

EGYPT

**EDUCATION, TRAINING AND EMPLOYMENT
DEVELOPMENTS 2021**

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KEY POLICY DEVELOPMENTS IN EDUCATION, TRAINING AND EMPLOYMENT

Since the structural reforms of 2014, the Egyptian economy has shown solid growth, with an increase in real GDP from 2.2% in 2013 to 5.6% in 2019. In 2020 the figure was 3.6% and it is projected to fall back to 2.5% in 2021.

This growth is the result of a deliberate spending policy being implemented by the government, particularly in the form of megaprojects, which include the construction of a new administrative capital city, expansion of the Suez Canal and road extensions. Although growth has been curbed by COVID-19, nevertheless Egypt is outperforming the other countries in the region.

While this stimulus approach has the potential to boost economic growth and create jobs, the continued population increase in Egypt has, so far, outpaced the rate of job creation. Egypt will therefore require urgent measures to generate enough jobs to absorb most of the working-age population into the labour market and avoid possible social tensions.

The Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) sector in Egypt comprises a myriad of stakeholders, all of whom are strongly engaged in sets of reforms but not yet united around a common vision. To address this, various task forces were assembled in 2019 to follow up on a presidential request to establish a dedicated authority for quality assurance in VET (Vocational Education and Training) and set up the Technical and Vocational Teachers' Academy (TVETA). In September 2020, the Egyptian Cabinet of Ministers approved the draft law to establish the Egyptian TVET Quality Assurance and Accreditation National Authority (ETQAAN), paving the way for a unified approach to assuring the quality of technical education and vocational training across various providers in Egypt. A joint strategic planning event held in 2021 with participation of the major development actors of the EU TVET Egypt project, contributed to the further implementation of the reform strategy.

The Ministry of Education and Technical Education (MoETE), as the main VET provider in the country, is working on the implementation of its new strategy, 'Technical Education 2.0' (TE 2.0), in close cooperation with various international support programmes (including those supported by the EU, Germany and the USA), with the aim of ensuring alignment to reforms, seeking complementarity among projects and working towards joint implementation. There is an opportunity to expand and further formalise this coordination mechanism within the framework of the revised comprehensive governance model for the entire VET sector. TVET Egypt, a programme supported by the EU, entered its final implementation year in 2021 but has been partially extended to 2022. During that year, it will be important to capitalise on its main achievements (such as the competence-based curriculum), while

other deliverables (the national labour market information system and the sector skills councils (SCCs) have still to be implemented.

1. KEY DEMOGRAPHIC, AND ECONOMIC CHARACTERISTICS

- **Political developments and the health situation**

Since President Al Sisi came to power, a deliberate government spending policy has aimed to boost growth through mega-projects, including construction of a new administrative capital city, expansion of the Suez Canal, and road extensions. Such a stimulus approach has the potential not only to boost economic growth but also create jobs. However, the continued population increase in Egypt has so far outpaced the rate of job creation. To curb this, Egypt will require urgent measures to generate enough jobs to absorb most of the working-age population into the labour market and avoid possible social tensions.

In general, the economic response to the pandemic COVID-19 in the Arab region of which Egypt is a part was already constrained in the aftermath of the first wave of the pandemic by the lack of fiscal space and by pre-existing vulnerabilities. The second wave of the pandemic represented a further deterioration in economic and social stability in the majority of Arab Mediterranean Countries (AMCs), which tried to retain the main economic measures of the first wave (i.e. guarantees, tax deferrals, postponement of bill payments) despite the further deterioration in the overall socio-economic situation. In January 2021, only two countries in the region presented a medium- to long-term recovery plan; Egypt had announced its recovery plan in September 2020. The Egyptian government launched the 'Ahalina' initiative, which is a community partnership aimed at crowding resources from civil society and the private sector to support irregular workers (Joint Study EMEA-ETF, 2021). Other examples can be found under the Takaful and Karama cash transfer programmes, where a specific initiative was included to target women heads-of-households and pregnant women, or those looking after one or more children under 12 years old, and they were granted exceptional leave and job protection for the duration of the lockdown. (Joint study EMEA-ETF, 2021).

- **Demographics**

Egypt is the most populous country in the Arab Region and ranks 14th globally. In 2021, its population has exceeded 102 million inhabitants and is growing at an annual rate of 2%. With this growth rate, the population is projected to reach 180 million by 2052, putting Egypt amongst the top nine largest populations in the world by then. In addition, and despite progress in reducing the urban/rural economic divide, regional inequalities persist, with household income and household expenditure growing more in urban than rural areas. (MIP EUD EGYPT, 2021).

Almost 60% of the total population are below the age of 30 according to the latest available national data. Egypt's Human Development Index (HDI) value in 2019 is 0.707, which puts the country at the

lower range of the high human development category, positioning it at 116th out of 189 countries and territories. When adjusted for inequality, the country loses 29.7% of its HDI value largely due to inequality in education and income (UNDP, 2020)

By mid-2020, Egypt had 543 000 international migrants in the country. As far as Egyptian emigrants are concerned, their top destination countries were Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates, and Kuwait, USA, Qatar, Italy, and Jordan (Migration Data Portal IOM, 2020).

The total share of international migrants in the population in 2020 was 0.5% and this was growing with respect to 2015 (0.4%). At total of 19% were younger than 19 years old, and, by mid-2020, 46% were female.

The net migration (immigrants minus emigrants) in the previous 5 years was -190.000.

The Government of Egypt pays attention to the skills dimension of migration and international labour mobility. This fact is also reflected in the Constitution of 2014, which commits to the expansion and quality of general education and VET in line with international standards. Egypt is also participating in the tender launched by the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD) to map the qualifications relevant for the labour emigration. The country is also part of the DG NEAR THAMM project. In both initiatives, the trust, portability, and transparency of Egyptian qualifications from a labour mobility perspective are key. The recent mission report of Commissioner Johansson to Egypt (15 November 2021) included a remark on further cooperation on labour mobility schemes and the inclusion of Egypt in the Talent Partnership initiative on labour migration. A reference was also made to support the root causes of migration via the enhancement of vocational training and skills qualifications, with the possible support of the European Training Foundation (ETF).

- **Economic developments, informal economy, remittances**

Under an economic and financial programme supported by the IMF Extended Fund Facility (EFF) in 2016, Egypt has implemented a series of macro-economic and structural reforms that stabilised the economy, (IMF, 2020), spurred growth and improved the business climate for more active private sector participation. As per the World Bank's *Doing Business 2020* report, the regulatory improvements included simplifying the process of starting a business, improving the reliability of electricity supply through automated systems to monitor power outages, and introducing digital tax payments (World Bank, 2020).

Nevertheless, the adverse repercussions of the COVID-19 pandemic have destabilised this progress and emphasised existing structural challenges. These mainly comprise: a slow private (formal) sector activity and hence weak job creation; underperforming non-oil exports and foreign direct investment (FDI); increased government debt-to-GDP ratio (despite a significant fall in 2018); and a budget structure assigning very limited allocations to the health and education sectors.

Real GDP growth reached 5.6% in 2019 (CAPMAS, 2020), the highest rate in a decade, and the figure was only 3.6% in 2020. The COVID-19 crisis caused a year-on-year contraction of 1.7% from April to June 2020, before growth recovered in October to December 2020 (+2%) with the lifting of the curfew and easing of social distancing measures (World Bank, 2021). Growth is projected to decline to 2.5% in 2021, given the impact of the pandemic, the renewed increase in the number of COVID-19 cases, and the slow vaccine roll-out in Egypt and abroad.

Positioned as a strategic trade hub, Egypt is the largest non-OPEC oil producer in Africa and one of the leading dry natural gas producers in the region. According to the latest available data (CAPMAS, 2021), crude oil production accounts for around 30 million tons and natural gas production for 35 million tons. Egypt is an important transit route for oil and liquefied natural gas (LNG) through the Suez Canal (CAPMAS, 2021). However, the COVID-19 pandemic – and resulting restrictions on international travel and collapse in demand – severely affected tourism, Suez Canal revenues, and export of goods. Exports of goods and services fell by 21.7% in 2020 compared to an increase of 31.6% in 2018. The current account deficit is projected to widen from 3.1% of GDP in 2020 to 3.4% in 2021 (World Bank, 2021).

Similarly, amidst the global economic slowdown, FDI inflows are projected to decrease from 2.1% of GDP in 2020 to around 1% of GDP in 2021 (World Bank, 2020).

Inflation has been declining since the 23.5% peak in 2017, reaching 5.7% in 2020 and projected at 4.8% in 2021 (IMF, 2021)

To lessen the adverse effects of the pandemic on the poor and mitigate the economic impact of COVID-19, the Government of Egypt has announced stimulus policies in a USD 6.13 billion package (EGP 100 billion, the equivalent of 1.7% of GDP) (World Bank, 2020). Key measures include an exceptional monetary grant to irregular workers and the expansion of existing cash transfer programmes; these measures replaced the generalised consumer subsidies for energy and food by programmes targeted more at poverty and human development (Al-Ahram Weekly, 2019).

In parallel with phasing out energy subsidies, Egypt has been investing in renewables. In 2015, the Government launched the 1 460 MW Benban solar power facility in Aswan Governorate, Africa's largest solar park. It will allow Egypt to increase the share of electricity provided by renewables from a meagre amount to 20% by 2022 and 42% by 2035 (RCREEE, 2019). This is a positive trend, since it corresponds with European Commission's priority pillars in greening the economy with the necessary interventions in skills development policies to ensure the supply of skilled labour.

2. EDUCATION AND TRAINING

2.1 Trends and challenges

- **Education expenditure, access, participation and early leaving**

According to the 2019 data available from the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO, IUS), Egypt is trending positively on certain key educational indicators. In 2019, the net enrolment rate in primary education reached 97.0% and gross enrolment in secondary education increased to 89.9%, while upper secondary rose to 77.6%. Egypt also has a well-developed and extensive tertiary education system, with 35.2% of Egyptians taking this opportunity (gross enrolment rate in tertiary education in 2018). In the academic year 2017/2018, more than two million students were enrolled in the 2 914 VET institutes (ISCED 3). In 2019, 46.9% of the total number of students in upper secondary education in Egypt were in VET (51.3% men and 42.0% women). Only a small percentage of VET graduates enters university, while others continue to mid-level technical colleges affiliated to the Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research.

In contrast to the positive trend in education attainment, labour force / activity rate is going down; it was 42.2% in 2019 (falling from 43.3% in 2018, 47% in 2015 and 49.4% in 2010). This trend appears to be driven by a fall in the activity rate of men from 74.9% in 2010 to 67.7% in 2018 and 67.3% in 2019. The activity rate of women hit a low in 2019, going from 18.4% in 2018 to 15.6% in 2019 (down from 2.8% in 2018) – just more than a quarter of the activity rate activity rate of men. (ETF Torino Process 2018-2020, p. 20, KIESE ETF, 2021)

In general, for both men and women, the phenomenon of ‘educated unemployment’ is a persistent feature in the Egyptian labour market. Low-educated workers (illiterate and those who read and write) show very low unemployment levels (from 2.4% in 2017 to 2.5% in 2019) (KIESE ETF, 2021), whereas much higher unemployment rates are recorded with higher levels of education attainment, such as university and intermediate secondary level (34% and 48.2% respectively). This is a strong indication of the mismatch between the skills offered by the education and training system and those demanded by the labour market (ETF, Torino Process 2018-2020). A fall of 8% is to be observed for higher educated employed women, going from 44.3% in 2017 to 36.4% in 2018. (KIESE ETF, 2021).

Egypt’s 2014 Constitution states that education is compulsory until the completion of secondary school or its equivalent and that the State will allocate at least 4% of GDP to school education in addition to 2% of GDP to university education, with these percentages to be increased annually. According to the available data, 8.9% of total public expenditure in 2017/2018 was spent on education, marking a decrease from previous years. (ETF, Torino Process 2018-2020)

- **Young people not in employment, education or training (NEET(s))**

As regards young people not in employment, education or training (NEETs), data from ILOSTAT show that there were 27.1% of NEETs in Egypt in 2018. Young girls are largely over-represented in this group (one out of three in Egypt) with a total share of 35% in 2017 and 40.3% in 2018. According to the ELMP survey 2018, 82% of women were neither in education nor in employment in 2018. This evidences why young girls need focused attention in future within education and training policies.

- **Education during the COVID-19 pandemic**

Due to the pandemic and like most governments around the world, Egypt had to balance the priority of keeping its citizens and specially students safe through social distancing and school closures and the need to continue the learning process for the rest of the academic year. Therefore, all types of education including TVET and work-based learning were suspended on 15 March 2020 until the end of the academic year and replaced with distance and on-line learning. A note prepared by the Ministry (Mr Ahmed El-Ashmawy and Dr Mohamad Megahed, May 2020) described a number of concrete measures by which the TVET sector in Egypt responded to the pandemic.

The following means to deal distance and on-line learning from home were immediately either established or activated, and each tool was supervised by a team of experienced technical education teachers: YouTube channels; Nile Sat TV Channel (for students with limited internet access); the technical education platform / website; a learning management portal (Edmodo).

According to Dr Mohamad Megahed (Deputy Minister), the above-mentioned tools were positively received by students, who were able to find many different means that suited them, including mobile phones and the WhatsApp application, to ensure continuous communication with teachers. Some students also interacted with teachers by sending their own videos and presentations. The German development agency GIZ also provided short-term expertise to the Ministry to manage communication and media advice.

Another concrete example is the digital library (<https://study.ekb.eg>), which includes many different digital education references and resources to help students with self-learning. A further platform that was put in place (<https://stream.moe.gov.eg>) represents a significant resource in preparing research projects for students and is also a live broadcast platform for virtual classes. Meanwhile, Edmodo (<https://edmodo.org>), a platform providing free education, helps teachers communicate safely with their students, and supports virtual classrooms under the supervision of parents. The Ministry of Education cooperated with Microsoft to provide office software to nearly 20 million students, free of charge, on the Edmodo platform, to support the new education system and encourage students to handle the digital software (Study ETF-EMEA-EMNES, 2021).

2.2 VET policy and institutional setting

- **Strategic and legal framework for VET and adult learning**

Education is a priority in the Egypt Vision 2030. In line with this, vocational education and training (VET) has gained importance and is under political pressure. However, the VET sector remains highly fragmented and previous attempts to establish over-arching governing models have not yet been achieved.

The Ministry of Education (MoETE), as the main VET provider in the country, is also working on the implementation of a reform strategy, dubbed Technical Education 2.0 (TE 2.0), which was launched in 2019 around five main reform pillars. The strategy aims to increase the attractiveness and relevance of VET, ensure its quality, train teachers, review the governance model and establish new models of public-private partnerships. In addition to the reforms within compulsory education, the government is seeking to modernise the higher education sector. In 2018, a Law for the Establishment of New Technological Universities was approved, with, initially, eight universities planned. These will be publicly owned and will offer 2- and 4-year programmes across a range of specialities, including agriculture, industry, technology and commerce. The courses will be open to students with general secondary school certificates, as well as those who have attended a technical school. It is envisaged that the model will build further on that of the Integrated Technical Educational Clusters (ITECs), which deliver all levels of technical and vocational qualifications in each sector.

The Ministry of Trade and Industry (MoTI) has also developed its own strategy, which includes a chapter on TVET, as well as plans to restructure the Productivity and Vocational Training Department (PVTD). The Ministry of Manpower (MoMM) has recently drafted a new Labour Law, which is currently under discussion in Parliament. Once this document has been approved, the MoMM will consider it their policy framework with priority over any new TVET strategy. The new Law replaces the Supreme Council for Human Resources Development with a new Council for Human Resources Development and Skills chaired by the Prime Minister.

- **Quality and quality assurance**

In 2019, the President issued a request to set up a dedicated authority for quality assurance for VET (ETQAAN) and to establish a teacher-training academy for VET (TVETA). Prominent task forces were put in place to finalise the strategy papers and, in September 2020, the draft law to establish ETQAAN was approved by the Cabinet of Ministers, paving the way for a unified approach to assuring the quality of technical education and vocational training across various providers in Egypt.

It is now awaiting final approval, which is expected at the end of 2021.

With the establishment of ETQAAN, the responsibilities of the National Authority for Quality Assurance and Accreditation of Education (NAQAAE) on VET will need to be reviewed. It is envisaged that

NAQAAE will remain responsible for all other educational qualifications and accreditation. In the medium term, NAQAAE and ETQAAN will need to work out mechanisms for coordination. The development of a national qualifications framework (NQF) is continuing under the responsibility of the NAQAAE. The NQF law, running in parallel with the ETQAAN debate, is expected to be approved by the end of 2021.

- **Work-based learning arrangements**

An important priority in terms of VET reforms is the reinforcement of current WBL initiatives. The most important of these is the dual system piloted through the Mubarak–Kohl Initiative, which currently accounts for 2% of VET. There is a strong political will to mainstream models of WBL throughout the education system and to increase WBL to involve 100 000 students a year, with the goal of increasing the percentage of students in work-based learning to 50% by 2025. The MoETE is developing public-private partnership models to engage industry in training through the applied technology schools' initiative and through centres of competence, with support from Germany and the EU. In 2020, a large-scale German support programme (run by the GIZ) initiated the roll-out of an Egyptian version of the 'dual system' of education and training. Meanwhile, an implementation plan was developed and started at the Joint Strategic Event held in October 2021. At this event, the MoETE brought together interventions such as the GIZ project to mainstream it towards the previously mentioned Technical Education reform (TE 2.0). In addition, the Productivity and Vocational Training Department (PVTD), which is under the aegis of the Ministry of Trade and Industry, is expanding the concept of 'training stations' within companies. The private sector is also engaging in other training approaches. For example, the joint occupational training centre (the 'EGT Academy') run by Siemens, the GIZ and the Egyptian government, was inaugurated in 2020 in Ain Sokhna and is expected to provide training to more than 5 000 young Egyptians in the coming years, thus developing a cohort of skilled technicians to ensure the maintenance and repair of power plants, wind farms, etc. This good example of public-private partnership, given the outcomes, will be mainstreamed in the national VET system. ([EGT Academy | Home-www.egtacacemy.com](http://www.egtacacemy.com))

- **VET governance and financing arrangements**

Enterprise TVET Partnerships (ETPs) were established in 2013 to improve the links between VET and the private sector, but they have been gradually discontinued. In 2019, during the implementation of TVET Egypt, the Federation of Egyptian Industry (FEI) started looking into how to revitalise the platforms of the ETP's around the concept of sector skills councils (SSCs), with the support of the EU-funded project, but until now this has been without success. The new SSCs are supposed to focus on aligning VET supply and demand, ensuring the quality and relevance of qualifications and participating in the assessment process. In parallel, the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development has initiated a sector platform approach for the electrical cables sub-sector.

In October 2021, TVET Egypt developed the first comprehensive concept note including the structural model, vision, operating mechanism, revenue streams, services, governance, and main stakeholders. In close collaboration with a taskforce formed by the GIZ, USAID, KfW and the MOETE, in 2022, TVET Egypt will support the establishment and drafting of the regulations for SSCs, including the draft law and by laws with all essential legal and regulatory binding terms and conditions required for their establishment. This will also encompass the legal and financial structure, including a business, governance and operational model which will be developed within a national policy for private sector engagement. The latter is essential, since successful TVET reforms have been the most successful engaging the private sector (KOF, 2018).

- **Digital education and skills**

As described in the section above, the MoETE responded swiftly to the COVID-19 crisis by setting up digital and online learning systems, and actively promoting the use of the online 'Edmodo' tool as the main teaching and learning platform.

Promoting digital learning and designing digital-skills initiatives for learners and teachers will be a long-term effort, so it is important that these experiences are capitalised upon and fed into longer-term policy work around blended learning. A task force has been set up for this purpose, and key development partners are joining in the efforts. The GIZ, KfW, USAID and TVET Egypt are implementing or planning activities to include digitalisation in the various stages of the VET cycle (Presentation Joint Strategic Planning Workshop, October 2021).

- **Donor support to education and VET for young people and adults**

The EU remains a dedicated supporter of the Egyptian education sector as a whole, with particular emphasis on increasing access to, and the quality of, education, especially for the most vulnerable. The current EU cooperation portfolio in education includes two complementary primary community schooling programmes (EUR 90 million in total). In the area of VET, the EU is providing support through the TVET Egypt programme (2013-2022, EUR 50 million), which is co-funded by the Egyptian government (EUR 67 million). The programme aims to improve the structure and performance of the TVET system to better respond to Egypt's rapidly changing socioeconomic needs, with a focus on youth employability and national competitiveness. This reform has been identified by policy makers and experts as a high priority, because of its potential to help reduce unemployment, promote social equity and enhance the country's global competitiveness. The programme entered its final year of implementation in 2021, but has been partially extended to 2022, a year which will be key to capitalise on prior achievements and successes in areas such as competency-based curriculum development, for instance.

Other deliverables, however, such as a labour-market information system (LMIS) and the SSCs, have yet to materialise and are the main purpose of the prolongation to 2022.

Given the political pressure around the VET reforms, the MoETE is facilitating, with the support of the ETF, the coordination of the various international projects (including those supported by the EU, Germany and the USA) with the aim of ensuring alignment to TE 2.0 reform, seeking complementarity between the interventions and working towards joint implementation. There is an opportunity to expand and further formalise this coordination mechanism within the framework of the revised comprehensive governance model for the entire VET sector.

3. LABOUR MARKET AND EMPLOYMENT

3.1 Trends and challenges

- **Labour Market and employment challenges in general**

Growth declined from 3.6% in FY2019/2020 to 3.3% in FY2020/2021 (1 July 2020-30 June 2021), from a figure of 5.6% in 2019, affected by the ongoing impact of COVID-19. However, sectors that had been contracting since the beginning of the pandemic (tourism, manufacturing, extractives, and Suez Canal) started rebounding during April-June 2021 (Q4-FY2020/2021), in part reflecting base effects, easing of restrictions and the gradual resumption of economic activity, international travel and trade. Unemployment declined to 7.3% by Q4-FY2020/2021, from the 9.6% peak a year earlier at the height of the COVID-19 shock. However, labour force participation and employment rates remain low at 41.9% and 39% of the working-age population respectively, further hindering poverty reduction (World Bank, 2021)

- **Employment and unemployment**

Unemployment fell to 7.2% by the end of 2020, after reaching 9.6% in mid-2020, with labour force participation and employment rates remaining below potential at 43.5% and 40.4% of the working-age population respectively. Unemployment is particularly high among women at 21.6% (ILOSTAT 2020).

Egypt's GDP decreased in 2020 to 3.6% after a period of growth in 2018 and 2019 (5.6%, according to ETF KIESE, based on World Bank WDI database). Even in the context of economic growth in 2019, the labour market has not been operating at its full potential. In fact, participation in the labour force has been declining over the past few years. Although the overall size of the Egyptian labour force is steadily increasing at an annual rate of around 1.8%, fewer than half of Egyptians of working age (aged 15+) are in the labour force, with the result that the labour force participation rate dipped as low as 42.2% in 2019, down from 43.3% in 2018, 47% in 2015 and 49.4% in 2010. This trend appears to be mainly driven by a fall in the activity rate of men, from 74.9% in 2010 to 67.7% in 2018 (-7.2 percentage points). The activity rate of women hit a low of 15.6% in 2019 down from 18.4% in 2018, just over a quarter of the participation rate of men, 67% in 2019.

The employment rate is following a similar downward trajectory, having dropped from 45% in 2010 to 39.1% in 2018 and 38.9% in 2019, mainly as a result of the decrease in the male employment rate from 71.3% to 63.1% over the same period. The female employment rate is more than four times lower than the male employment rate, with just 14.4% of working-age women employed in 2018 and 12.3% in 2019.

Women face substantial barriers to finding work and remaining employed, especially after marriage, which obviously affects the female employment rate. Most women entering the labour market are medium to highly skilled.

Services dominate the employment structure, accounting for a 50.11.3% share in 2019, with women 69.9% compared with men 46.6% in the same year. The share accounted for by agriculture is declining, from 28.2% in 2010 to 21.6% in 2018 and 21.1% in 2019, while industry and construction employed 26.8% of the workforce in 2018 and this rate increased in 2019 to 28.5%, compared to 25.3% in 2010. Although employment is slowly decreasing in agriculture in favour of the services sector, the overall structure of the economy has remained similar for some years.

The full effect of COVID-19 on the structure of the labour market is yet to become apparent, although the impact on some sectors, e.g. tourism, is already clear and rebounding in 2021 (World Bank, 2021). Though Egypt imposed a looser lockdown than other countries, nevertheless this severely affected the Egyptian economy. Tourism (about 5% of GDP) came to a virtual standstill because of airport closures, leaving the sector dependent on low-value domestic visitors only.

The continued population growth in Egypt has outpaced the rate of job creation. In response, Egypt will need to take urgent measures to generate sufficient numbers of jobs to absorb the vast majority of the working-age population into the labour market. (ILO, , 2018). Most of the new jobs recently created have been in the private sector, while public employment has been decreasing since 2005 (except in some sectors, such as education), as a result of the deficit-reduction measures applied by successive cabinets. Employment in the private sector continues to be dominated by small firms and informal work. A total of 98% of Egypt's firms are micro enterprises, often limited to low-value-added activities.

The informal economy currently accounts for 48-70% of employment, according to estimates by the African Development Bank. Informal employees were affected most by the fallout from COVID-19, because of the lack of a safety net. To mitigate the impact on the unorganised labour force, Egypt introduced a monetary compensation payment (EGP 500), for which informal workers could register via an online database run by the MoMM.

The total unemployment rate decreased to 7.8% in 2019 (13.1% in 2015; 9.8% in 2018) – as did the rates for both men and women. The female unemployment rate remained particularly high (21.3% in 2018; 21.6% in 2019), mainly driven by the low number of women in the labour market. Cultural and family factors, including care obligations, are the main causes of the low rate of female participation in the labour force. Furthermore, labour market and working conditions are affecting women's decisions, with job security remaining a significant factor when choosing employment in the public sector. Overall, finding employment is more difficult for those who are better educated and looking for a good-

quality job: the unemployment rate (aged 15+) among those with a high level of education was 22.1% in 2018, compared with 10.4% among those with a medium level of education.

Given the overall weak performance of the labour market, the transition from school to work has become more difficult for young people. Despite a slight improvement, youth unemployment remains high at 19.2% in 2019 (24.7% in 2018, down from 31.6% in 2015), particularly among young women (49,3% in 2019).

This indicates a weak link between educational outputs and labour market needs, resulting in inadequate curricula that do not appear to be aligned to the competencies required by employers, as well as a mismatch in terms of quality and expectations. Almost half of working young people (47.7%) are in occupations that do not match their education, that is, they are over-educated or under-educated (EMNES Studies, 2021). Over-education is an issue predominantly in elementary occupations, followed by clerks and skilled agricultural and fishery workers. At the same time, employers report difficulties in finding skilled labour, and skills gaps increased to 19% in 2016, according to the World Bank Enterprise Survey.

- **Statistical data collection and labour market information**

A comprehensive Labour Market Information System (LMIS) does not yet exist in Egypt. Data are mainly gathered through administrative sources (employment offices) and from the labour force surveys conducted by the Central Agency for Public Mobilisation and Statistics (CAPMAS). Various mechanisms exist to identify the needs of the labour market and develop relevant qualifications, such as the National Skills Standards Programme within the Industrial Training Council. However, these give only a partial picture.

- **Poverty**

Social conditions remain difficult in Egypt, with around 30% of the population living below the national poverty line according to the household survey results for October 2019-March 2020 (World Bank, 2021), with the highest poverty rates persisting in rural areas.

To lessen the adverse effects of the pandemic on the poor and mitigate the economic impact of COVID-19, the Government of Egypt has announced stimulus policies in a USD 6.13 billion package (EGP 100 billion, the equivalent of 1.7% of GDP) (World Bank, 2020). Key measures include an exceptional monetary grant to irregular workers and the expansion of existing cash transfer programmes; these measures replaced the generalised consumer subsidies for energy and food by programmes targeted more at poverty and human development (Al-Ahram Weekly, 2019)

3.2 Employment policy and institutional setting

- **Strategy and legal framework in the employment policy field**

The MoMM is responsible for labour policy, managing labour supply and demand, increasing the employability of the labour force, and monitoring labour market demand. It administers the network of 300 employment offices. However, most of these offices are underdeveloped, under-staffed and under-resourced; they provide a very limited range of employment services, merely issuing work permits and registrations (Amer, 2012). The MoMM has drafted a new Labour Law, which is pending discussion in Parliament. Under the new law, the Supreme Council for Human Resources Development would likely be replaced by a new Council for Human Resources Development and Skills, chaired by the Prime Minister.

- **Initiatives to boost employment**

Reducing high unemployment, especially among women and young people, is a priority for the Egyptian government. While macroeconomic policies and structural reforms aim to support job creation, numerous ongoing and emerging initiatives for active labour-market policies are being implemented by various stakeholders and, in many cases, supported by donors. The government is planning to develop specialised training programmes for young people and introduce job intermediation schemes.

The transition from school to work has gained attention, in particular through the creation of school-to-work transition and career-guidance units within the relevant ministries (originally planned only for the MoETE). They have been also established in the MoMM and the Ministry of Trade and Industry in 2018). Regional units with career-guidance, employment and entrepreneurship functions have been established at the governorate level. Career-guidance functions are established at every school level within the framework of the TVET Egypt programme. However, further legislative measures are pending.

There are several entrepreneurship programmes that aim to stimulate creation of small businesses. During 2019, the trend was the emergence of incubators and initiatives focusing on innovative start-ups. In addition, in 2019, the MoETE led the development of an entrepreneurship curriculum to be integrated at technical secondary education level. Following its approval in 2020 by the Supreme Council for pre-university education, the curriculum is now being rolled out in all technical secondary schools.

As small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) are highly exposed to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, the government launched a number of initiatives in 2019-2020, in cooperation with the Central Bank of Egypt and international financial institutions such as the EBRD, to extend credit-repayment periods, relax various tax measures and provide financial aid.

- **Donor support to the employment policy field**

A number of international and national stakeholders are working together under the umbrella of the TVET Egypt programme to develop a comprehensive LMIS under the auspices of the Information and Decision Support Centre (IDSC). In addition, the International Labour Organisation (ILO) and the German development agency GIZ are supporting Egyptian stakeholders in improving data-gathering and analysis through the Regional Labour Market Observatories. The TVET Egypt programme has developed a tracer study to gather information about graduates' employability, and has conducted a pilot in 2019-2020 (ETF Monitoring report –TVET Egypt 2020).

For further information, please contact Pasqualino Mare, European Training Foundation, email: Pasqualino.Mare@etf.europa.eu

STATISTICAL ANNEX - EGYPT

Annex includes annual data from 2010, 2015, 2019 and 2020 or the last available year.

	Indicator	2010	2015	2019	2020	
1	Total Population (000) ⁽¹⁾	82 761.2	92 442.5	100 388.1	102 334.4	
2	Relative size of youth population (age group 15–24) (%) ^{(1) (2) (3)}	32.0	29.2	27.8	27.5	
3	GDP growth rate (%)	5.1	4.4	5.6	3.6	
4	GDP by sector (%)	Agriculture added value	13.3	11.4	11.0	11.5
		Industry added value	35.8	36.6	35.6	31.8
		Services added value	46.2	53.2	50.5	51.7
5	Public expenditure on education (as % of GDP)	M.D.	M.D.	M.D.	M.D.	
6	Public expenditure on education (as % of total public expenditure) ⁽¹⁾	13.7	11.4	M.D.	M.D.	
7	Adult literacy (%)	72.0	M.D.	71.2 (2017)	M.D.	
8	Educational attainment of adult population (aged 25–64 or 15+) (%) ⁽⁷⁾	Less than Basic	33.7 ⁽⁴⁾	27.9 ⁽⁵⁾	15.2u	M.D.
		Basic	10.3 ⁽⁴⁾	13.8 ⁽⁵⁾	0.9u	M.D.
		Medium	37.2 ⁽⁴⁾	39.2 ⁽⁵⁾	58.9u	M.D.
		High	18.8 ⁽⁴⁾	19.1 ⁽⁵⁾	M.D.	M.D.
9	Early leavers from education and training (aged 18–24) (%)	Total	M.D.	27.8 ⁽³⁾ (2012)	M.D.	M.D.
		Male	M.D.	25.9 ⁽³⁾ (2012)	M.D.	M.D.
		Female	M.D.	29.7 ⁽³⁾ (2012)	M.D.	M.D.
10	Gross enrolment rates in upper secondary education (ISCED level 3) (%)	48.2	M.D.	77.6	M.D.	
11	Share of VET students in upper secondary education (ISCED level 3) (%)	50.7	M.D.	47.3	M.D.	
12	Tertiary education attainment (aged 30–34) (%) ⁽³⁾	M.D.	20.4 (2012)	M.D.	M.D.	
13	Participation in training/lifelong learning (aged 25–64) (%)	Total	M.D.	M.D.	M.D.	M.D.
		Male	M.D.	M.D.	M.D.	M.D.
		Female	M.D.	M.D.	M.D.	M.D.
14	Low achievement in reading, mathematics and science – PISA (%)	Reading	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.
		Mathematics	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.
		Science	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.
15	Activity rate (aged 15+) (%) ⁽³⁾	Total	49.4	47.0	42.2	M.D.
		Male	74.9	70.5	67.3	M.D.
		Female	23.1	22.7	15.6	M.D.
16	Inactivity rate (aged 15+) (%) ⁽³⁾	Total	50.6	53.0	57.8	M.D.
		Male	25.1	29.5	32.7	M.D.
		Female	76.9	77.3	84.4	M.D.

17	Employment rate (aged 15+) (%) ⁽³⁾	Total	45.0	40.8	38.9	M.D.
		Male	71.3	63.9	64.1	M.D.
		Female	18.0	17.0	12.3	M.D.
18	Employment rate by educational attainment (% aged 15+) ^{(3) (8)}	Low	38.4	34.3	M.D.	M.D.
		Medium	49.7	44.8	M.D.	M.D.
		High	63.1	59.4	M.D.	M.D.
19	Employment by sector (%) ⁽³⁾⁽⁹⁾	Agriculture	28.2	25.8	21.1	M.D.
		Industry and Construction	25.3	25.1	28.5	M.D.
		Services	46.3	49.1	50.1	M.D.
20	Incidence of self-employment (%) ⁽³⁾		37.8	37.5	28.9	M.D.
21	Incidence of vulnerable employment (%) ⁽³⁾		23.1	25.5	19.5	M.D.
22	Unemployment rate (aged 15+) (%) ⁽³⁾	Total	8.8	13.1	7.8	M.D.
		Male	4.8	9.4	4.8	M.D.
		Female	22.1	24.8	21.6	M.D.
23	Unemployment rate by educational attainment (aged 15+) (%) ⁽³⁾⁽¹⁰⁾	Less than Basic	1.0	4.1	2.5	M.D.
		Basic	2.9	9.0	4.9	M.D.
		Medium	12.5	16.7	11.1	M.D.
		High	18.5	21.6	M.D.	M.D.
24	Long-term unemployment rate (aged 15+) (%)		7.4	11.3	M.D.	M.D.
25	Youth unemployment rate (aged 15–24) (%)	Total	24.3	31.6	19.2	M.D.
		Male	14.3	28.5	12.2	M.D.
		Female	53.4	38.3	49.3	M.D.
26	Proportion of people aged 15–24 not in employment, education or training (NEETs) (%)	Total	33.1	27.6	28.0	M.D.
		Male	15.8	19.8	16.4	M.D.
		Female	52.0	35.8	40.3	M.D.

Last update: September 2021

Sources:

Indicators 1, 2, 3, 4 – World Bank, World Development Indicators database

Indicator 6 – EUROSTAT

Indicators 7, 10, 11 – UNESCO, Institute for Statistics

Indicators 8, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26 – ILOSTAT

Indicators 9, 12 – Egyptian Labour Market Panel Survey, Economic Research Forum.

Notes:

⁽¹⁾ Estimations

(2) Denominator population 15–64

(3) Based on ETF calculations

(4) LOW, less than basic = no schooling + ISCED 0; LOW, basic = ISCED 1; MEDIUM = ISCED 3+4; HIGH = ISCED 5+6

(5) LOW, less than basic = no schooling + ISCED 0; LOW, basic = ISCED 1+2; MEDIUM = ISCED 3+4; HIGH = ISCED 5+6

(6) LOW, less than basic = no schooling; LOW, basic = ISCED 1+2; MEDIUM = ISCED 3+4; HIGH = ISCED 5+6

(7) In some cases, totals do not add up to 100% because of respondents with no stated level of education.

(8) Medium= ISCED97 3-4; High= ISCED97 5-6; Low (2010)= no schooling+ISCED97 0 + ISCED97 1 ; Low (2015)= no schooling + ISCED97 0 + ISCED97 1 +ISCED97 2; Low (2016-2018)=no schooling + ISCED97 1 +ISCED97 2.

(9) In some cases, sectors do not add up to 100% because the economic sector was not classified.

(10) Low-0 refers to level of ISCED 0+ No schooling, Low-1-2 refers to level of ISCED 1-2 (no information available on ISCED 0), Medium refers to level of ISCED 3-4, High refers to level of ISCED beyond 5.

Legend:

N.A. = Not Applicable

M.D. = Missing Data

u = unreliable data

ANNEX: DEFINITIONS OF INDICATORS

	Description	Definition
1	Total population ('000)	The total population is estimated as the number of people having their usual residence in a country on 1 January of the relevant year. When information on the usually resident population is not available, countries may report legal or registered residents.
2	Relative size of youth population (age group 15–24) (%)	This is the ratio of the youth population (aged 15–24) to the working-age population, usually aged 15–64 (74)/15+.
3	GDP growth rate (%)	Annual percentage growth rate of GDP at market prices based on constant local currency. Aggregates are based on constant 2010 US dollars. GDP is the sum of gross value added by all resident producers in the economy plus any product taxes and minus any subsidies not included in the value of the products. It is calculated without making deductions for depreciation of fabricated assets or for depletion and degradation of natural resources.
4	GDP by sector (%)	The share of value added from Agriculture, Industry and Services. Agriculture corresponds to ISIC divisions 1–5 and includes forestry, hunting, and fishing, as well as cultivation of crops and livestock production. Value added is the net output of a sector after adding up all outputs and subtracting intermediate inputs. It is calculated without making deductions for depreciation of fabricated assets or depletion and degradation of natural resources. The origin of value added is determined by the International Standard Industrial Classification (ISIC), revision 3 or 4.
5	Public expenditure on education (as % of GDP)	Public expenditure on education expressed as a percentage of GDP. Generally, the public sector funds education either by directly bearing the current and capital expenses of educational institutions, or by supporting students and their families with scholarships and public loans as well as by transferring public subsidies for educational activities to private firms or non-profit organisations (transfer to private households and enterprises). Both types of transactions together are reported as total public expenditure on education.
6	Public expenditure on education (as % of total public expenditure)	Public expenditure on education expressed as a percentage of total public expenditure. Generally, the public sector funds education either by directly bearing the current and capital expenses of educational institutions, or by supporting students and their families with scholarships and public loans as well as by transferring public subsidies for educational activities to private firms or non-profit organisations (transfer to private households and enterprises). Both types of transactions together are reported as total public expenditure on education.
7	Adult literacy (%)	Adult literacy is the percentage of the population aged 15 years and over who can both read and write a short simple statement on his/her everyday life, and understand it. Generally, 'literacy' also encompasses 'numeracy' – the ability to make simple arithmetic calculations.

	Description	Definition
8	Educational attainment of adult population (25–64 or aged 15+) (%)	Educational attainment refers to the highest educational level achieved by individuals expressed as a percentage of all persons in that age group. This is usually measured in terms of the highest educational programme successfully completed, which is typically certified by a recognised qualification. Recognised intermediate qualifications are classified at a lower level than the programme itself.
9	Early leavers from education and training (age group 18–24) (%)	Early leavers from education and training are defined as the percentage of the population aged 18–24 with, at most, lower secondary education who were not in further education or training during the 4 weeks preceding the survey. Lower secondary education refers to ISCED 1997 levels 0–2 and 3C short (i.e. programmes lasting under two years) for data up to 2013 and to ISCED 2011 levels 0–2 for data from 2014 onwards.
10	Gross enrolment rates in upper secondary education (ISCED level 3) (%)	Number of students enrolled in a given level of education, regardless of age, expressed as a percentage of the official school-age population corresponding to the same level of education.
11	Share of VET students in upper secondary education (ISCED level 3) (%)	Total number of students enrolled in vocational programmes at a given level of education (in this case, upper secondary), expressed as a percentage of the total number of students enrolled in all programmes (vocational and general) at that level.
12	Tertiary education attainment (aged 30–34) (%)	Tertiary attainment is calculated as the percentage of the population aged 30–34 who have successfully completed tertiary studies (e.g. university, higher technical institution). Educational attainment refers to ISCED 1997 level 5–6 up to 2013 and ISCED 2011 level 5–8 from 2014 onwards.
13	Participation in training/lifelong learning (age group 25–64) (%)	Participants in lifelong learning refers to persons aged 25–64 who stated that they received education or training in the four weeks preceding the survey (numerator). The denominator is the total population of the same age group, excluding those who did not answer the question on participation in education and training. The information collected relates to all education or training, whether or not it is relevant to the respondent's current or possible future job. If a different reference period is used, this should be indicated.
14	Low achievement in reading, maths and science – PISA (%)	Low achievers are the 15-year-olds who are failing to reach level 2 on the PISA scale for reading, mathematics and science.
15	Activity rate (aged 15+) (%)	The activity rate is calculated by dividing the active population by the population of the same age group. The active population (also called 'labour force') is defined as the sum of employed and unemployed people. The inactive population consists of all people who are classified as neither employed nor unemployed.
16	Inactivity rate (aged 15+) (%)	The inactivity/out of the labour force rate is calculated by dividing the inactive population by the population of the same age group. The inactive population consists of all people who are classified as neither employed nor unemployed.
17	Employment rate (aged 15+) (%)	The employment rate is calculated by dividing the number of employed people by the population of the same age group. Employed people are all people who worked at least one hour for pay or profit during the reference period or were temporarily absent from such work. If a different age group is used, this should be indicated.
18	Employment rate by educational attainment (% aged 15+)	The employment rate is calculated by dividing the number of employed persons by the population of the same age group.

	Description	Definition
		<p>Employed persons are all persons who worked at least one hour for pay or profit during the reference period or were temporarily absent from such work. If a different age group is used, this should be indicated.</p> <p>Educational levels refer to the highest educational level successfully completed. Three levels are considered: Low (ISCED level 0–2), Medium (ISCED level 3–4) and High (ISCED 1997 level 5–6, and ISCED 2011 level 5–8).</p>
19	Employment by sector (%)	This indicator provides information on the relative importance of different economic activities with regard to employment. Data are presented by broad branches of economic activity (i.e. Agriculture/Industry/Services) based on the International Standard Industrial Classification of All Economic Activities (ISIC). In Europe, the NACE classification is consistent with ISIC.
20	Incidence of self-employment (%)	The incidence of self-employment is expressed by the self-employed (i.e. employers + own-account workers + contributing family workers) as a proportion of the total employed.
21	Incidence of vulnerable employment (%)	The incidence of vulnerable employment is expressed by the own-account workers and contributing family workers as a proportion of the total employed.
22	Unemployment rate (aged 15+) (%)	The unemployment rate represents unemployed people as a percentage of the labour force. The labour force is the total number of people who are employed or unemployed. Unemployed people comprise those aged 15–64 or 15+ who were without work during the reference week; are currently available for work (were available for paid employment or self-employment before the end of the two weeks following the reference week); are actively seeking work, i.e. had taken specific steps in the four-week period ending with the reference week to seek paid employment or self-employment, or had found a job to start later (within a period of, at most, three months).
23	Unemployment rate by educational attainment (aged 15+) (%)	The unemployment rate represents unemployed people as a percentage of the labour force. The labour force is the total number of people who are employed or unemployed. Unemployed people comprise those aged 15–64 or 15+ who were without work during the reference week; are currently available for work (were available for paid employment or self-employment before the end of the two weeks following the reference week); are actively seeking work (had taken specific steps in the four-week period ending with the reference week to seek paid employment or self-employment, or had found a job to start later (within a period of, at most, three months)). Educational levels refer to the highest educational level successfully completed. Three levels are considered: Low (ISCED level 0–2), Medium (ISCED level 3–4) and High (ISCED 1997 level 5–6, and ISCED 2011 level 5–8)
24	Long-term unemployment rate (aged 15+) (%)	The long-term unemployment rate is the share of people in the total active population who have been unemployed for 12 months or more, expressed as a percentage. The duration of unemployment is defined as the duration of a search for a job or as the period of time since the last job was held (if this period is shorter than the duration of the search for a job).
25	Youth unemployment rate (aged 15–24) (%)	The youth unemployment ratio is calculated by dividing the number of unemployed people aged 15–24 by the total population of the same age group.

	Description	Definition
26	Proportion of people aged 15–24 not in employment, education or training (NEETs) (%)	The indicator provides information on young people aged 15–24 who meet the following two conditions: first, they are not employed (i.e. unemployed or inactive according to the ILO definition); and second, they have not received any education or training in the four weeks preceding the survey. Data are expressed as a percentage of the total population of the same age group and gender, excluding the respondents who have not answered the question on participation in education and training.

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LIST OF ACRONYMS

CAPMAS	Central Agency for Public Mobilization and Statistics
ETP	Enterprise TVET Partnership
ETQAAN	Egyptian TVET Quality Assurance and Accreditation National Authority
FEI	Federation of Egyptian Industry
GIZ	The Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit GmbH
GDP	Gross domestic product
ICT	Information and communications technology
IDSC	Information and Decision Support Centre
ILO	International Labour Organisation
ISCED	International Standard Classification of Education
ISIC	International Standard Industrial Classification
ITEC	Integrated Technical Educational Cluster
LMIS	Labour-market information system
MENA	Middle East and North Africa
MoETE	Ministry of Education and Technical Education
MoMM	Ministry of Manpower and Migration
NAQAAE	National Authority for Quality Assurance and Accreditation of Education
NEET	Not in employment, education or training
NQF	National qualifications framework
PVTD	Productivity and Vocational Training Department
SSC	Sector skills council
TIMSS	Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study
TVET	Technical and vocational education and training
TVETA	Technical and Vocational Teachers' Academy
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation
VET	Vocational education and training
WBL	Work-based learning

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION ABOUT
OUR ACTIVITIES PLEASE CONTACT:
COMMUNICATION DEPARTMENT
EUROPEAN TRAINING FOUNDATION
VIALE SETTIMIO SEVERO 65
I - 10133 TORINO
E: INFO@ETF.EUROPA.EU
T: +39 011 6302222
F: +39 011 6302200
WWW.ETF.EUROPA.EU