

MIGRANTS AND REFUGEES IN EGYPT

07/06/2022 - 07/03/2023

13/02/2023 – 07/03/2023

- On February 27, Egypt's Foreign Minister Sameh Shoukry [visited](#) Syria and Türkiye to convey a message of solidarity from Cairo following the [devastating earthquake](#) that struck the two countries. During the visit, President Assad [thanked](#) Egypt and its people for hosting Syrian refugees and "treating them as brothers." Sameh Shoukry's visit was the first by an Egyptian foreign minister to Syria since its civil war began in 2011, and another sign of the warming ties between Syrian President Bashar Assad and Arab states.

26/01/2023 – 13/02/2023

- On February 2, Stefania Craxi, chairwoman of the Italian Senate's Defense and Foreign Affairs Committee, concluded her three-day visit in Egypt. Craxi was received by the Egyptian Foreign Minister Sameh Shoukry who, throughout the meeting, [emphasised](#) the importance of building on the momentum witnessed in Egypt-Italy relations in the recent period. The talks took up cooperation in several areas that constitute a common challenge for the two countries, one of which is irregular migration across the Mediterranean. Craxi's visit follows [the visit of Antonio Tajani](#), Italy's Foreign Minister, who was in Egypt on January 21 with the aim of discussing stabilisation efforts in Libya, increasing cooperation in deterring migration flows across the Mediterranean and strengthening energy partnerships. The diplomatic efforts stepped up by the Italian government with countries like Egypt, Libya and Tunisia reflect the Italian willingness to stop migrants directly before setting off from the coasts of North Africa.

15/12/2022-26/01/2023

- In a recent visit of Italy's Minister of Foreign Affairs to Egypt, he [stressed](#) the importance of Egypt in stemming irregular migration flows. The Minister also mentioned that Italy is ready to have more legal migrants, including from Egypt via for instance pilot projects to give migrants grants to study

and train in Italy. However, he remained vague on the concrete details of this proposal.

- [Increasing numbers](#) of Egyptians are fleeing the country following the route that goes through eastern Libya to reach Italy. In 2022, Egyptians were the first nationality of people disembarked in Italy, with [20,542](#) registered arrivals.
- UNHCR published the [“Egypt Detention Prevention and Response”](#). According to the information reported, up to 31 October 2022 3,306 people were arrested on migration-related offences in 2022 mostly from the southern border. In total, in 2022 UNHCR registered an increase of 14% in the total number of arrests compared to 2021. The organisation also denounces that it does not have access to detention and border points, which is a key factor in diminishing asylum-seekers’ access to asylum in Egypt.

25/11/2022 – 13/12/2022

- Commissioner **Várhelyi** [replied](#) to a parliamentary question on the EU cooperation on migration with Egypt saying that: *“The current project pipeline on migration cooperation with Egypt amounts to EUR 160 million, out of which substantial support will be provided for border surveillance, search, and rescue at land and sea by the Egyptian border authorities. The aim will be to enhance Egypt’s capacity to save lives of migrants stranded at sea and in the desert and address the irregular migration flows towards Europe. (...) In addition, Egypt will also benefit from multi-country actions for returns and reintegration, legal migration, support to cross-border cooperation and international police cooperation against migration smuggling in North Africa. The specific amounts are still to be determined for these actions. Lastly, under the EU Emergency Trust Fund for Africa — North Africa Window, Egypt currently benefits with a total of nearly EUR 91 million in bilateral and regional actions, including the bilateral package of EUR 60 million for ‘Enhancing the response to Migration Challenges in Egypt’.*

05/10/2022 – 02/11/2022

- The EU [signed](#) an agreement with Egypt for the first phase of an 80 million EUR border management programme.
- Refugee Platform Egypt published the new report [EU funding for the Egyptian Coast Guard \(Strengthening a Partnership That Violates Human Rights\)](#)
- More and more Egyptians [are taking the sea](#) route across the Mediterranean to reach Italy. [16,371](#) Egyptians have arrived in Italy since the beginning of 2022, showing a stark increase compared to previous

years. The reasons that push Egyptians to migrate are multiple and include a dire economic and political situation which push many into poverty and repression. As leaving from Egypt is very difficult due to the government's strict measures to stop departing boats, people leave from eastern Libya, where the business of smuggling and trafficking is widespread.

- 35 CSOs including EuroMed Rights co-signed the statement [End arbitrary detention and forcible deportation of Eritrean asylum seekers!](#)

21/09/2022 – 05/10/2022

- Following a parliamentary question by MEPs Erik Marquardt and Tineke Strik, the EU Commission [confirmed](#) that it will allocate €23 million in 2022 and €57 million in 2023 to Egypt, to provide equipment and services search and rescue and border surveillance at land and sea borders. However, it stressed that at this stage there is no overview of which equipment or services will be delivered. It also stressed the importance to increase Egypt's capacity to monitor its border with Sudan and Libya, as arrivals of Egyptians to Europe have increased especially with departures from eastern Libya.

19/07/2022 – 21/09/2022

- The Refugee Platform Egypt [published](#) a report on the detention and forcible deportation of Eritrean asylum seekers. Between October 2021 and June 2022, Egyptian authorities deported more than 70 Eritrean asylum-seekers. Some of those returned were sent to compulsory military service, while others disappeared leaving no trace. Before deportation, they were detained for months and even years without any legal basis.
- MEPs Erik Marquardt and Tineke Strik from the Greens submitted a [parliamentary question](#) to Commissioner Várhelyi asking for more information on the EUR 80 million that the Commission will give to the Egyptian coast guard for 'border protection' and to prevent Egyptians from fleeing. The questions demanded clarifications on the equipment or services delivered to the Egyptian authorities, on the indicators used to ensure that EU-Egypt migration cooperation complies with human rights, and on the human rights impact or risk assessment conducted to guarantee that this funding will not facilitate human rights violations. The [answer](#) of the Commissioner remained [vague](#): "the Commission is currently developing an action in support of border management (search and rescue and border surveillance at land and sea borders) in close coordination with Egyptian authorities (...) As the action has not been adopted yet, no overview of equipment or services to be delivered to Egyptian authorities is available at this stage. An ex ante risk assessment will be conducted and monitoring

will take place throughout the action to ensure that it does not pose any threats to the respect of international human rights standards and the protection of refugees and migrants”.

28/06/2022-19/07/2022

- About [130 Egyptian](#) migrants were found by the Libyan tugboat Irasa, from the Libyan Ports Company and disembarked in Derna, Libya. According to reconstructions, the people were in distress and the vessel Irasa was the only one nearby which could carry out a SAR operation. It was assisted by a boat of the Red Crescent in Derna and a militia boat from Cyrenaica.

07/06/2022 – 27/06/2022

- The Egyptian Coast Guard will receive [80 million EUR](#) from the EU Commission to prevent migrants’ departures. More than 3,500 Egyptians fled since the beginning of the year and the majority of them disembarked in Italy.
- A new Migration Hub was [launched](#) in Egypt at the American University in Cairo, to provide a space for partnership that “draws on government, donors, experts, practitioners and civil society to create and synthesize knowledge for the use by policy makers, generating a menu of policy choices, based on analytical evidence, evaluation of policies, data collection, and quality control”.
- Rosa Luxemburg Stiftung [published](#) a report on Egypt’s systematic practices of detention, deportations and human rights violations against people on the move. As stated, “Thousands or even tens of thousands of people are arrested at Egypt’s borders every year and often held indefinitely in administrative detention. While the military infrequently publishes figures on people arrested at the borders, Egypt is a downright black box regarding deportations. Official statistics do not exist, and neither civil society nor the media are able to grasp official practices in their entirety, given the sensitivity of the issue and the lack of transparency by the Ministry of Interior and the army”. The report is available [here](#).