



Egypt

Arab Republic of Egypt



Key Facts



World Freedom Press Global Index Ranking (Overall): Ranked 163 (56.47)

Head of State / Head of Government: President Abdelfattah ELSISI (since 8 June 2014)

Capital city: Cairo

Population: 99,413,317 (July 2018 est.)

Official Language(s): Arabic

Ethnic Groups: Egyptian 99.7%, other 0.3% (2006 est.)

Currency:

Gross domestic product (PPP):

Internet penetration: 49.5 %

Most trusted medium of information: Television

Legal System: mixed legal system based on Napoleonic civil and penal law, Islamic religious law, and vestiges of colonial-era laws; judicial review of the constitutionality of laws by the Supreme Constitutional Court

Political system: presidential republic

Journalists Killed/Imprisoned:

Media Environment: mix of state-run and private broadcast media; state-run TV operates 2 national and 6 regional terrestrial networks, as well as a few satellite channels; dozens of private satellite channels and a large number of Arabic satellite channels are available for free; some limited satellite services are also available via subscription; state-run radio operates about 30 stations belonging to 8 networks; privately-owned radio includes 8 major stations, 4 of which belong to 1 network as of 2019. Egypt is one of the most densely populated countries in the Middle East with an estimated population of 97 million citizens,

and boasts a young population, 49 percent of which ranges between 0 and 24 years of age. The country has gone through a fierce economic reform program that has had its influence on all fields including the media industry. However, according to the IMF, the gross domestic product (GDP) growth has started to slightly improve and inflation is declining after more than a year since the launch of the economic reform program. Although it has a low per capita GDP, Egypt is the third largest media market after Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates (UAE).

Media Issues: The press freedom situation has become more and more alarming under President Abdel Fattah al-Sisi, who engineered a second term as president in early 2018. Egypt is now one of the world's biggest jailers of journalists. Some spend years in detention without being charged or tried. Others have been sentenced to long jail terms or even life imprisonment in iniquitous mass trials. The authorities have waged a witch-hunt since 2013 against journalists suspected of supporting the Muslim Brotherhood and have orchestrated a "Sisification" of the media. The Internet is the only place left where independently reported information can circulate, but more than 500 websites have been blocked since the summer of 2017 and more are more people are being arrested because of their social network posts. An increasingly harsh legislative weapons pose an additional threat to media freedom. Under a terrorism law adopted in August 2015, journalists are obliged on national security grounds to report only the official version of "terrorist" attacks. In 2018, new cyber-crime and media laws enshrined government control over the media and made it possible to prosecute and imprison journalists and close websites for sharing independently reported information online. Some news websites chose to shut down rather than try to comply with such repressive legislation. Journalists and human rights defenders are meanwhile banned from much of the Sinai region and from providing independent coverage of any military operation. Coverage of many economic subjects, including inflation and corruption, can also result in imprisonment. The 2018 presidential election intensified the censorship and accelerated the pace with which media outlets are closed. The foreign media are also targeted, with articles being blocked online or attacked by officials, and reporters being expelled or banned from visiting Egypt.

Popular Forms of Media Consumption

Digital Media: The rates of Internet users and mobile penetration have increased remarkably since 2011. The Internet penetration in Egypt reaches up to 38 million; and the mobile broadband subscriptions reaches 31 percent. Internet is accessed through mobile phones by 32 million subscribers. The percentage of families who have access to Internet at home counts for 46.5 percent of the population. Social media users (Facebook & Twitter) count for 30.5 percent of the population. The average time spent online per week in Egypt has increased from 18 hours in 2013, and 23 hours in 2015, to 26 hours in 2017. Using smartphones to connect to the Internet is rising and computer use is declining. The usage of smartphones increased from 32 percent in 2015 to 47 percent in 2017, and computers went down from 34 percent in 2015 to 20 percent in 2017. The revolution was named the "Internet Revolution" or the "Digital Revolution" as Egyptians were mobilized through the Internet and the social media platforms to voice out their anger, and since then the dependency on the digital platforms increased. News organizations at that time realized the need for online platforms that offer timely news, which urged a re-structuring for their business models.

Television: Television is the most popular media platform in Egypt. Nearly all Egyptians (98.8 percent) have television sets in their home. Television is by far the most common source of news as nearly all Egyptians (94.1 percent) use the TV to get news at least once a week, and 84.2 percent use it daily or most days a week.

Radio: Egypt has the most extensive and powerful radio broadcasting system in the Arab region. The

system is under direct control of the government and operates under the mobilization type of broadcasting. Radio broadcasts have been traditionally more conservative in expressing views than the print media.