censuses after widespread claims that the figures had been distorted.^{[11][12][13]}</p> <p>c. [^] "Among the peoples of the ancient Near East, only the Egyptians have stayed where they were and remained what they were, although they have changed their language once and their religion twice. In a sense, they constitute the world's oldest nation".^[14] Arthur Goldschmidt Jr.</p> <p>d. [^] See Daylight saving time in Egypt.</p>	

Egypt (**Arabic:** مصر *Miṣr* [mesˤr], Egyptian Arabic pronunciation: [masˤr]), officially the **Arab Republic of Egypt**, is a [transcontinental country](#) spanning the [northeast corner of Africa](#) and the [Sinai Peninsula](#) in the [southwest corner of Asia](#). It is bordered by the [Mediterranean Sea](#) to [the north](#), the [Gaza Strip](#) of [Palestine](#) and [Israel](#) to [the northeast](#), the [Red Sea](#) to the east, [Sudan](#) to [the south](#), and [Libya](#) to [the west](#). The [Gulf of Aqaba](#) in the northeast separates Egypt from [Jordan](#) and [Saudi Arabia](#). [Cairo](#) is the capital and [largest city of Egypt](#), while [Alexandria](#), the second-largest city, is an important industrial and tourist hub at the [Mediterranean coast](#).^[14] At approximately 100 million inhabitants, Egypt is the [14th-most populated country in the world](#), and the [third-most populated](#) in Africa, behind [Nigeria](#) and [Ethiopia](#).

Egypt has one of the longest histories of any country, tracing its heritage along the [Nile Delta](#) back to the 6th–4th millennia BCE. Considered a [cradle of civilisation](#), [Ancient Egypt](#) saw some of the earliest developments of writing, agriculture, urbanisation, organised religion and central government.^[15] Egypt's long and rich cultural heritage is an integral part of its national identity, which reflects its unique [transcontinental](#) location being simultaneously [Mediterranean](#), [Middle Eastern](#) and [North African](#).^[16] Egypt was an early and important [centre of Christianity](#), but was largely [Islamised](#) in the seventh century. Modern Egypt dates back to 1922,

when it gained independence from the [British Empire](#) as a monarchy. Following the [1952 revolution](#), Egypt declared itself a [republic](#), and in 1958 it merged with [Syria](#) to form the [United Arab Republic](#), which dissolved in 1961. Throughout the second half of the 20th century, Egypt endured social and religious strife and political instability, fighting [several armed conflicts](#) with [Israel](#) in [1948](#), [1956](#), [1967](#) and [1973](#), and [occupying](#) the [Gaza Strip](#) intermittently until 1967. In 1978, Egypt signed the [Camp David Accords](#), officially withdrawing from the Gaza Strip and [recognising Israel](#). After the Arab Spring, which led to the [2011 Egyptian revolution](#) and overthrow of [Hosni Mubarak](#), the country faced a [protracted period of political unrest](#).

Egypt's current government, a [semi-presidential republic](#) led by [Abdel Fattah el-Sisi](#) since 2014, has been described by a number of watchdogs as authoritarian and responsible for perpetuating the country's poor [human rights record](#). [Islam](#) is the [official religion](#) of Egypt and [Arabic](#) is its official language.^[17] The great majority of its people live near the banks of the [Nile](#) River, an area of about 40,000 square kilometres (15,000 sq mi), where the only [arable land](#) is found. The large regions of the [Sahara desert](#), which constitute most of Egypt's territory, are sparsely inhabited. About 43% of Egypt's residents live across the country's urban areas,^[18] with most spread across the densely populated centres of greater Cairo, Alexandria and other major cities in the Nile Delta.

Egypt is considered to be a [regional power](#) in [North Africa](#), the [Middle East](#) and the [Muslim world](#), and a [middle power](#) worldwide.^[19] It is a [developing country](#) having a diversified economy, which is the [third-largest in Africa](#), the [38th-largest economy by nominal GDP](#) and [127th by nominal GDP](#) per capita.^[20] Egypt is a founding member of the [United Nations](#), the [Non-Aligned Movement](#), the [Arab League](#), the [African Union](#), [Organisation of Islamic Cooperation](#) and the [World Youth Forum](#).

Names

The English name "Egypt" is derived from the [Ancient Greek](#) "*Aígyptos*" (*Αἴγυπτος*), via [Middle French](#) "Egypte" and [Latin](#) "*Aegyptus*". It is reflected in [early Greek Linear B](#) tablets as "a-ku-pi-ti-yo".^[21] The adjective "aigýpti-"/"aigýptios" was borrowed into Coptic as "*gyptios*", and from there into [Arabic](#) as "*qubṭī*", back formed into "قبط" ("*qubṭ*"), whence English "[Copt](#)". The Greek forms were borrowed from [Late Egyptian](#) (*Amarna*) *Hikuptah* or "Memphis", a corruption of the earlier [Egyptian](#) name



(⟨*ḥwt-k3-ptḥ*⟩ ḥwt-k3-ptḥ), meaning "home of the [ka](#) (soul) of Ptah", the name of a temple to the god [Ptah](#) at [Memphis](#).^[22]

"*Miṣr*" (Arabic pronunciation: [misˤr]; مصر) is the [Classical Quranic Arabic](#) and modern official name of Egypt, while "*Maṣr*" (Egyptian Arabic pronunciation: [masˤr]; مَصر) is the local pronunciation in [Egyptian Arabic](#),^[23] with the full official name being "*Jumhūrīyat Miṣr al-ʿArabīyah*" and "*Gomhoreyyet Maṣr el-ʿArabeyya*" in Standard and Egyptian Arabic, respectively. The name is of [Semitic](#) origin, directly [cognate](#) with other Semitic words for Egypt such as the [Hebrew](#) מִצְרַיִם ("*Miṣráyim/Mitzráyim/Mizráim*"). The oldest attestation of this name for Egypt is the [Akkadian](#) "mi-iš-ru" ("mišru")^{[24][25]} related to *mišru*/*miširru*/*mišaru*, meaning "border" or "frontier".^[26] The [Neo-Assyrian Empire](#) used the derived term 𐏁𐏃𐏁𐏃, *Mu-ṣur*.^[27]

The ancient Egyptian name of the country was



() *km.t*, which means black land, likely referring to the [fertile](#) black soils of the [Nile flood](#) plains, distinct from the *deshret* (), or "red land" of the [desert](#).^{[28][29]} This name is commonly vocalised as *Kemet*, but was probably pronounced [kuːmat] in ancient Egyptian.^[30] The name is realised as *K(h)ēmə* ([Bohairic Coptic](#): ⲕⲏⲙⲓ, [Sahidic Coptic](#): ⲕⲏⲙⲉ) in the [Coptic](#) stage of the Egyptian language, and appeared in early Greek as (*Khēmía*).^{[31][32]} Another name was "land of the riverbank".^[33] The names of [Upper and Lower Egypt](#) were *Ta-Sheme'aw* () "sedgeland" and *Ta-Mehew* () "northland", respectively.

History

Main article: [History of Egypt](#)



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Prehistory and Ancient Egypt

Main articles: [Prehistoric Egypt](#) and [Ancient Egypt](#)



[Temple of Derr](#) ruins in 1960

There is evidence of [rock carvings](#) along the [Nile](#) terraces and in desert oases. In the [10th millennium BCE](#), a culture of [hunter-gatherers](#) and [fishers](#) was replaced by a [grain-grinding culture](#). Climate changes or [overgrazing](#) around 8000 [BCE](#) began to desiccate the pastoral lands of Egypt, forming the [Sahara](#). Early [tribal peoples](#) migrated to the Nile River where they developed a settled agricultural [economy](#) and more centralised [society](#).^[34]

By about 6000 BCE, a [Neolithic](#) culture took root in the Nile Valley.^[35] During the Neolithic era, several predynastic cultures developed independently in [Upper and Lower Egypt](#). The [Badarian](#) culture and the successor [Naqada](#) series are generally regarded as precursors to [dynastic Egypt](#). The earliest known Lower Egyptian site, Merimda, predates the Badarian by about seven hundred years. Contemporaneous Lower Egyptian communities coexisted with their southern counterparts for more than two thousand years, remaining culturally distinct, but maintaining frequent contact through trade. The earliest known evidence of [Egyptian hieroglyphic](#) inscriptions

appeared during the predynastic period on Naqada III pottery vessels, dated to about 3200 BCE.^[36]



The [Giza Necropolis](#) is the oldest of the [ancient Wonders](#) and the only one still in existence.

A unified kingdom was founded c. 3150 BCE by King [Menes](#), leading to a [series of dynasties](#) that ruled Egypt for the next three millennia. [Egyptian culture](#) flourished during this long period and remained distinctively Egyptian in its [religion](#), [arts](#), [language](#) and customs. The [first two ruling dynasties](#) of a unified Egypt set the stage for the [Old Kingdom](#) period, c. 2700–2200 BCE, which constructed many [pyramids](#), most notably the [Third Dynasty pyramid of Djoser](#) and the [Fourth Dynasty Giza pyramids](#).

The [First Intermediate Period](#) ushered in a time of political upheaval for about 150 years.^[37] Stronger Nile floods and stabilisation of government, however, brought back renewed prosperity for the country in the [Middle Kingdom](#) c. 2040 BCE, reaching a peak during the reign of Pharaoh [Amenemhat III](#). A [second period of disunity](#) heralded the arrival of the first foreign ruling dynasty in Egypt, that of the Semitic [Hyksos](#). The Hyksos invaders took over much of Lower Egypt around 1650 BCE and founded a new capital at [Avaris](#). They were driven out by an Upper Egyptian force led by [Ahmose I](#), who founded the [Eighteenth Dynasty](#) and relocated the capital from [Memphis](#) to [Thebes](#).

The [New Kingdom](#) c. 1550–1070 BCE began with the Eighteenth Dynasty, marking the rise of Egypt as an [international power](#) that expanded during its greatest extension to an empire as far south as [Tombos](#) in [Nubia](#), and included parts of the [Levant](#) in the east. This period is noted for some of the most well known [Pharaohs](#), including [Hatshepsut](#), [Thutmose III](#), [Akhenaten](#) and his wife [Nefertiti](#), [Tutankhamun](#) and [Ramesses II](#). The first historically attested expression of [monotheism](#) came during this period as [Atenism](#). Frequent contacts with other nations brought new ideas to the New Kingdom. The country was later invaded and conquered by [Libyans](#), [Nubians](#) and [Assyrians](#), but native Egyptians eventually drove them out and regained control of their country.^[38]



The Weighing of the Heart from the [Book of the Dead of Ani](#)

In 525 BCE, the [Achaemenid Empire](#), led by [Cambyses II](#), began their conquest of Egypt, eventually capturing the pharaoh [Psamtik III](#) at the battle of [Pelusium](#). Cambyses II then assumed the formal title of [pharaoh](#), but ruled Egypt from his home of [Susa](#) in Persia (modern [Iran](#)), leaving Egypt under the control of a [satrapy](#). The entire [Twenty-seventh Dynasty of Egypt](#), from 525 to 402 BCE, save for [Petubastis III](#), was an entirely Achaemenid-ruled period, with the Achaemenid emperors all being granted the title of pharaoh. A few temporarily successful revolts against the Achaemenids marked the fifth century BCE, but Egypt was never able to permanently overthrow the Achaemenids.^[39]

The [Thirtieth Dynasty](#) was the last native ruling dynasty during the Pharaonic epoch. It [fell to the Achaemenids again](#) in 343 BCE after the last native Pharaoh, King [Nectanebo II](#), was defeated in battle. This [Thirty-first Dynasty of Egypt](#), however, did not last long, as the Achaemenids were toppled several decades later by [Alexander the Great](#). The Macedonian Greek general of Alexander, [Ptolemy I Soter](#), founded the [Ptolemaic dynasty](#).^[40]

Ptolemaic and Roman Egypt

Main articles: [Ptolemaic Kingdom](#) and [Roman Egypt](#)



The Ptolemaic Queen [Cleopatra VII](#) and her son by Julius Caesar, [Caesarion](#), at the [Temple of Dendera](#)

The [Ptolemaic Kingdom](#) was a powerful [Hellenistic](#) state, extending from southern [Syria](#) in the east, to [Cyrene](#) to the west, and south to the frontier with Nubia. [Alexandria](#) became the capital city and a centre of [Greek](#) culture and trade. To gain recognition by the native Egyptian populace, they named themselves as the successors to the Pharaohs. The later Ptolemies took on Egyptian traditions, had themselves portrayed on public monuments in Egyptian style and dress, and participated in Egyptian religious life.^{[41][42]}

The last ruler from the [Ptolemaic](#) line was [Cleopatra VII](#), who committed suicide following the burial of her lover [Mark Antony](#), after [Octavian](#) had captured Alexandria and her mercenary forces had fled. The Ptolemies faced rebellions of native Egyptians and were involved in foreign and civil wars that led to the decline of the kingdom and its annexation by Rome.

Christianity was brought to Egypt by [Saint Mark the Evangelist](#) in the 1st century.^[43] [Diocletian](#)'s reign (284–305 CE) marked the transition from the [Roman](#) to the [Byzantine](#) era in Egypt, when a great number of Egyptian Christians were persecuted. The [New Testament](#) had by then been translated into Egyptian. After

the [Council of Chalcedon](#) in CE 451, a distinct [Egyptian Coptic Church](#) was firmly established.^[44]

Middle Ages (7th century – 1517)

Main article: [Egypt in the Middle Ages](#)



The [Amr ibn al-As](#) mosque in Cairo, recognized as the oldest in Africa

The Byzantines were able to regain control of the country after a brief [Sasanid Persian](#) invasion early in the 7th century amidst the [Byzantine–Sasanian War of 602–628](#) during which they established a new short-lived province for ten years known as [Sasanian Egypt](#), until 639–42, when Egypt was invaded and [conquered by the Islamic caliphate](#) by the [Muslim Arabs](#). When they defeated the Byzantine armies in Egypt, the Arabs brought [Islam](#) to the country. Some time during this period, Egyptians began to blend in their new faith with indigenous beliefs and practices, leading to various [Sufi](#) orders that have flourished to this day.^[43] These earlier rites had survived the period of [Coptic Christianity](#).^[45]

In 639 an army were sent in Egypt by the second [caliph](#), [Umar](#), under the command of [Amr ibn al-As](#). They defeated a Roman army at the battle of Heliopolis. Amr next proceeded in the direction of Alexandria, which surrendered to him by a treaty signed on 8 November 641. Alexandria was regained for the Byzantine Empire in 645 but was retaken by Amr in 646. In 654 an invasion fleet sent by [Constans II](#) was repulsed.

The Arabs founded the capital of Egypt called [Fustat](#), which was later burned down during the Crusades. Cairo was later built in the year 986 to grow to become the largest and richest city in the [Arab caliphate](#), second only to [Baghdad](#).

Abbasid period



The [Ibn Tulun Mosque](#) in Cairo, of [Ahmad Ibn Tulun](#)

The [Abbasid](#) period was marked by new taxations, and the Copts revolted again in the fourth year of Abbasid rule. At the beginning of the 9th century the practice of ruling Egypt through a governor was resumed under [Abdallah ibn Tahir](#), who decided to reside at [Baghdad](#), sending a deputy to Egypt to govern for him. In 828 another Egyptian revolt broke out, and in 831 the Copts joined with native Muslims against the government. Eventually the power loss of the Abbasids in Baghdad led for general upon general to take over rule of Egypt, yet being under Abbasid allegiance, the [Tulunid dynasty](#) (868–905) and [Ikhshidid dynasty](#) (935–969) were among the most successful to defy the Abbasid Caliph.

Fatimids, Ayyubids and Mamluks



The [Al-Hakim Mosque](#) in Cairo, of [Al-Hakim bi-Amr Allah](#), the sixth caliph, as renovated by [Dawoodi Bohra](#)

Muslim rulers remained in control of Egypt for the next six centuries, with [Cairo](#) as the seat of the [Fatimid Caliphate](#). With the end of the [Ayyubid dynasty](#), the [Mamluks](#), a [Turco-Circassian](#) military caste, took control about 1250. By the late 13th century, Egypt linked the Red Sea, India, Malaya, and East Indies.^[46] The mid-14th-century [Black Death](#) killed about 40% of the country's population.^[47]

Early modern period: Ottoman Egypt (1517–1867)

Main article: [Egypt Eyalet](#)



Napoleon defeated the [Mamluk](#) troops in the [Battle of the Pyramids](#), 21 July 1798, painted by [Lejeune](#).

Egypt was conquered by the [Ottoman Turks](#) in 1517, after which it became a province of the [Ottoman Empire](#). The defensive militarisation damaged its civil society and economic institutions.^[46] The weakening of the economic system combined with the effects of plague left Egypt vulnerable to foreign invasion. Portuguese traders took over their trade.^[46] Between 1687 and 1731, Egypt experienced six famines.^[48] The 1784 [famine](#) cost it roughly one-sixth of its population.^[49]

Egypt was always a difficult province for the Ottoman [Sultans](#) to control, due in part to the continuing power and influence of the [Mamluks](#), the Egyptian military caste who had ruled the country for centuries.

Egypt remained semi-autonomous under the [Mamluks](#) until it was [invaded](#) by the [French](#) forces of [Napoleon](#) Bonaparte in 1798. After the French were defeated by the British, a three-way power struggle ensued between the [Ottoman Turks](#), Egyptian [Mamluks](#) who had ruled Egypt for centuries, and [Albanian mercenaries](#) in the service of the Ottomans.

Muhammad Ali dynasty

Main article: [History of Egypt under the Muhammad Ali dynasty](#)



Egypt under Muhammad Ali dynasty



[Muhammad Ali](#) was the founder of the [Muhammad Ali dynasty](#) and the first [Khedive](#) of Egypt and [Sudan](#).

After the French were expelled, power was seized in 1805 by [Muhammad Ali Pasha](#), an [Albanian](#) military commander of the Ottoman army in Egypt. Muhammad Ali [massacred](#) the Mamluks and established a [dynasty](#) that was to rule Egypt until the revolution of 1952.

The introduction in 1820 of long-staple [cotton](#) transformed its agriculture into a cash-crop [monoculture](#) before the end of the century, concentrating land ownership and shifting production towards international markets.^[50]

Muhammad Ali annexed [Northern Sudan](#) (1820–1824), [Syria](#) (1833), and parts of [Arabia](#) and [Anatolia](#); but in 1841 the European powers, fearful lest he topple the Ottoman Empire itself, forced him to return most of his conquests to the Ottomans. His military ambition required him to modernise the country: he built industries, a system of canals for irrigation and transport, and reformed the [civil service](#).^[50]

He constructed a military state with around four percent of the populace serving the army to raise Egypt to a powerful positioning in the Ottoman Empire in a way showing various similarities to the Soviet strategies (without communism) conducted in the 20th century.^[51]

Muhammad Ali Pasha evolved the military from one that convened under the tradition of the [corvée](#) to a great modernised army. He introduced conscription of the male peasantry in 19th century Egypt, and took a novel approach to create his great army, strengthening it with numbers and in skill. Education and training of the new soldiers

became mandatory; the new concepts were furthermore enforced by isolation. The men were held in barracks to avoid distraction of their growth as a military unit to be reckoned with. The resentment for the military way of life eventually faded from the men and a new ideology took hold, one of nationalism and pride. It was with the help of this newly reborn martial unit that Muhammad Ali imposed his rule over Egypt.^[52]

The policy that Mohammad Ali Pasha followed during his reign explains partly why the numeracy in Egypt compared to other North-African and Middle-Eastern countries increased only at a remarkably small rate, as investment in further education only took place in the military and industrial sector.^[53]

Muhammad Ali was succeeded briefly by his son [Ibrahim](#) (in September 1848), then by a grandson [Abbas I](#) (in November 1848), then by [Saïd](#) (in 1854), and [Isma'il](#) (in 1863) who encouraged science and agriculture and banned slavery in Egypt.^[51]

Khedivate of Egypt (1867–1914)

Main article: [Khedivate of Egypt](#)

[Egypt under the Muhammad Ali dynasty](#) remained nominally an Ottoman province. It was granted the status of an [autonomous vassal state](#) or [Khedivate](#) in 1867.

The [Suez Canal](#), built in partnership with the French, was completed in 1869. Its construction was financed by European banks. Large sums also went to patronage and corruption. New taxes caused popular discontent. In 1875 Isma'il avoided bankruptcy by selling all Egypt's shares in the canal to the British government. Within three years this led to the imposition of British and French [controllers](#) who sat in the Egyptian cabinet, and, "with the financial power of the bondholders behind them, were the real power in the Government."^[54]

Other circumstances like epidemic diseases (cattle disease in the 1880s), floods and wars drove the economic downturn and increased Egypt's dependency on foreign debt even further.^[55]



The [battle of Tel el-Kebir](#) in 1882 during the [Anglo-Egyptian War](#)

Local dissatisfaction with the Khedive and with European intrusion led to the formation of the first nationalist groupings in 1879, with [Ahmed 'Urabi](#) a prominent figure. After increasing tensions and nationalist revolts, the United Kingdom invaded Egypt in 1882, crushing the Egyptian army at the [Battle of Tell El Kebir](#) and militarily occupying the country.^[56] Following this, the Khedivate became a *de facto* British protectorate under nominal Ottoman sovereignty.^[57]

In 1899 the Anglo-Egyptian Condominium Agreement was signed: the Agreement stated that Sudan would be jointly governed by the Khedivate of Egypt and the United Kingdom. However, actual control of Sudan was in British hands only.

In 1906, the [Denshawai incident](#) prompted many neutral Egyptians to join the nationalist movement.

Sultanate of Egypt (1914–1922)

Main article: [Sultanate of Egypt](#)



Female nationalists demonstrating in [Cairo](#), 1919

In 1914 the [Ottoman Empire](#) entered World War I in alliance with the Central Empires; Khedive [Abbas II](#) (who had grown increasingly hostile to the British in preceding years) decided to support the motherland in war. Following such decision, the British forcibly removed him from power and replaced him with his brother [Hussein Kamel](#).^{[58][59]}

Hussein Kamel declared Egypt's independence from the Ottoman Empire, assuming the title of [Sultan of Egypt](#). Shortly following independence, Egypt was declared a protectorate of the United Kingdom.

After [World War I](#), [Saad Zaghlul](#) and the [Wafd Party](#) led the Egyptian nationalist movement to a majority at the local [Legislative Assembly](#). When the British exiled Zaghlul and his associates to [Malta](#) on 8 March 1919, the country arose in its [first modern revolution](#). The revolt led the [UK government](#) to issue a [unilateral declaration of Egypt's independence](#) on 22 February 1922.^[60]

Kingdom of Egypt (1922–1953)

Main article: [Kingdom of Egypt](#)



[Fuad I of Egypt](#) with [Edward, Prince of Wales](#), 1932

Following independence from the United Kingdom, Sultan [Fuad I](#) assumed the title of [King of Egypt](#); despite being nominally independent, the Kingdom was still under British military occupation and the UK still had great influence over the state.



British infantry near [El Alamein](#), 17 July 1942

The [new government](#) drafted and implemented a [constitution](#) in 1923 based on a [parliamentary](#) system. The nationalist Wafd Party won a landslide victory in the [1923–1924 election](#) and [Saad Zaghloul](#) was appointed as the new Prime Minister.

In 1936, the [Anglo-Egyptian Treaty](#) was concluded and British troops withdrew from Egypt, except for the Suez Canal. The treaty did not resolve the question of [Sudan](#), which, under the terms of the existing Anglo-Egyptian Condominium Agreement of 1899, stated that Sudan should be jointly governed by Egypt and Britain, but with real power remaining in British hands.^[61]

Britain used Egypt as a base for Allied operations throughout the region, especially the battles in North Africa against Italy and Germany. Its highest priorities were control of the Eastern Mediterranean, and especially keeping the Suez Canal open for merchant ships and for military connections with India and Australia. When the war began in September 1939, Egypt declared martial law and broke off diplomatic relations with Germany. It broke diplomatic relations with Italy in 1940, but never declared war, even when the Italian army invaded Egypt. The Egyptian army did no fighting. In June 1940 the King dismissed Prime Minister Aly Maher, who got on poorly with the British. A new coalition Government was formed with the Independent Hassan Pasha Sabri as Prime Minister.

Following a ministerial crisis in February 1942, the ambassador Sir [Miles Lampson](#), pressed Farouk to have a [Wafd](#) or Wafd-coalition government replace [Hussein Sirri Pasha](#)'s government. On the night of 4 February 1942, [British troops and tanks](#)

[surrounded Abdeen Palace in Cairo and Lampson presented Farouk with an ultimatum](#). Farouk capitulated, and Nahhas formed a government shortly thereafter.

Most British troops were withdrawn to the Suez Canal area in 1947 (although the British army maintained a military base in the area), but nationalist, anti-British feelings continued to grow after the War. Anti-monarchy sentiments further increased following the disastrous performance of the Kingdom in the [First Arab-Israeli War](#). The 1950 election saw a landslide victory of the nationalist [Wafd Party](#) and the King was forced to appoint [Mostafa El-Nahas](#) as new Prime Minister. In 1951 Egypt unilaterally withdrew from the [Anglo-Egyptian Treaty of 1936](#) and ordered all remaining British troops to leave the Suez Canal.

As the British refused to leave their base around the Suez Canal, the Egyptian government cut off the water and refused to allow food into the Suez Canal base, announced a boycott of British goods, forbade Egyptian workers from entering the base and sponsored guerrilla attacks. On 24 January 1952, Egyptian guerrillas staged a fierce attack on the British forces around the Suez Canal, during which the Egyptian Auxiliary Police were observed helping the guerrillas. In response, on 25 January, General [George Erskine](#) sent out British tanks and infantry to surround the auxiliary police station in Ismailia. The police commander called the Interior Minister, [Fouad Serageddin](#), Nahas's right-hand man, to ask if he should surrender or fight. Serageddin ordered the police to fight "to the last man and the last bullet". The resulting battle saw the police station levelled and 43 Egyptian policemen killed together with 3 British soldiers. The Ismailia incident outraged Egypt. The next day, 26 January 1952 was "[Black Saturday](#)", as the anti-British riot was known, that saw much of downtown Cairo which the Khedive Ismail the Magnificent had rebuilt in the style of Paris, burned down. Farouk blamed the Wafd for the Black Saturday riot, and dismissed Nahas as prime minister the next day. He was replaced by [Aly Maher Pasha](#).^[62]

On 22–23 July 1952, the [Free Officers Movement](#), led by [Muhammad Naguib](#) and [Gamal Abdel Nasser](#), launched a coup d'état ([Egyptian Revolution of 1952](#)) against the king. Farouk I abdicated the throne to his son [Fouad II](#), who was, at the time, a seven-month-old baby. The Royal Family left Egypt some days later and the Council of Regency, led by [Prince Muhammad Abdel Moneim](#) was formed. The council, however, held only nominal authority and the real power was actually in the hands of the [Revolutionary Command Council](#), led by Naguib and Nasser.

Popular expectations for immediate reforms led to the workers' riots in [Kafr Dawar](#) on 12 August 1952. Following a brief experiment with civilian rule, the Free Officers abrogated the monarchy and the 1923 constitution and declared Egypt a republic on 18 June 1953. Naguib was proclaimed as president, while Nasser was appointed as the new Prime Minister.

Republic of Egypt (1953–1958)

Main article: [History of republican Egypt](#)

Following the [1952 Revolution](#) by the [Free Officers Movement](#), the rule of Egypt passed to military hands and all political parties were banned. On 18 June 1953, the Egyptian Republic was declared, with General [Muhammad Naguib](#) as the first

President of the Republic, serving in that capacity for a little under one and a half years.

President Nasser (1956–1970)



Egyptian President [Gamal Abdel Nasser](#) in Mansoura, 1960

Naguib was forced to resign in 1954 by [Gamal Abdel Nasser](#) – a [Pan-Arabist](#) and the real architect of the 1952 movement – and was later put under [house arrest](#). After Naguib's resignation, the position of President was vacant until the election of Nasser in 1956.^[63]

In October 1954, Egypt and the United Kingdom agreed to abolish the [Anglo-Egyptian Condominium Agreement](#) of 1899 and grant Sudan independence; the agreement came into force on 1 January 1956.

Nasser assumed [power](#) as president in June 1956. British forces completed their withdrawal from the occupied Suez Canal Zone on 13 June 1956.

He [nationalised](#) the Suez Canal on 26 July 1956; his hostile approach towards Israel and economic nationalism prompted the beginning of the [Second Arab-Israeli War](#) (Suez Crisis), in which Israel (with support from France and the United Kingdom) occupied the Sinai peninsula and the Canal. The war came to an end because of US and USSR diplomatic intervention and the *status quo* was restored.

United Arab Republic (1958–1971)



Smoke rises from oil tanks beside the [Suez Canal](#) hit during the initial [Anglo-French assault](#) on Egypt, 5 November 1956.

In 1958, Egypt and [Syria](#) formed a sovereign union known as the [United Arab Republic](#). The union was short-lived, ending in 1961 when [Syria](#) seceded, thus ending the union. During most of its existence, the United Arab Republic was also in a loose [confederation](#) with [North Yemen](#) (or the Mutawakkilite Kingdom of Yemen), known as the [United Arab States](#).

In the early 1960s, Egypt became fully involved in the [North Yemen Civil War](#). Despite several military moves and peace conferences, the war sank into a stalemate.^[64]

In mid May 1967, the Soviet Union issued warnings to [Nasser](#) of an impending Israeli attack on Syria. Although the chief of staff [Mohamed Fawzi](#) verified them as "baseless",^{[65][66]} Nasser took three successive steps that made the war virtually inevitable: on 14 May he deployed his troops in Sinai near the border with Israel, on 19 May he expelled the UN peacekeepers stationed in the Sinai Peninsula border with Israel, and on 23 May he closed the [Straits of Tiran](#) to Israeli shipping.^[67] On 26 May [Nasser](#) declared, "The battle will be a general one and our basic objective will be to destroy Israel".^[68]

This prompted the beginning of the [Third Arab Israeli War](#) (Six-Day War) in which Israel attacked Egypt, and occupied [Sinai Peninsula](#) and the [Gaza Strip](#), which Egypt had [occupied](#) since the [1948 Arab–Israeli War](#). During the 1967 war, an [Emergency Law](#) was enacted, and remained in effect until 2012, with the exception of an 18-month break in 1980/81.^[69] Under this law, police powers were extended, constitutional rights suspended and censorship legalised.^[70]

At the time of the fall of the Egyptian monarchy in the early 1950s, less than half a million Egyptians were considered upper class and rich, four million middle class and 17 million lower class and poor.^[71] Fewer than half of all primary-school-age children attended school, most of them being boys. Nasser's policies changed this. Land reform and distribution, the dramatic growth in university education, and government support to national industries greatly improved social mobility and flattened the social curve. From academic year 1953–54 through 1965–66, overall public school enrolments more than doubled. Millions of previously poor Egyptians, through education and jobs in the public sector, joined the middle class. Doctors, engineers, teachers, lawyers, journalists, constituted the bulk of the swelling middle class in Egypt under Nasser.^[71] During the 1960s, the Egyptian economy went from sluggish to the verge of collapse, the society became less free, and Nasser's appeal waned considerably.^[72]

Arab Republic of Egypt (1971–present)

President Sadat (1970–1981)



Egyptian tanks advancing in the Sinai desert during the [Yom Kippur War](#), 1973

In 1970, President Nasser died and was succeeded by [Anwar Sadat](#). Sadat switched Egypt's [Cold War](#) allegiance from the Soviet Union to the United States, expelling Soviet advisors in 1972. He launched the [Infitah](#) economic reform policy, while clamping down on religious and secular opposition. In 1973, Egypt, along with Syria, launched the [Fourth Arab-Israeli War](#) (Yom Kippur War), a surprise attack to regain part of the Sinai territory Israel had captured 6 years earlier.



Celebrating the signing of the 1978 [Camp David Accords](#): [Menachem Begin](#), [Jimmy Carter](#), [Anwar Sadat](#)

In 1975, Sadat shifted Nasser's economic policies and sought to use his popularity to reduce government regulations and encourage foreign investment through his program of Infitah. Through this policy, incentives such as reduced taxes and import tariffs attracted some investors, but investments were mainly directed at low risk and profitable ventures like tourism and construction, abandoning Egypt's infant industries.^[73] Because of the elimination of subsidies on basic foodstuffs, it led to the [1977 Egyptian Bread Riots](#).

Sadat made a [historic visit to Israel in 1977](#), which led to the 1979 [Egypt-Israel peace treaty](#) in exchange for Israeli withdrawal from Sinai. In return, Egypt recognized Israel as a legitimate sovereign state. Sadat's initiative sparked enormous controversy in the [Arab world](#) and led to Egypt's expulsion from the [Arab League](#), but it was supported by most Egyptians.^[74] [Sadat was assassinated](#) by an Islamic extremist in October 1981.

President Mubarak (1981–2011)

[Hosni Mubarak](#) came to power after the assassination of Sadat in a referendum in which he was the only candidate.^[75] Hosni Mubarak reaffirmed Egypt's relationship with Israel yet eased the tensions with Egypt's Arab neighbours. Domestically, Mubarak faced serious problems. Mass poverty and unemployment led rural families to stream into cities like Cairo where they ended up in crowded slums, barely managing to survive.

On [25 February 1986](#), the Security Police started rioting, protesting against reports that their term of duty was to be extended from 3 to 4 years. Hotels, nightclubs, restaurants and casinos were attacked in Cairo and there were riots in other cities. A day time curfew was imposed. It took the army 3 days to restore order. 107 people were killed.^[76]

In the 1980s, 1990s, and 2000s, terrorist attacks in Egypt became numerous and severe, and began to target Christian [Copts](#), foreign tourists and government officials.^[77] In the 1990s an [Islamist](#) group, [Al-Gama'a al-Islamiyya](#), engaged in an extended campaign of violence, from the murders and attempted murders of prominent writers and intellectuals, to the repeated targeting of tourists and foreigners. Serious damage was done to the largest sector of Egypt's economy—tourism^[78]—and in turn to the government, but it also devastated the livelihoods of many of the people on whom the group depended for support.^[79]

During Mubarak's reign, the political scene was dominated by the [National Democratic Party](#), which was created by Sadat in 1978. It passed the 1993 Syndicates Law, 1995 Press Law, and 1999 Nongovernmental Associations Law

which hampered freedoms of association and expression by imposing new regulations and draconian penalties on violations.^[80] As a result, by the late 1990s parliamentary politics had become virtually irrelevant and alternative avenues for political expression were curtailed as well.^[81]



[Cairo](#) grew into a [metropolitan area](#) with a population of over 20 million.

On 17 November 1997, [62 people, mostly tourists, were massacred](#) near [Luxor](#).

In late February 2005, Mubarak announced a reform of the presidential election law, paving the way for multi-candidate polls for the first time since the [1952 movement](#).^[82] However, the new law placed restrictions on the candidates, and led to Mubarak's easy re-election victory.^[83] Voter turnout was less than 25%.^[84] Election observers also alleged government interference in the election process.^[85] After the election, Mubarak imprisoned [Ayman Nour](#), the runner-up.^[86]

Human Rights Watch's 2006 report on Egypt detailed serious human rights violations, including routine [torture](#), arbitrary detentions and trials before military and state security courts.^[87] In 2007, [Amnesty International](#) released a report alleging that Egypt had become an international centre for torture, where other nations send suspects for interrogation, often as part of the [War on Terror](#).^[88] Egypt's foreign ministry quickly issued a rebuttal to this report.^[89]

Constitutional changes voted on 19 March 2007 prohibited parties from using religion as a basis for political activity, allowed the drafting of a new anti-terrorism law, authorised broad police powers of arrest and surveillance, and gave the president power to dissolve parliament and end judicial election monitoring.^[90] In 2009, Dr. Ali El Deen Hilal Dessouki, Media Secretary of the National Democratic Party ([NDP](#)), described Egypt as a "[pharaonic](#)" political system, and democracy as a "long-term goal". Dessouki also stated that "the real center of power in Egypt is the military".^[citation needed]

Revolution (2011)

Main article: [2011 Egyptian revolution](#)





Top: celebrations in Tahrir Square after the announcement of Hosni Mubarak's resignation.

Bottom: protests in Tahrir Square against President [Morsi](#) on 27 November 2012.

On 25 January 2011, [widespread protests](#) began against Mubarak's government. On 11 February 2011, Mubarak resigned and fled Cairo. Jubilant celebrations broke out in Cairo's [Tahrir Square](#) at the news.^[91] The [Egyptian military](#) then assumed the power to govern.^{[92][93]} [Mohamed Hussein Tantawi](#), chairman of the [Supreme Council of the Armed Forces](#), became the *de facto* interim [head of state](#).^{[94][95]} On 13 February 2011, the military dissolved the parliament and suspended the constitution.^[96]

A [constitutional referendum](#) was held on 19 March 2011.^[97] On 28 November 2011, Egypt held its [first parliamentary election](#) since the previous regime had been in power. Turnout was high and there were no reports of major irregularities or violence.^[98]

President Morsi (2012–2013)

[Mohamed Morsi](#) was [elected president](#) on 24 June 2012.^[99] On 30 June 2012, Mohamed Morsi was sworn in as Egypt's president.^[100] On 2 August 2012, Egypt's Prime Minister [Hisham Qandil](#) announced his 35-member cabinet comprising 28 newcomers, including four from the Muslim Brotherhood.^[101]

Liberal and secular groups walked out of the [constituent assembly](#) because they believed that it would impose strict Islamic practices, while Muslim Brotherhood backers threw their support behind Morsi.^[102] On 22 November 2012, President Morsi issued a temporary declaration immunising his decrees from challenge and seeking to protect the work of the constituent assembly.^[103]

The move led to massive protests and violent action throughout Egypt.^[104] On 5 December 2012, tens of thousands of supporters and opponents of President Morsi clashed, in what was described as the largest violent battle between Islamists and their foes since the country's revolution.^[105] Mohamed Morsi offered a "national dialogue" with opposition leaders but refused to cancel the [December 2012 constitutional referendum](#).^[106]

Political crisis (2013)

Main article: [2013 Egyptian coup d'état](#)

On 3 July 2013, [after a wave of public discontent](#) with autocratic excesses of Morsi's [Muslim Brotherhood](#) government,^[107] the military [removed](#) Morsi from office, dissolved the Shura Council and installed a temporary interim government.^[108]

On 4 July 2013, 68-year-old Chief Justice of the [Supreme Constitutional Court of Egypt](#) [Adly Mansour](#) was sworn in as acting president over the new government following the removal of Morsi.^[109] The new Egyptian authorities cracked down on the

Muslim Brotherhood and its supporters, jailing thousands and forcefully dispersing pro-Morsi and pro-Brotherhood protests.^{[110][111]} Many of the Muslim Brotherhood leaders and activists have either been sentenced to death or life imprisonment in a series of mass trials.^{[112][113][114]}

On 18 January 2014, the interim government instituted a [new constitution](#) following a referendum approved by an overwhelming majority of voters (98.1%). 38.6% of registered voters participated in the referendum^[115] a higher number than the 33% who voted in a referendum during Morsi's tenure.^[116]

President el-Sisi (2014–present)



Women in Cairo wear face masks during the [COVID-19 pandemic in Egypt](#) in March 2020.

On 26 March 2014, Field Marshal [Abdel Fattah el-Sisi](#), Egyptian Defence Minister and Commander-in-Chief [Egyptian Armed Forces](#), retired from the military, announcing he would stand as a candidate in the [2014 presidential election](#).^[117] The poll, held between 26 and 28 May 2014, resulted in a landslide victory for el-Sisi.^[118] Sisi was sworn into office as [President of Egypt](#) on 8 June 2014.^[119] The Muslim Brotherhood and some liberal and secular activist groups boycotted the vote.^[120] Even though the interim authorities extended voting to a third day, the 46% turnout was lower than the 52% turnout in the 2012 election.^[121]

A new parliamentary election was held in December 2015, resulting in a landslide victory for pro-Sisi parties, which secured a strong majority in the newly formed [House of Representatives](#).^[122]

In 2016, Egypt entered in a diplomatic crisis with Italy following the [murder of researcher Giulio Regeni](#): in April 2016, Prime Minister [Matteo Renzi](#) recalled the Italian ambassador from Cairo because of lack of co-operation from the Egyptian Government in the investigation.^[123] The ambassador was sent back to Egypt in 2017 by the new Prime Minister [Paolo Gentiloni](#).^[124]

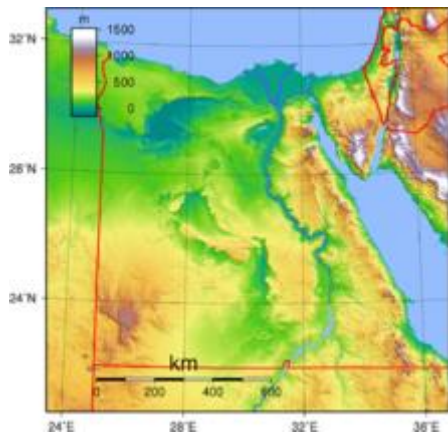
El-Sisi was [re-elected in 2018](#), facing no serious opposition.^[125] In 2019, a series of constitutional amendments were approved by the parliament, further increasing the President's and the military's power, increasing presidential terms from 4 years to 6 years and allowing El-Sisi to run for another two mandates.^[126] The proposals [were approved in a referendum](#).^[127]

The dispute between Egypt and [Ethiopia](#) over the [Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam](#) escalated in 2020.^{[128][129]} Egypt sees the dam as an existential threat,^[130] fearing that the dam will reduce the amount of water it receives from the [Nile](#).^[131]

In December 2020, final results of the parliamentary [election](#) confirmed a clear majority of the seats for Egypt's Mostaqbal Watn ([Nation's Future](#)) Party, which strongly supports president el-Sisi. The party even increased its majority, partly because of new electoral rules.^[132]

Geography

Main article: [Geography of Egypt](#)



Egypt's topography

Egypt lies primarily between latitudes [22°](#) and [32°N](#), and longitudes [25°](#) and [35°E](#). At 1,001,450 square kilometres (386,660 sq mi), it is the world's 30th-largest country.^[133] Due to the extreme aridity of Egypt's climate, population centres are concentrated along the narrow Nile Valley and Delta, meaning that about 99% of the population uses about 5.5% of the total land area.^[134] 98% of Egyptians live on 3% of the territory.^[135]

Egypt is bordered by Libya to the west, the Sudan to the south, and the Gaza Strip and Israel to the east. A [transcontinental nation](#), it possesses a land bridge (the Isthmus of Suez) between Africa and Asia, traversed by a navigable waterway (the [Suez Canal](#)) that connects the Mediterranean Sea with the Indian Ocean by way of the Red Sea.

Apart from the Nile Valley, the majority of Egypt's landscape is desert, with a few [oases](#) scattered about. Winds create prolific [sand dunes](#) that peak at more than 30 metres (100 ft) high. Egypt includes parts of the [Sahara](#) desert and of the [Libyan Desert](#).

Sinai peninsula hosts the highest mountain in Egypt, [Mount Catherine](#) at 2,642 meters. The [Red Sea Riviera](#), on the east of the peninsula, is renowned for its wealth of coral reefs and marine life.

Towns and cities include [Alexandria](#), the second largest city; [Aswan](#); [Asyut](#); [Cairo](#), the modern Egyptian capital and largest city; [El Mahalla El Kubra](#); [Giza](#), the site of the Pyramid of Khufu; [Hurghada](#); [Luxor](#); [Kom Ombo](#); [Port Safaga](#); [Port Said](#); [Sharm El Sheikh](#); [Suez](#), where the south end of the Suez Canal is located; [Zagazig](#);

and [Minya](#). [Oases](#) include [Bahariya](#), [Dakhla](#), [Farafra](#), [Kharga](#) and [Siwa](#). [Protectorates](#) include Ras Mohamed National Park, Zaranik Protectorate and Siwa.

On 13 March 2015, plans for a [proposed new capital of Egypt](#) were announced.^[136]

Climate

Main article: [Climate of Egypt](#)



The [Qattara Depression](#) in Egypt's north west

Most of Egypt's rain falls in the winter months.^[137] South of Cairo, rainfall averages only around 2 to 5 mm (0.1 to 0.2 in) per year and at intervals of many years. On a very thin strip of the northern coast the rainfall can be as high as 410 mm (16.1 in),^[138] mostly between October and March. [Snow](#) falls on Sinai's mountains and some of the north coastal cities such as [Damietta](#), [Baltim](#) and [Sidi Barrani](#), and rarely in Alexandria. A very small amount of snow fell on Cairo on 13 December 2013, the first time in many decades.^[139] [Frost](#) is also known in mid-Sinai and mid-Egypt.

Egypt has an unusually hot, sunny and dry climate. Average high temperatures are high in the north but very to extremely high in the rest of the country during summer. The cooler Mediterranean winds consistently blow over the northern sea coast, which helps to get more moderated temperatures, especially at the height of the summertime. The [Khamaseen](#) is a hot, dry wind that originates from the vast deserts in the south and blows in the spring or in the early summer. It brings scorching sand and dust particles, and usually brings daytime temperatures over 40 °C (104 °F) and sometimes over 50 °C (122 °F) in the interior, while the relative humidity can drop to 5% or even less.

Prior to the construction of the [Aswan Dam](#), the Nile flooded annually, replenishing Egypt's soil. This gave Egypt a consistent harvest throughout the years.

The potential rise in sea levels due to [global warming](#) could threaten Egypt's densely populated coastal strip and have grave consequences for the country's economy, agriculture and industry. Combined with growing demographic pressures, a significant rise in sea levels could turn millions of Egyptians into [environmental refugees](#) by the end of the 21st century, according to some climate experts.^{[140][141]}

Biodiversity

Main article: [Wildlife of Egypt](#)



The [Eastern Imperial Eagle](#) is the national animal of Egypt.

Egypt signed the Rio [Convention on Biological Diversity](#) on 9 June 1992, and became a party to the convention on 2 June 1994.^[142] It has subsequently produced a [National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan](#), which was received by the convention on 31 July 1998.^[143] Where many [CBD National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plans](#) neglect biological kingdoms apart from animals and plants,^[144]

The plan stated that the following numbers of species of different groups had been recorded from Egypt: algae (1483 species), animals (about 15,000 species of which more than 10,000 were insects), fungi (more than 627 species), monera (319 species), plants (2426 species), protozoans (371 species). For some major groups, for example lichen-forming fungi and nematode worms, the number was not known. Apart from small and well-studied groups like amphibians, birds, fish, mammals and reptiles, the many of those numbers are likely to increase as further species are recorded from Egypt. For the fungi, including lichen-forming species, for example, subsequent work has shown that over 2200 species have been recorded from Egypt, and the final figure of all fungi actually occurring in the country is expected to be much higher.^[145] For the grasses, 284 native and naturalised species have been identified and recorded in Egypt.^[146]

Government

Main article: [Politics of Egypt](#)



[Abdel Fattah el-Sisi](#) is the current [President of Egypt](#).

The [House of Representatives](#), whose members are elected to serve five-year terms, specialises in legislation. [Elections](#) were held between [November 2011 and January](#)

[2012](#), which were later dissolved. [The next parliamentary election](#) was announced to be held within 6 months of the constitution's ratification on 18 January 2014, and were held in two phases, from 17 October to 2 December 2015.^[147] Originally, the parliament was to be formed before the president was elected, but interim president [Adly Mansour](#) pushed the date.^[148] The [2014 Egyptian presidential election](#) took place on 26–28 May. Official figures showed a turnout of 25,578,233 or 47.5%, with [Abdel Fattah el-Sisi](#) winning with 23.78 million votes, or 96.9% compared to 757,511 (3.1%) for [Hamdeen Sabahi](#).^[149]

After a wave of public discontent with the autocratic excesses^[clarification needed] of the [Muslim Brotherhood](#) government of President [Mohamed Morsi](#),^[107] on 3 July 2013 then-[General Abdel Fattah el-Sisi](#) announced the removal of Morsi from office and the suspension of the [constitution](#). A 50-member constitution committee was formed for modifying [the constitution](#), which was later published for [public voting](#) and was adopted on 18 January 2014.^[150]

In 2013, [Freedom House](#) rated [political rights](#) in Egypt at 5 (with 1 representing the most free and 7 the least), and [civil liberties](#) at 5, which gave it the freedom rating of "Partly Free".^[151]

[Egyptian nationalism](#) predates its Arab counterpart by many decades, having roots in the 19th century and becoming the dominant mode of expression of Egyptian anti-colonial activists and intellectuals until the early 20th century.^[152] The ideology espoused by [Islamists](#) such as the [Muslim Brotherhood](#) is mostly supported by the lower-middle strata of Egyptian society.^[153]

Egypt has the oldest continuous parliamentary tradition in the Arab world.^[154] The first popular assembly was established in 1866. It was disbanded as a result of the British occupation of 1882, and the British allowed only a consultative body to sit. In 1923, however, after the country's independence was declared, a new constitution provided for a parliamentary monarchy.^[154]

Military and foreign relations

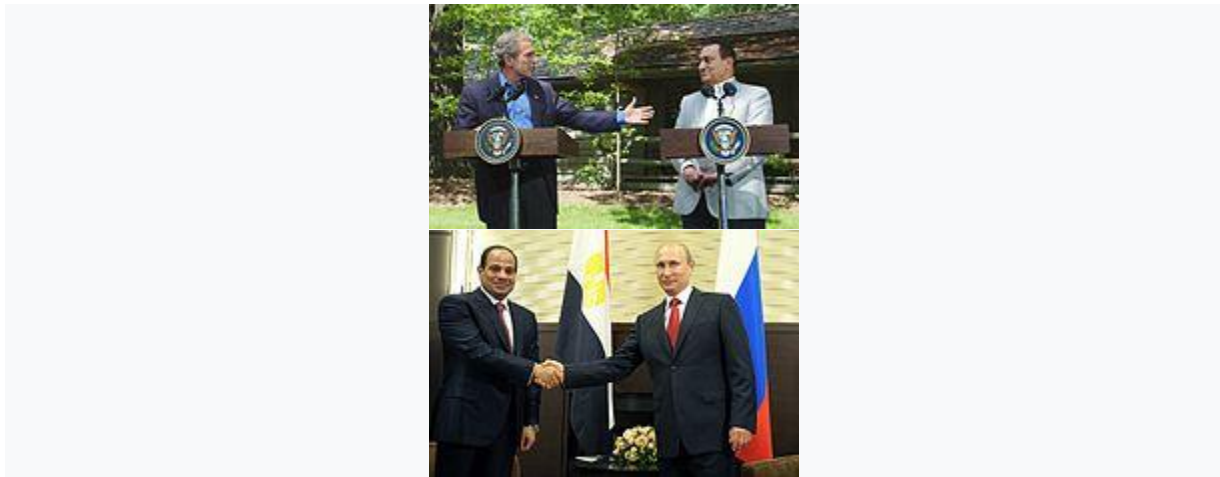
Main articles: [Egyptian Armed Forces](#) and [Foreign relations of Egypt](#)



Egyptian honor guard soldiers during a visit of U.S. Navy Adm. Mike Mullen

The military is influential in the political and economic life of Egypt and exempts itself from laws that apply to other sectors. It enjoys considerable power, prestige and independence within the state and has been widely considered part of the Egyptian "[deep state](#)".^{[75][155][156]}

Egypt is speculated by Israel to be the second country in the region with a [spy satellite](#), [EgyptSat 1](#)^[157] in addition to [EgyptSat 2](#) launched on 16 April 2014.^[158]



Top: Former President [Hosni Mubarak](#) with former US President [George W. Bush](#) at Camp David in 2002.

Bottom: President [Abdel Fattah el-Sisi](#) and Russian President [Vladimir Putin](#) in Sochi, August 2014.

The [United States](#) provides Egypt with annual [military assistance](#), which in 2015 amounted to US\$1.3 billion.^[159] In 1989, Egypt was designated as a [major non-NATO ally](#) of the United States.^[160] Nevertheless, ties between the two countries have partially soured since the [July 2013 overthrow](#) of Islamist president [Mohamed Morsi](#),^[161] with the [Obama administration](#) denouncing Egypt over its crackdown on the Muslim Brotherhood, and cancelling future military exercises involving the two countries.^[162] There have been recent attempts, however, to normalise relations between the two, with both governments frequently calling for mutual support in the [fight against regional and international terrorism](#).^{[163][164][165]} However, following [the election](#) of [Republican Donald Trump](#) as the [President of the United States](#), the two countries were looking to improve the [Egyptian-American relations](#). On 3 April 2017 al-Sisi met with Trump at the White House, marking the first visit of an Egyptian president to Washington in 8 years. Trump praised al-Sisi in what was reported as a public relations victory for the Egyptian president, and signaled it was time for a normalization of the relations between Egypt and the US.^[166]

Relations with [Russia](#) have improved significantly following Mohamed Morsi's removal^[167] and both countries have worked since then to strengthen military^[168] and trade ties^[169] among other aspects of bilateral co-operation. [Relations with China](#) have also improved considerably. In 2014, Egypt and [China](#) established a bilateral "comprehensive strategic partnership".^[170]

The permanent [headquarters](#) of the [Arab League](#) are located in Cairo and the body's secretary general has traditionally been Egyptian. This position is currently held by former foreign minister [Ahmed Aboul Gheit](#). The Arab League briefly moved from Egypt to [Tunis](#) in 1978 to protest the [Egypt–Israel peace treaty](#), but it later returned to Cairo in 1989. Gulf monarchies, including the [United Arab Emirates](#)^[171] and [Saudi Arabia](#),^[172] have pledged billions of dollars to help Egypt overcome its economic difficulties since the overthrow of Morsi.^[173]



President el-Sisi with US President [Joe Biden](#), 11

November 2022

Following the [1973 war](#) and the subsequent peace treaty, Egypt became the first Arab nation to establish [diplomatic relations](#) with Israel. Despite that, Israel is still widely considered as a hostile state by the majority of Egyptians.^[174] Egypt has played a historical role as a mediator in resolving various disputes in the Middle East, most notably its handling of the [Israeli–Palestinian conflict](#) and the [peace process](#).^[175] Egypt's ceasefire and truce brokering efforts in [Gaza](#) have hardly been challenged following [Israel](#)'s evacuation of its settlements from the strip in 2005, despite increasing animosity towards the [Hamass government in Gaza](#) following the ouster of Mohamed Morsi,^[176] and despite recent attempts by countries like Turkey and Qatar to take over this role.^[177]

Ties between Egypt and other non-Arab Middle Eastern nations, including [Iran](#) and [Turkey](#), have often been strained. Tensions with Iran are mostly due to Egypt's peace treaty with Israel and Iran's rivalry with traditional Egyptian allies in the Gulf.^[178] Turkey's recent support for the now-banned Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt and its alleged involvement in [Libya](#) also made both countries bitter regional rivals.^[179]

Egypt is a founding member of the [Non-Aligned Movement](#) and the [United Nations](#). It is also a member of the [Organisation internationale de la francophonie](#), since 1983. Former Egyptian [Deputy Prime Minister Boutros Boutros-Ghali](#) served as [Secretary-General of the United Nations](#) from 1991 to 1996.

In 2008, Egypt was estimated to have two million African refugees, including over 20,000 Sudanese nationals registered with UNHCR as refugees fleeing armed conflict or asylum seekers. Egypt adopted "harsh, sometimes lethal" methods of border control.^[180]

Law

Main article: [Egyptian Civil Code](#)



The High Court of Justice in [Downtown Cairo](#)

The legal system is based on [Islamic](#) and civil law (particularly [Napoleonic codes](#)); and judicial review by a Supreme Court, which accepts compulsory [International Court of Justice](#) jurisdiction only with reservations.^[62]

Islamic jurisprudence is the principal source of legislation. Sharia courts and qadis are run and licensed by the [Ministry of Justice](#).^[181] The personal status law that regulates matters such as marriage, divorce and child custody is governed by Sharia. In a family court, a woman's testimony is worth half of a man's testimony.^[182]

On 26 December 2012, the Muslim Brotherhood attempted to institutionalise a controversial new constitution. It was approved by the public in a [referendum](#) held 15–22 December 2012 with 64% support, but with only 33% electorate participation.^[183] It replaced the [2011 Provisional Constitution of Egypt](#), adopted following the revolution.

The Penal code was unique as it contains a "[Blasphemy Law](#)."^[184] The present court system allows a death penalty including against an absent individual [tried in absentia](#). Several Americans and Canadians were sentenced to death in 2012.^[185]

On 18 January 2014, the interim government successfully institutionalised a more [secular constitution](#).^[186] The president is elected to a four-year term and may serve 2 terms.^[186] The parliament may impeach the president.^[186] Under the constitution, there is a guarantee of gender equality and absolute [freedom of thought](#).^[186] The military retains the ability to appoint the national Minister of Defence for the next two full presidential terms since the constitution took effect.^[186] Under the constitution, political parties may not be based on "religion, race, gender or geography".^[186]

Human rights

Main article: [Human rights in Egypt](#)

See also: [Sudanese refugees in Egypt](#), [August 2013 Rabaa massacre](#), and [Persecution of Copts](#)

The [Egyptian Organization for Human Rights](#) is one of the longest-standing bodies for the defence of [human rights in Egypt](#).^[187] In 2003, the government established the National Council for Human Rights.^[188] Shortly after its foundation, the council came under heavy criticism by local activists, who contend it was a propaganda tool for the government to excuse its own violations^[189] and to give legitimacy to repressive laws such as the Emergency Law.^[190]



Protesters from the Third Square movement, which supported neither the former Morsi government nor the Armed Forces, 31 July 2013

The [Pew Forum on Religion & Public Life](#) ranks Egypt as the fifth worst country in the world for religious freedom.^{[191][192]} The [United States Commission on International](#)

[Religious Freedom](#), a bipartisan independent agency of the US government, has placed Egypt on its watch list of countries that require close monitoring due to the nature and extent of violations of religious freedom engaged in or tolerated by the government.^[193] According to a 2010 [Pew](#) Global Attitudes survey, 84% of Egyptians polled supported the [death penalty](#) for those who [leave Islam](#); 77% supported whippings and cutting off of hands for theft and robbery; and 82% support stoning a person who commits adultery.^[194]

[Coptic Christians](#) face discrimination at multiple levels of the government, ranging from underrepresentation in government ministries to laws that limit their ability to build or repair churches.^[195] Intolerance towards followers of the [Bahá'í Faith](#), and those of the non-orthodox Muslim sects, such as [Sufis](#), [Shi'a](#) and [Ahmadis](#), also remains a problem.^[196] When the government moved to computerise identification cards, members of religious minorities, such as Bahá'ís, could not obtain [identification documents](#).^[196] An Egyptian court ruled in early 2008 that members of other faiths may obtain identity cards without listing their faiths, and without becoming officially recognised.^[197]

Clashes continued between police and supporters of former President Mohamed Morsi. During violent clashes that ensued as part of the [August 2013 sit-in dispersal](#), 595 protesters were killed^[198] with 14 August 2013 becoming the single deadliest day in Egypt's modern history.^[199]

Egypt actively practices [capital punishment](#). Egypt's authorities do not release figures on death sentences and executions, despite repeated requests over the years by human rights organisations.^[200] The United Nations human rights office^[201] and various [NGOs](#)^{[200][202]} expressed "deep alarm" after an Egyptian Minya Criminal Court sentenced 529 people to death in a single hearing on 25 March 2014. Sentenced supporters of former President [Mohamed Morsi](#) were to be executed for their alleged role in violence following his [removal](#) in July 2013. The judgement was condemned as a violation of [international law](#).^[203] By May 2014, approximately 16,000 people (and as high as more than 40,000 by one independent count, according to [The Economist](#)),^[204] mostly Brotherhood members or supporters, have been imprisoned after Morsi's removal^[205] after the [Muslim Brotherhood](#) was labelled as [terrorist organisation](#) by the post-Morsi interim Egyptian government.^[206] According to human rights groups there are some 60,000 political prisoners in Egypt.^{[207][208]}



Prominent Egyptian dissident [Alaa Abd El-Fattah](#) was sentenced to five years of imprisonment in December 2021.^[209]

[Homosexuality](#) is illegal in Egypt.^[210] According to a 2013 survey by the [Pew Research Center](#), 95% of Egyptians believe that [homosexuality](#) should not be accepted by society.^[211]

In 2017, Cairo was voted the most dangerous megacity for women with more than 10 million inhabitants in a poll by [Thomson Reuters Foundation](#). Sexual harassment was described as occurring on a daily basis.^[212]

Freedom of the press

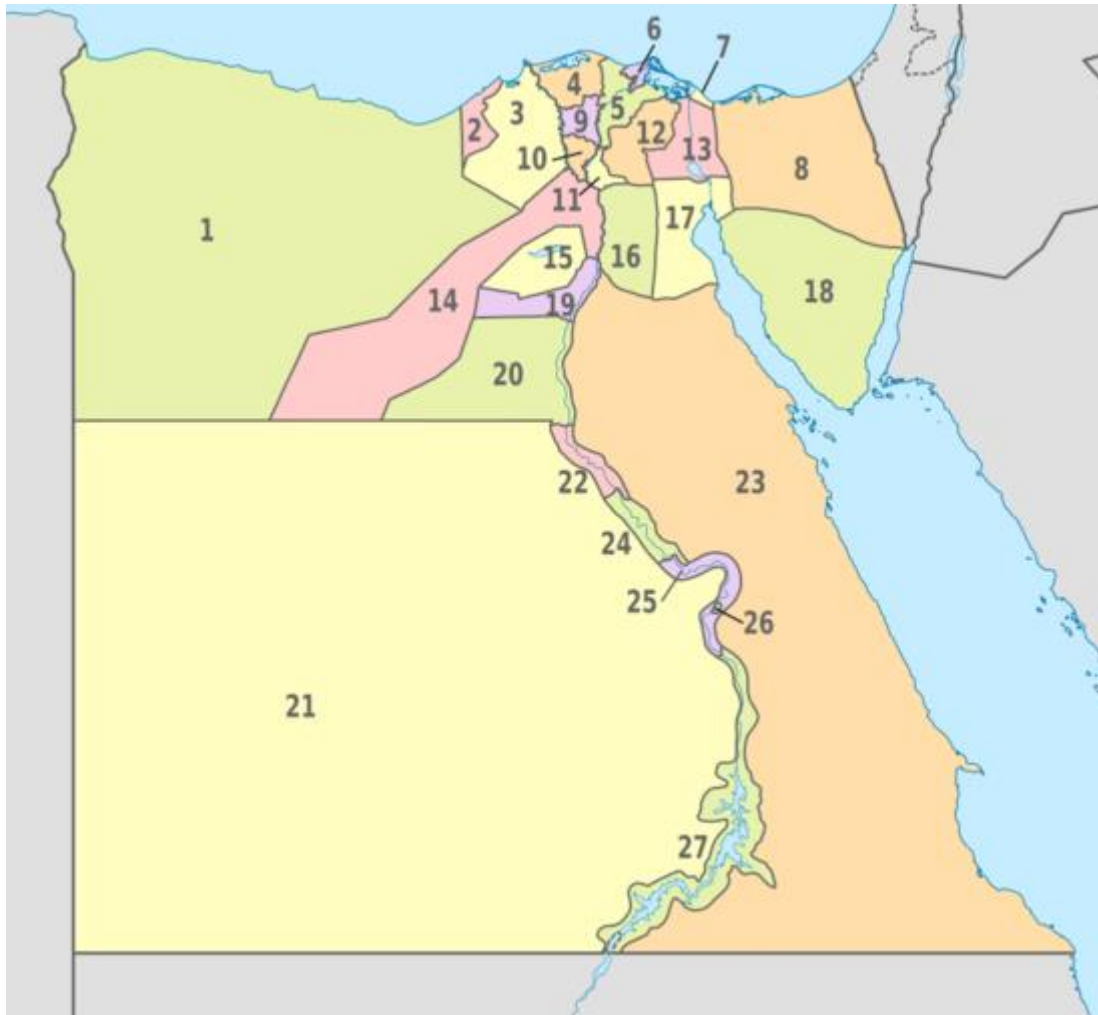
[Reporters Without Borders](#) ranked Egypt in their 2017 [World Press Freedom Index](#) at No. 160 out of 180 nations. At least 18 journalists were imprisoned in Egypt, as of August 2015. A new anti-terror law was enacted in August 2015 that threatens members of the media with fines ranging from about US\$25,000 to \$60,000 for the distribution of wrong information on acts of terror inside the country "that differ from official declarations of the Egyptian Department of Defense".^[213]

Some critics of the government have been [arrested](#) for allegedly spreading [false information](#) about the [COVID-19 pandemic in Egypt](#).^{[214][215]}

Administrative divisions

Main articles: [Governorates of Egypt](#) and [Subdivisions of Egypt](#)

Egypt is divided into 27 governorates. The governorates are further divided into regions. The regions contain towns and villages. Each governorate has a capital, sometimes carrying the same name as the governorate.^[216]

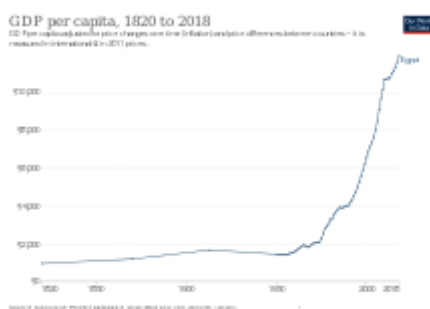


Governorates of Egypt

1. [Matrouh](#) 2. [Alexandria](#) 3. [Beheira](#) 4. [Kafr El Sheikh](#) 5. [Dakahlia](#) 6. [Damietta](#) 7. [Port Said](#) 8. [North Sinai](#) 9. [Gharbia](#) 10. [Monufia](#) 11. [Qalyubia](#) 12. [Sharqia](#) 13. [Ismailia](#) 14. [Giza](#) 15. [Faiyum](#) 16. [Cairo](#) 17. [Suez](#) 18. [South Sinai](#) 19. [Beni Suef](#) 20. [Minya](#) 21. [New Valley](#) 22. [Asyut](#) 23. [Red Sea](#) 24. [Sohag](#) 25. [Qena](#) 26. [Luxor](#) 27. [Aswan](#)

Economy

Main article: [Economy of Egypt](#)



Change in per capita GDP of Egypt, 1820–2018.
 Figures are inflation-adjusted to 2011 International dollars.

Egypt's economy depends mainly on agriculture, media, petroleum exports, natural gas, and tourism. There are also more than three million Egyptians working abroad, mainly in [Libya](#), [Saudi Arabia](#), the [Persian Gulf](#) and Europe. The completion of the [Aswan High Dam](#) in 1970 and the resultant [Lake Nasser](#) have altered the time-honoured place of the Nile River in the agriculture and ecology of Egypt. A rapidly growing population, limited [arable land](#), and dependence on the Nile all continue to overtax resources and stress the economy.

On 2022 The Egyptian economy entered an ongoing crisis, the Egyptian pound was one of the worst performing currencies,^[217] inflation. reached 32.6% and [core inflation](#) reached nearly 40% on March.^[218]

The government has invested in communications and physical infrastructure. Egypt has received [United States foreign aid](#) since 1979 (an average of \$2.2 billion per year) and is the third-largest recipient of such funds from the United States following the Iraq war. Egypt's economy mainly relies on these sources of income: tourism, remittances from Egyptians working abroad and revenues from the Suez Canal.^[219]

Economic conditions have started to improve considerably, after a period of stagnation, due to the adoption of more liberal economic policies by the government as well as increased revenues from tourism and a booming [stock market](#). In its annual report, the [International Monetary Fund](#) (IMF) has rated Egypt as one of the top countries in the world undertaking economic reforms.^[220] Some major economic reforms undertaken by the government since 2003 include a dramatic slashing of customs and tariffs. A new [taxation law](#) implemented in 2005 decreased corporate taxes from 40% to the current 20%, resulting in a stated 100% increase in [tax revenue](#) by 2006.



[Smart Village](#), a business district established in 2001 to facilitate the growth of high-tech businesses

Although one of the main obstacles still facing the Egyptian economy is the limited trickle down of wealth to the average population, many Egyptians criticise their government for higher prices of basic goods while their [standards of living](#) or purchasing power remains relatively stagnant. Corruption is often cited by Egyptians as the main impediment to further economic growth.^{[221][222]} The government promised major reconstruction of the country's infrastructure, using money paid for the newly acquired third mobile license (\$3 billion) by [Etisalat](#) in 2006.^[223] In the [Corruption Perceptions Index](#) 2013, Egypt was ranked 114 out of 177.^[224]



The [Suez Canal](#)

An estimated 2.7 million Egyptians abroad contribute actively to the development of their country through [remittances](#) (US\$7.8 billion in 2009), as well as circulation of human and social capital and investment.^[225] Remittances, money earned by Egyptians living abroad and sent home, reached a record US\$21 billion in 2012, according to the World Bank.^[226]

Egyptian society is moderately unequal in terms of income distribution, with an estimated 35–40% of Egypt's population earning less than the equivalent of \$2 a day, while only around 2–3% may be considered wealthy.^[227]

Tourism

Main article: [Tourism in Egypt](#)



Tourists riding an [Arabian camel](#) in front of [Pyramid of Khafre](#). The [Giza Necropolis](#) is one of Egypt's main tourist attractions.

Tourism is one of the most important sectors in Egypt's economy. More than 12.8 million tourists visited Egypt in 2008, providing revenues of nearly \$11 billion. The tourism sector employs about 12% of Egypt's workforce.^[228] Tourism Minister Hisham Zaazou told industry professionals and reporters that tourism generated some \$9.4 billion in 2012, a slight increase over the \$9 billion seen in 2011.^[229]

The [Giza Necropolis](#) is one of Egypt's best-known tourist attractions; it is the only one of the [Seven Wonders of the Ancient World](#) still in existence.

Egypt's beaches on the Mediterranean and the Red Sea, which extend to over 3,000 kilometres (1,900 miles), are also popular tourist destinations; the [Gulf of Aqaba](#) beaches, [Safaga](#), [Sharm el-Sheikh](#), [Hurghada](#), [Luxor](#), [Dahab](#), [Ras Sidr](#) and [Marsa Alam](#) are popular sites.

Energy

Main article: [Energy in Egypt](#)



An offshore platform in the Darfeel Gas Field

Egypt has a developed energy market based on coal, oil, [natural gas](#), and [hydro power](#). Substantial coal deposits in the northeast Sinai are mined at the rate of about 600,000 tonnes (590,000 long tons; 660,000 short tons) per year. Oil and gas are produced in the western desert regions, the [Gulf of Suez](#), and the Nile Delta. Egypt has huge reserves of gas, estimated at 2,180 cubic kilometres (520 cu mi),^[230] and [LNG](#) up to 2012 exported to many countries. In 2013, the Egyptian General Petroleum Co (EGPC) said the country will cut exports of natural gas and tell major industries to slow output this summer to avoid an energy crisis and stave off political unrest, Reuters has reported. Egypt is counting on top liquid natural gas (LNG) exporter Qatar to obtain additional gas volumes in summer, while encouraging factories to plan their annual maintenance for those months of peak demand, said EGPC chairman, Tarek El Barkatawy. Egypt produces its own energy, but has been a net oil importer since 2008 and is rapidly becoming a net importer of natural gas.^[231]

Egypt produced 691,000 [bbl/d](#) of oil and 2,141.05 Tcf of natural gas in 2013, making the country the largest non-[OPEC](#) producer of oil and the second-largest dry natural gas producer in Africa. In 2013, Egypt was the largest consumer of oil and natural gas in Africa, as more than 20% of total oil consumption and more than 40% of total dry natural gas consumption in Africa. Also, Egypt possesses the largest oil refinery capacity in Africa 726,000 bbl/d (in 2012).^[230]

Egypt is currently building its first [nuclear power plant in El Dabaa](#), in the northern part of the country, with \$25 billion in Russian financing.^[232]

Transport

Main article: [Transport in Egypt](#)

Transport in Egypt is centred around Cairo and largely follows the pattern of settlement along the Nile. The main line of the nation's 40,800-kilometre (25,400 mi) railway network runs from Alexandria to Aswan and is operated by [Egyptian National Railways](#). The vehicle road network has expanded rapidly to over 34,000 km (21,000 mi), consisting of 28 line, 796 stations, 1800 train covering the Nile Valley and Nile Delta, the Mediterranean and Red Sea coasts, the Sinai, and the Western oases.



The Cairo Metro (line 2)

The [Cairo Metro](#) consists of three operational lines with a fourth line expected in the future.

[EgyptAir](#), which is now the country's [flag carrier](#) and largest airline, was founded in 1932 by Egyptian industrialist [Talaat Harb](#), today owned by the Egyptian government. The airline is based at [Cairo International Airport](#), its main hub, operating scheduled passenger and freight services to more than 75 destinations in the [Middle East](#), [Europe](#), [Africa](#), [Asia](#), and [the Americas](#). The Current [EgyptAir](#) fleet includes 80 aeroplanes.

Suez Canal

Main article: [Suez Canal](#)



The [Suez Canal Bridge](#)

The Suez Canal is an artificial sea-level waterway in Egypt, connecting the Mediterranean Sea and the Red Sea. Opened in November 1869 after 10 years of construction work, it allows ship transport between [Europe](#) and [Asia](#) without navigation around [Africa](#). The northern terminus is Port Said and the southern terminus is Port Tawfiq at the city of Suez. Ismailia lies on its west bank, 3 kilometres (1+⁷/₈ miles) from the half-way point.

The canal is 193.30 km (120+¹/₈ mi) long, 24 metres (79 feet) deep and 205 m (673 ft) wide as of 2010. It consists of the northern access channel of 22 km (14 mi), the canal itself of 162.25 km (100+⁷/₈ mi) and the southern access channel of 9 km (5+¹/₂ mi). The canal is a single lane with passing places in the Ballah By-Pass and the Great Bitter Lake. It contains no locks; seawater flows freely through the canal.

On 26 August 2014 a proposal was made for opening a [New Suez Canal](#). Work on the New Suez Canal was completed in July 2015.^{[233][234]} The channel was officially inaugurated with a ceremony attended by foreign leaders and featuring military flyovers on 6 August 2015, in accordance with the budgets laid out for the project.^{[235][236]}

Water supply and sanitation

Main article: [Water supply and sanitation in Egypt](#)



Green irrigated land along the Nile amidst the desert and in the delta

The piped [water supply](#) in Egypt increased between 1990 and 2010 from 89% to 100% in urban areas and from 39% to 93% in rural areas despite rapid population growth. Over that period, Egypt achieved the elimination of [open defecation](#) in rural areas and invested in infrastructure. Access to an [improved water source](#) in Egypt is now practically universal with a rate of 99%. About one half of the population is connected to [sanitary sewers](#).^[237]

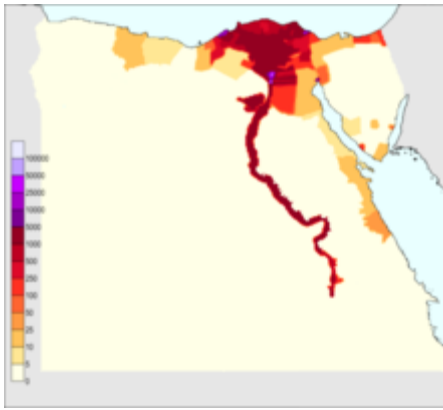
Partly because of low sanitation coverage about 17,000 children die each year because of [diarrhoea](#).^[238] Another challenge is low cost recovery due to water tariffs that are among the lowest in the world. This in turn requires government subsidies even for operating costs, a situation that has been aggravated by salary increases without tariff increases after the [Arab Spring](#). Poor operation of facilities, such as water and wastewater treatment plants, as well as limited government accountability and transparency, are also issues.

Due to the absence of appreciable rainfall, Egypt's agriculture depends entirely on irrigation. The main source of irrigation water is the river Nile of which the flow is controlled by the high dam at Aswan. It releases, on average, 55 cubic kilometres (45,000,000 acre-ft) water per year, of which some 46 cubic kilometres (37,000,000 acre-ft) are diverted into the irrigation canals.^[239]

In the Nile valley and delta, almost 33,600 square kilometres (13,000 sq mi) of land benefit from these irrigation waters producing on average 1.8 crops per year.^[239]

Demographics

Main articles: [Demographics of Egypt](#) and [Egyptians](#)



Egypt's population density (people per km²)

Egypt is the most populated country in the Arab world and the third most populous on the [African continent](#), with about 95 million inhabitants as of 2017.^[240] Its population grew rapidly from 1970 to 2010 due to [medical advances](#) and increases in agricultural productivity^[241] enabled by the [Green Revolution](#).^[242] Egypt's population was estimated at 3 million when [Napoleon](#) invaded the country in 1798.^[243]

Egypt's people are highly urbanised, being concentrated along the Nile (notably Cairo and Alexandria), in the Delta and near the Suez Canal. Egyptians are divided demographically into those who live in the major urban centres and the [fellahin](#), or farmers, that reside in rural villages. The total inhabited area constitutes [only 77,041 km²](#), putting the [physiological density](#) at over 1,200 people per km², similar to [Bangladesh](#).

While emigration was restricted under Nasser, thousands of Egyptian professionals were dispatched abroad in the context of the [Arab Cold War](#).^[244] Egyptian emigration was liberalised in 1971, under President Sadat, reaching record numbers after the 1973 oil crisis.^[245] An estimated 2.7 million Egyptians live abroad. Approximately 70% of Egyptian migrants live in Arab countries (923,600 in [Saudi Arabia](#), 332,600 in [Libya](#), 226,850 in [Jordan](#), 190,550 in [Kuwait](#) with the rest elsewhere in the region) and the remaining 30% reside mostly in Europe and North America (318,000 in the United States, 110,000 in Canada and 90,000 in Italy).^[225] The process of emigrating to non-Arab states has been ongoing since the 1950s.^[246]

Ethnic groups

Ethnic [Egyptians](#) are by far the largest ethnic group in the country, constituting 99.7% of the total population.^[62] Ethnic minorities include the [Abazas](#), [Turks](#), [Greeks](#), [Bedouin](#) Arab tribes living in the eastern deserts and the [Sinai Peninsula](#), the [Berber](#)-speaking [Siwis](#) ([Amazigh](#)) of the [Siwa Oasis](#), and the [Nubian](#) communities clustered along the Nile. There are also tribal [Beja](#) communities concentrated in the southeasternmost corner of the country, and a number of [Dom](#) clans mostly in the Nile Delta and [Faïyum](#) who are progressively becoming assimilated as urbanisation increases.

Some 5 million immigrants live in Egypt, mostly [Sudanese](#), "some of whom have lived in Egypt for generations".^[247] Smaller numbers of immigrants come from [Iraq](#), [Ethiopia](#), [Somalia](#), [South Sudan](#), and [Eritrea](#).^[247]

The [Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees](#) estimated that the total number of "people of concern" (refugees, asylum seekers, and [stateless people](#))

was about 250,000. In 2015, the number of registered [Syrian refugees in Egypt](#) was 117,000, a decrease from the previous year.^[247] Egyptian government claims that a half-million Syrian refugees live in Egypt are thought to be exaggerated.^[247] There are 28,000 registered [Sudanese refugees in Egypt](#).^[247]

[Jewish communities in Egypt](#) have almost [disappeared](#). Several important Jewish archaeological and historical sites are found in Cairo, Alexandria and other cities.

Languages

Main article: [Languages of Egypt](#)

The [official language](#) of the Republic is [Literary Arabic](#).^[248] The [spoken languages](#) are: [Egyptian Arabic](#) (68%), [Sa'idi Arabic](#) (29%), [Eastern Egyptian Bedawi Arabic](#) (1.6%), [Sudanese Arabic](#) (0.6%), [Domari](#) (0.3%), [Nobiin](#) (0.3%), [Beja](#) (0.1%), [Siwi](#) and others.^[citation needed] Additionally, [Greek](#), [Armenian](#) and [Italian](#), and more recently, African languages like [Amharic](#) and [Tigrigna](#) are the main languages of immigrants.

The main foreign languages taught in schools, by order of popularity, are [English](#), [French](#), [German](#) and [Italian](#).

Historically [Egyptian](#) was spoken, the latest stage of which is [Coptic Egyptian](#). Spoken Coptic was mostly extinct by the 17th century but may have survived in isolated pockets in [Upper Egypt](#) as late as the 19th century. It remains in use as the liturgical language of the [Coptic Orthodox Church of Alexandria](#).^{[249][250]} It forms a separate branch among the family of [Afroasiatic languages](#).

Religion

Main article: [Religion in Egypt](#)

Egypt has the largest Muslim population in the [Arab world](#), and the [sixth world's largest Muslim population](#), and home for (5%) of the world's Muslim population.^[251] Egypt also has the [largest Christian population](#) in the [Middle East and North Africa](#).^[252]

Egypt is a predominantly [Sunni](#) Muslim country with [Islam](#) as its state religion. The percentage of adherents of various religions is a controversial topic in Egypt. An estimated 85–90% are identified as Muslim, 10–15% as [Coptic Christians](#), and 1% as other Christian denominations, although without a census the numbers cannot be known. Other estimates put the Christian population as high as 15–20%.^[note 1] [Non-denominational Muslims](#) form roughly 12% of the population.^{[259][260]}

Egypt was a Christian country before the 7th century, and after Islam arrived, the country was gradually Islamised into a majority-Muslim country.^{[261][262]} It is not known when Muslims reached a majority variously estimated from c. 1000 CE to as late as the 14th century. Egypt emerged as a centre of politics and culture in the [Muslim world](#). Under [Anwar Sadat](#), Islam became the official [state religion](#) and [Sharia](#) the main source of law.^[263] It is estimated that 15 million Egyptians follow [Native Sufi orders](#),^{[264][265][266]} with the Sufi leadership asserting that the numbers are much greater as many Egyptian Sufis are not officially registered with a Sufi order.^[265] At least 305 people were killed during a [November 2017 attack](#) on a Sufi mosque in Sinai.^[267]

There is also a [Shi'a](#) minority. The [Jerusalem Center for Public Affairs](#) estimates the Shia population at 1 to 2.2 million^[268] and could measure as much as 3 million.^[269] The [Ahmadiyya](#) population is estimated at less than 50,000,^[270] whereas the [Salafi](#) (ultra-conservative Sunni) population is estimated at five to six million.^[271] [Cairo](#) is famous for its numerous [mosque minarets](#) and has been dubbed "The City of 1,000 Minarets".^[272]



[St. Mark Coptic Cathedral in Alexandria](#)

Of the [Christian population in Egypt](#) over 90% belong to the native Coptic Orthodox Church of Alexandria, an [Oriental Orthodox](#) Christian Church.^[273] Other native Egyptian Christians are adherents of the [Coptic Catholic Church](#), the [Evangelical Church of Egypt](#) and various other [Protestant](#) denominations. Non-native Christian communities are largely found in the urban regions of Cairo and Alexandria, such as the [Syro-Lebanese](#), who belong to [Greek Catholic](#), [Greek Orthodox](#), and [Maronite Catholic](#) denominations.^[274]

Egypt hosts the [Coptic Orthodox Church of Alexandria](#). It was founded back in the first century, considered to be the largest church in the country.

Egypt is also the home of [Al-Azhar University](#) (founded in 969 CE, began teaching in 975 CE), which is today the world's "most influential voice of establishment Sunni Islam" and is, by some measures, the second-oldest continuously operating university in the world.^[275]

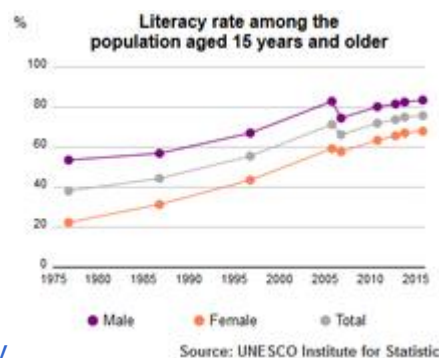
Egypt recognises only three religions: Islam, Christianity, and Judaism. Other faiths and minority Muslim sects practised by Egyptians, such as the small [Bahá'í Faith](#) and [Ahmadiyya](#) communities, are not recognised by the state and face persecution by the government, which labels these groups a threat to Egypt's national security.^{[276][277]} Individuals, particularly Bahá'ís and atheists, wishing to include their religion (or lack thereof) on their mandatory state issued identification cards are denied this ability (see [Egyptian identification card controversy](#)), and are put in the position of either not obtaining required identification or lying about their faith. A 2008 court ruling allowed members of unrecognised faiths to obtain identification and leave the religion field blank.^{[196][197]}

Education

Main article: [Education in Egypt](#)



[Cairo University](#)



Egyptian literacy rate among the population aged 15 years and older by UNESCO Institute of Statistics

The illiteracy rate has decreased since 1996 from 39.4 to 25.9 percent in 2013. The adult literacy rate as of July 2014 was estimated at 73.9%.^[278] The illiteracy rate is highest among those over 60 years of age being estimated at 64.9%, while illiteracy among youth between 15 and 24 years of age was listed at 8.6 percent.^[279]

A European-style education system was first introduced in Egypt by the Ottomans in the early 19th century to nurture a class of loyal bureaucrats and army officers.^[280] Under British occupation investment in education was curbed drastically, and secular public schools, which had previously been free, began to charge fees.^[280]

In the 1950s, President Nasser phased in free education for all Egyptians.^[280] The Egyptian curriculum influenced other Arab education systems, which often employed Egyptian-trained teachers.^[280] Demand soon outstripped the level of available state resources, causing the quality of public education to deteriorate.^[280] Today this trend has culminated in poor teacher–student ratios (often around one to fifty) and persistent gender inequality.^[280]

Basic education, which includes six years of primary and three years of preparatory school, is a right for Egyptian children from the age of six.^[281] After grade 9, students are tracked into one of two strands of secondary education: general or technical schools. General secondary education prepares students for further education, and graduates of this track normally join higher education institutes based on the results of the [Thanaweya Amma](#), the leaving exam.^[281]

Technical secondary education has two strands, one lasting three years and a more advanced education lasting five. Graduates of these schools may have access to higher education based on their results on the final exam, but this is generally uncommon.^[281]

[Cairo University](#) is Egypt's premier [public university](#). The country is currently opening new research institutes for the aim of modernising research in the nation, the most recent example of which is [Zewail City of Science and Technology](#). Egypt was ranked 86th in the [Global Innovation Index](#) in 2023, up from 92nd in 2019.^{[282][283]}

Health

Main article: [Health in Egypt](#)



[Children's Cancer Hospital Egypt](#)

Egyptian life expectancy at birth was 73.20 years in 2011, or 71.30 years for males and 75.20 years for females. Egypt spends 3.7 percent of its gross domestic product on health including treatment costs 22 percent incurred by citizens and the rest by the state.^[284] In 2010, spending on healthcare accounted for 4.66% of the country's GDP. In 2009, there were 16.04 physicians and 33.80 nurses per 10,000 inhabitants.^[285]

As a result of modernisation efforts over the years, Egypt's healthcare system has made great strides forward. Access to healthcare in both urban and rural areas greatly improved and immunisation programs are now able to cover 98% of the population. Life expectancy increased from 44.8 years during the 1960s to 72.12 years in 2009. There was a noticeable decline of the infant mortality rate (during the 1970s to the 1980s the infant mortality rate was 101–132/1000 live births, in 2000 the rate was 50–60/1000, and in 2008 it was 28–30/1000).^[286]

According to the [World Health Organization](#) in 2008, an estimated 91.1% of Egypt's girls and women aged 15 to 49 have been subjected to [genital mutilation](#),^[287] despite being illegal in the country. In 2016 the law was amended to impose tougher penalties on those convicted of performing the procedure, pegging the highest jail term at 15 years. Those who escort victims to the procedure can also face jail terms up to 3 years.^[288]

The total number of Egyptians with [health insurance](#) reached 37 million in 2009, of which 11 million are minors, providing an insurance coverage of approximately 52 percent of Egypt's population.^[289]

Largest cities

See also: [List of cities and towns in Egypt](#)

Largest cities or towns in Egypt							
2017 census							
	Rank	Name	Governorate	Pop.	Rank	Name	Governorate
 <p>Cairo</p>	1	Cairo	Cairo	9,153,135	11	Asyut	Asyut
	2	Alexandria	Alexandria	5,039,975	12	Khusus	Qalyubia
	3	Giza	Giza	4,146,340	13	Ismailia	Ismailia
	4	Shubra El Kheima	Qalyubia	1,165,914	14	Zagazig	Sharqia
	5	Port Said	Port Said	751,073	15	6th of October	Giza
	6	Suez	Suez	660,592	16	Aswan	Aswan
	7	Mansoura	Dakahlia	548,259	17	New Cairo	Cairo

 Alexandria	8	El Mahalla El Kubra	Gharbia	522,799	18	Damietta	Damietta
	9	Tanta	Gharbia	508,754	19	Damanhur	Beheira
	10	Faiyum	Faiyum	475,139	20	Minya	Minya

Culture

Main article: [Culture of Egypt](#)

Egypt is a recognised cultural trendsetter of the Arabic-speaking world. Contemporary Arabic and Middle-Eastern culture is heavily influenced by Egyptian literature, music, film and television. Egypt gained a regional leadership role during the 1950s and 1960s, giving a further enduring boost to the standing of Egyptian culture in the Arabic-speaking world.^[290]



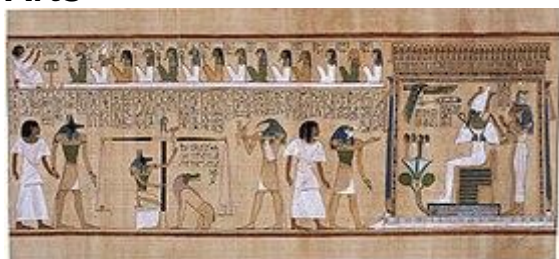
[Al-Azhar Park](#) is listed as one of the world's sixty great public spaces by the [Project for Public Spaces](#).

Egyptian identity evolved in the span of a long period of occupation to accommodate [Islam](#), [Christianity](#) and Judaism; and a new language, [Arabic](#), and its spoken descendant, [Egyptian Arabic](#) which is also based on many Ancient Egyptian words.^[291]

The work of early 19th century scholar [Rifa'a al-Tahtawi](#) renewed interest in [Egyptian antiquity](#) and exposed Egyptian society to [Enlightenment](#) principles. Tahtawi co-founded with education reformer [Ali Mubarak](#) a native [Egyptology](#) school that looked for inspiration to medieval Egyptian scholars, such as [Suyuti](#) and [Maqrizi](#), who themselves studied the [history](#), [language](#) and [antiquities](#) of Egypt.^[292]

Egypt's renaissance peaked in the late 19th and early 20th centuries through the work of people like [Muhammad Abduh](#), [Ahmed Lutfi el-Sayed](#), [Muhammad Loutfi Goumah](#), [Tawfiq el-Hakim](#), [Louis Awad](#), [Qasim Amin](#), [Salama Moussa](#), [Taha Hussein](#) and [Mahmoud Mokhtar](#). They forged a [liberal](#) path for Egypt expressed as a commitment to personal freedom, [secularism](#) and faith in science to bring progress.^[293]

Arts



The "weighing of the heart" scene from the [Book of the Dead](#)

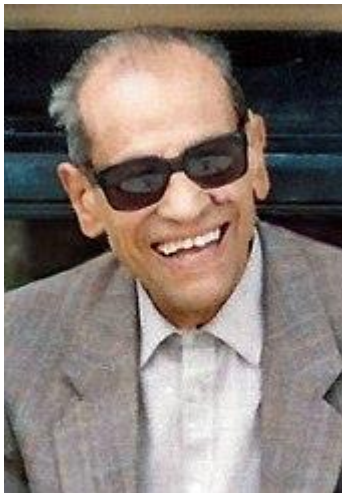
See also: [Architecture of Egypt](#)

The Egyptians were one of the first major civilisations to codify design elements in art and [architecture](#). [Egyptian blue](#), also known as calcium copper silicate, is a pigment used by Egyptians for thousands of years. It is considered to be the first synthetic pigment. The wall paintings done in the service of the [Pharaohs](#) followed a rigid code of visual rules and meanings. Egyptian civilisation is renowned for its colossal [pyramids](#), [temples](#) and monumental tombs.

Well-known examples are the [Pyramid of Djoser](#) designed by ancient architect and engineer [Imhotep](#), the [Sphinx](#), and the temple of [Abu Simbel](#). Modern and contemporary Egyptian art can be as diverse as any works in the world art scene, from the vernacular architecture of [Hassan Fathy](#) and [Ramses Wissa Wassef](#), to [Mahmoud Mokhtar](#)'s sculptures, to the distinctive [Coptic iconography](#) of [Isaac Fanous](#). The [Cairo Opera House](#) serves as the main performing arts venue in the Egyptian capital.

Literature

Main article: [Egyptian literature](#)



[Naguib Mahfouz](#), the first Arabic-language writer to win the [Nobel Prize](#) in Literature

Egyptian literature traces its beginnings to [ancient Egypt](#) and is some of the earliest known literature. Indeed, the Egyptians were the first culture to develop literature as we know it today, that is, the [book](#).^[294] It is an important cultural element in the life of Egypt. Egyptian novelists and poets were among the first to experiment with modern styles of [Arabic literature](#), and the forms they developed have been widely imitated throughout the Arab world.^[295] The first modern Egyptian novel [Zaynab](#) by [Muhammad Husayn Haykal](#) was published in 1913 in the [Egyptian vernacular](#).^[296] Egyptian novelist [Naguib Mahfouz](#) was the first Arabic-language writer to win the [Nobel Prize in Literature](#). Egyptian women writers include [Nawal El Saadawi](#), well known for her [feminist activism](#), and [Alifa Rifaat](#) who also writes about women and tradition.

Vernacular poetry is perhaps the most popular [literary genre](#) among Egyptians, represented by the works of [Ahmed Fouad Negm](#) (Fagumi), [Salah Jaheen](#) and [Abdel Rahman el-Abnudi](#).^[297]

Media

Main article: [Media of Egypt](#)

[Egyptian media](#) are highly influential throughout the [Arab World](#), attributed to large audiences and increasing freedom from government control.^{[298][299]} Freedom of the media is guaranteed in the constitution; however, many laws still restrict this right.^{[298][300]}

Cinema

Main article: [Cinema of Egypt](#)



[Salah Zulfikar](#), film star



[Soad Hosny](#),

film star

[Egyptian cinema](#) became a regional force with the coming of sound. In 1936, [Studio Misr](#), financed by industrialist [Talaat Harb](#), emerged as the leading Egyptian studio, a role the company retained for three decades.^[301] For over 100 years, more than 4000 films have been produced in Egypt, three quarters of the total Arab production.^{[302][303]} Egypt is considered the leading country in the field of cinema in the [Arab world](#).^[304] Actors from all over the Arab world seek to appear in the Egyptian cinema for the sake of fame. The [Cairo International Film Festival](#) has been rated as one of 11 festivals with a top class rating worldwide by the International Federation of Film Producers' Associations.^[305]

The number of cinemas increased with the emergence of talking films, and reached 395 in 1958. This number began to decline after the establishment of television in 1960 and the establishment of the public sector in cinemas in 1962, and reached 297 in 1965, then to 141 in 1995 due to the circulation of films through video equipment though the boom of the film industry in this period. Due to laws and procedures that encouraged investment in the establishment of private cinemas, they increased again, especially in commercial centers, until their number reached 200 in 2001 and 400 in 2009. Over a period of more than a hundred years, Egyptian cinema has presented more than four thousand films.^{[306][307]}

Music

Main article: [Music of Egypt](#)



Ancient Egyptians playing music

[Egyptian music](#) is a rich mixture of indigenous, Mediterranean, African and Western elements. It has been an integral part of [Egyptian culture](#) since antiquity. The ancient [Egyptians](#) credited one of their gods [Hathor](#) with the invention of [music](#), which [Osiris](#) in turn used as part of his effort to civilise the world. Egyptians used music instruments since then.^[308]

Contemporary Egyptian music traces its beginnings to the creative work of people such as [Abdu al-Hamuli](#), Almaz and Mahmoud Osman, who influenced the later work of [Sayed Darwish](#), [Umm Kulthum](#), [Mohammed Abdel Wahab](#) and [Abdel Halim Hafez](#). Prominent contemporary Egyptian pop singers include [Amr Diab](#) and [Mohamed Mounir](#).

Dances



[Tanoura](#) dancers performing in Wekalet El Ghoury, Cairo

Today, Egypt is often considered the home of [belly dance](#). Egyptian [belly dance](#) has two main styles – [raqs baladi](#) and [raqs shargi](#). There are also numerous folkloric and character dances that may be part of an Egyptian-style belly dancer's repertoire, as well as the modern shaabi street dance which shares some elements with [raqs baladi](#).

Museums

Main article: [List of museums in Egypt](#)



The [Egyptian Museum](#) of Cairo

Egypt has one of the oldest civilisations in the world. It has been in contact with many other civilisations and nations and has been through so many eras, starting from prehistoric age to the modern age, passing through so many ages such as Pharonic, Roman, Greek, Islamic and many other ages. At least 60 museums may be found in Egypt.



Tutankhamun's burial mask is one of the major attractions of the [Egyptian Museum](#) of Cairo.

The three main museums in Egypt are [The Egyptian Museum](#) which has more than 120,000 items, the [Egyptian National Military Museum](#) and the [6th of October Panorama](#).

The [Grand Egyptian Museum](#) (GEM), also known as the Giza Museum, is an under construction museum that will house the largest collection of ancient Egyptian artifacts in the world, it has been described as the world's largest archaeological museum.^[309] The museum was scheduled to open in 2015 and will be sited on 50 hectares (120 acres) of land approximately two kilometres (1.2 miles) from the Giza Necropolis and is part of a new master plan for the plateau. The Minister of Antiquities Mamdouh al-Damaty announced in May 2015 that the museum will be partially opened in May 2018.^[310]

Festivals

Egypt celebrates many festivals and religious carnivals, also known as *mulid*. They are usually associated with a particular Coptic or Sufi saint, but are often celebrated by Egyptians irrespective of creed or religion.

The ancient spring festival of [Sham en Nisim](#) ([Coptic](#): Ⲫⲱⲙⲉⲛ ⲛⲓⲥⲓⲙ *shom en nisim*) has been celebrated by Egyptians for thousands of years, typically between the [Egyptian months](#) of [Paremoude](#) (April) and [Pashons](#) (May), following [Easter](#) Sunday.

Cuisine

Main article: [Egyptian cuisine](#)



[Kushari](#), one of Egypt's national dishes

Egyptian cuisine relies heavily on legume and vegetable dishes. Although food in Alexandria and the coast of Egypt tends to use a great deal of fish and other seafood, for the most part Egyptian cuisine is based on foods that grow out of the ground. Meat has been very expensive for most Egyptians throughout history, so a great number of vegetarian dishes have been developed.

Some consider [kushari](#) (a mixture of rice, lentils, and macaroni) to be the [national dish](#). In addition, [ful medames](#) (mashed fava beans) is one of the most popular dishes. Fava bean is also used in making [falafel](#) (also known as "ta'miya"), which may have originated in Egypt and spread to other parts of the Middle East. Garlic fried with coriander is added to [molokhiya](#), a popular green soup made from finely chopped jute leaves, sometimes with chicken or rabbit.

Sports



A crowd at Cairo Stadium watching the [Egypt national football team](#)

[Football](#) is the most popular [national sport](#) of Egypt. The [Cairo Derby](#) is one of the fiercest derbies in Africa, and the BBC picked it as one of the 7 toughest derbies in the world.^[311] [Al Ahly](#) is the most successful club of the 20th century in the African continent according to CAF, closely followed by their rivals [Zamalek SC](#). They're known as the "[African Club of the Century](#)". With twenty titles, Al Ahly is currently the world's most successful club in terms of international trophies, surpassing Italy's [A.C. Milan](#) and Argentina's [Boca Juniors](#), both having eighteen.^[312]

The [Egyptian national football team](#), known as the Pharaohs, won the [African Cup of Nations](#) seven times, including three times in a row in 2006, 2008, and 2010. Considered the most successful African national team and one which has reached the top 10 of the FIFA world rankings, Egypt has qualified for the [FIFA World Cup](#) three times. Two goals from star player [Mohamed Salah](#) in their last qualifying game took Egypt through to the [2018 FIFA World Cup](#).^[313] The Egyptian Youth National team Young Pharaohs won the Bronze Medal of the [2001 FIFA youth world cup](#) in Argentina. Egypt was 4th place in the football tournament in the [1928](#) and the [1964](#) Olympics.

[Squash](#) and [tennis](#) are other popular sports in Egypt. The Egyptian squash team has been competitive in international championships since the 1930s. [Amr Shabana](#), [Ali Farag](#) and [Ramy Ashour](#) are Egypt's best players and all were ranked the world's number one squash player. Egypt has won the Squash World Championships five times, with the last title being in [2019](#).

In 1999, Egypt [hosted](#) the [IHF World Men's Handball Championship](#), and hosted it again in [2021](#). In 2001, the [national handball team](#) achieved its best result in the tournament by reaching fourth place. Egypt has won in the [African Men's Handball Championship](#) five times, being the best team in Africa. In addition to that, it also championed the [Mediterranean Games](#) in [2013](#), the [Beach Handball World Championships](#) in [2004](#) and the [Summer Youth Olympics](#) in [2010](#). Among all African nations, the [Egypt national basketball team](#) holds the record for best performance at the [Basketball World Cup](#) and at the [Summer Olympics](#).^{[314][315]} Further, the team has won a record number of 16 medals at the [African Championship](#).

[Egypt has taken part](#) in the [Summer Olympic Games](#) since 1912 and has hosted [several other international competitions](#) including [the first Mediterranean Games](#) in 1951, the [1991 All-Africa Games](#), the [2009 FIFA U-20 World Cup](#) and the [1953](#), [1965](#) and [2007](#) editions of the [Pan Arab Games](#).

Egypt featured a national team in [beach volleyball](#) that competed at the [2018–2020 CAVB Beach Volleyball Continental Cup](#) in both the women's and the men's section.^[316]