



A Study on the Dynamics of the Egyptian Diaspora: Strengthening Development Linkages



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Publisher: International Organization for Migration (IOM)
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July 2010



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Abbreviations

CAPMAS	Central Agency for Public Mobilization and Statistics, Egypt
IOM	International Organization for Migration
OECD	Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development
UNECA	United Nations Economic Commission for Africa
UAE	United Arab Emirates
KSA	Kingdom of Saudi Arabia

Acknowledgment

This study would not have been possible without the support of Egyptian colleagues and friends in the diaspora. We owe special thanks to Karem Ahmed Issa, Ikladius Ibrahim, Hanan Khalifa, and Ali Fayed in the United Kingdom; Dalia Ibrahim, Adel Mohamed, and Rania Sultan in the United States of America; Abdel-Hameed El-Abbasi and Ahmed Aboul-Saad in Kuwait. Thanks also go to friends and colleagues (Yasmin Moutaz and Ghada El-Said) in Egypt who helped to establish contacts with the diaspora communities in the host countries.

We are also grateful to the IOM Regional Office for the Middle East for providing us with their intellectual, technical and logistical support. In particular, we would like to thank Mr. Md. Shahidul Haque, Mr. Mathieu Luciano and Mr. Roberto Pitea. With respect to logistical and administrative support, we would also like to thank, among others, Ms. Fiona El Assiuty, Ms. Elisa Crowe, Ms. Maha Adel Baki, Mr. Mona El-Zayyat and Ms. Mary Aziz.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This study is based on a field survey of Egyptian diaspora communities in Kuwait, the United Kingdom and the United States of America. The study uses a mixed method approach employing both quantitative as well as qualitative research methodologies. A quantitative study was carried out using a structured questionnaire with 323 respondents in these three countries. Additionally, forty-nine in-depth interviews were also conducted with Egyptian diasporas living in these countries. The objective of this study is to provide an overview on contemporary Egyptian diaspora, examine avenues for engaging diaspora community in the development of Egypt and to recommend policies and programmes to enhance their contribution towards the overall socio-economic development of Egypt.

The report begins with presenting a summary of the debate on migration-development nexus, diaspora as agents for development, the approaches of researching diaspora, and a brief literature review of the existing studies on Egyptian diasporas. It then discusses the conceptualization of the Egyptian diaspora in terms of its history followed by an examination of the contemporary diaspora communities in Arab countries and in the West. The results of the empirical study are then presented in the subsequent section. This section includes a portrait of the background characteristics of the diaspora community, their migration dynamics and their difficulties and concerns. Furthermore, there is also a discussion regarding the various channels through which the resources of the diaspora community could be linked to the development of Egypt. Finally, the paper concludes with providing several policy recommendations for the relevant

stakeholders to address the concerns of the Egyptian diaspora communities abroad. For instance, in relation to preservation of national (Egyptian) identity, the Ministry of Culture, in cooperation with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and concerned bodies in Egypt, should attempt to link Egyptians abroad with their homeland through regular outreach activities. Egyptian cultural centres and other identity-related activities should be strengthened.

Regarding the role of the Egyptian Consulates abroad, the study documented the fact that Egyptians abroad still believe that there are significant rooms for improvement in the services provided by the staff in embassies and consulates of Egypt. It is interesting to note that many of the interviewees had never visited an embassy or a consulate of Egypt abroad themselves, but nonetheless, they expect a certain level of ignorance and negligence on the part of the staff. It seems that there is a powerful stereotype concerning Egyptian diplomatic missions abroad which is detrimental for both the diaspora community as well as the government who is trying to maintain linkage with these communities. A suggestion of the study is that the Ministry of Foreign Affairs needs to assess the performance of Egyptian missions abroad and take actions accordingly. It also needs to launch a media campaign to promote a more positive image of its consulates and embassies throughout the world and abolish the existing negative stereotypes.

In relation to the current military service requirement in Egypt, any Egyptian youth under the age of 30 years, regardless of their place of birth, will have to go through military service as long as they are

holding the Egyptian nationality. The only way to get exemption is through obtaining a document from the Egyptian government exempting them from the service. Often times, the study population mentioned that the government missions that are entrusted to issue this document comes infrequently abroad and thus they are not able to timely obtain documents exempting them from this requirement. This in turn delays their attempts to visit Egypt as they fear legal actions upon their arrival (imprisonment) in absence of this exemption document. The findings of this study suggest that the Ministry of Defence may consider sending missions more frequently to the countries with major Egyptian diaspora to help clarify and resolve the issues associated with compulsory military service.

With respect to the political participation of the Egyptian diaspora, the study noted that Egyptians abroad complain about their inability to vote in elections taking place in Egypt. The People Assembly and the Government of Egypt may consider changing the election law to allow Egyptians living abroad to vote in the Egyptian elections while they are away. Many countries in the world including Arab countries, such as Algeria, allow their citizens to vote in national elections while being abroad.

Furthermore, the study recommends that in order to facilitate diaspora engagement in the development process of Egypt, the Egyptian government should strengthen its link with the existing diaspora networks and organizations, such as religious organizations and communities, associations, and venues of engagement created and maintained by the Egyptian diasporas.

With the prevalence of the culture of mistrust between the Egyptian diaspora communities and the government, any strong attempts to impose policies or regulations on current institutions including suggesting a formal structure or governmental run organization to engage diasporas may be regarded as an attempt by the government to control Egyptians living abroad. Instead, the government can provide support to help bridge the gaps between existing organizations and the government bodies in Egypt to foster unified effort and cooperation. Furthermore, the Government of Egypt could promote the use of internet and virtual diaspora communities and disseminate information through these venues to link Egyptians abroad among themselves as well as with their country of origin.

The three main channels through which the diaspora community can contribute to the development of the country are: financial capital (remittance), human capital (transfer of knowledge and skills) and social capital. The study elaborates on each of these three types of capital and suggests ways in which these resources could be tapped in order to better utilize it for the socio-economic development of Egypt.

I. Introduction

With the current ease of population mobility, the new developments and the spread of means of communication, the word “migration” no longer absolutely implies a definitive move from one country to another. Nowadays, many migrants maintain ties with their country of origin via different mediums. The role of diaspora in the development process of their countries of origin is a relatively new research terrain and efforts are being made to maximize the developmental benefit on the societies and the economies of countries of origin. Contemporary diaspora communities recognize the importance of linkages between origins and destinations. Contributions of the diaspora communities to their countries of origin are not always dependent on their physical return. Diaspora engagement in the development of their country of origin can be through financial transfers or through transfer of their knowledge and skills (Bloch, 2005; Skeldon, 2008). The transfer of knowledge and skills could also be understood in the context of the term ‘brain circulation’. This means that due to the movement of diasporas (movement of ‘brains’) between their host and home country, a certain set of skills and knowledge might be ‘circulated’ by the diasporas to their fellow countrymen.

With about four million Egyptians abroad (CAPMAS, 2008), the Egyptian diaspora have the potential to play a crucial role in the development of their home country. The challenge for policymakers in Egypt is to create an environment that encourages and supports the contribution of diaspora to the development process in Egypt. Despite some studies, there is still a knowledge gap with regard to the potential of the resources of the diaspora community and how these resources can be better channelled to effectively contribute to the socio-economic development of Egypt. Hence, this study is a step towards bridging this gap in literature and to suggest ways in which the linkage between home and diaspora could be strengthened. This study is based primarily on a field survey of Egyptian diaspora communities living in Kuwait, the United Kingdom (UK), and the United States of America (US). A combination of quantitative

and qualitative methods (mixed-method approach) was employed in this study to better achieve its objectives. A quantitative study was conducted using a structured questionnaire with 323 respondents in the three countries. In addition, approximately 49 in-depth interviews were also conducted with Egyptians living in these countries.

I.1 Goal and Objectives of the study

This study is one of the very few studies on Egyptian diaspora. The main goal of this study is to provide an overview on Egyptian diasporas, examine avenues for engaging diaspora in the development of Egypt and to recommend policies and programmes to enhance their contribution towards the socio-economic development of the country. Furthermore, the study aims to meet its goal through exploring answers to the questions under the following specific objectives:

- 1. Conceptualize diaspora in the context of Egyptian migration dynamics:*
Is there a ‘homogeneous’ Egyptian diaspora community with similar characteristics and migration trajectories or are there ‘heterogeneous’ communities differentiated by distinct characteristics as well as differences due to their respective current (destination) location? In other words, are Egyptian diaspora in Arab countries different from their counterparts in the West? If yes, what are the major differences between these two diaspora communities?
- 2. Trace the migratory process of the diaspora and profile the Egyptian diasporas abroad:*
How did the Egyptian diaspora evolve and what are the major destinations for Egyptian emigrants? What are the main characteristics of each community? What are the major defining factors of the Egyptian diaspora communities in terms of the type of migration and what are the socio-political conditions that shaped migration streams to different destinations?

3. *Gather data and analyse the needs, concerns and priorities of diaspora communities:*

What are some of the primary needs, concerns and priorities of the Egyptian diaspora in relation to their country of origin? How do Egyptians perceive the services of the Egyptian diplomatic missions in their countries of destination? How do they communicate with their home country and what are their concerns?

4. *Identify appropriate policies to address the concerns and needs of the Egyptian diasporas:*

What are the appropriate strategies and policies that can be implemented to address the concerns of the Egyptian diasporas? What can the relevant ministries and institutions in Egypt do to help Egyptians abroad to address their concerns? What are the mechanisms that could be put in place to attend to these varying needs of the diaspora?

5. *Identify the different potential resources within the diaspora communities that could contribute to the national development process in Egypt:*

What are the ways in which the available resources and skills of the diaspora community be linked to the development process in Egypt? How do the Egyptian diaspora communities perceive their capacity to use and transfer their knowledge and skills towards the socio-economic development of their country of origin?

6. *Suggest institutional mechanisms and incentives facilitating diaspora engagement in the development of Egypt:*

What institutional mechanisms can be suggested to facilitate Egyptian diaspora engagement in the development of Egypt? What incentives can the Egyptian Government and other relevant national institutions provide to attract investment by the diaspora? In what ways can be the government or bridge the gap and improve the communication between the Egyptian diaspora and their home country? How do Egyptians abroad organize themselves and how can the concerned institutions in Egypt benefit from the Egyptian diaspora organizations?

I.2 Structure of the Study

This study is divided into six sections. The preceding section, Section 1, was the introductory section. Section 2 (the following section) examines the research design and methodology. Section 3 explores the relationships between migration, diaspora, and development. Section 4 details the conceptualization and history of the Egyptian diaspora in the three research countries. Section 5 presents and analyses research findings. Lastly, the final section (section 6) engages in a detail policy discussion and suggests recommendations that could be undertaken by government alone as well as in cooperation with its other national and international development partners to effectively channel the diaspora resources and their contributions towards the socio-economic development of Egypt.

II. Research Design and Methodology

The research design and methodology are elaborated in this section. It includes key definitions and concepts, selection of fieldwork sites, sample selection, methodology and data collection tools.

II.1 Key Definitions and Concepts

The term *diaspora* “refers to any people or ethnic population that leave their traditional ethnic homelands, being dispersed throughout other parts of the world” (IOM, 2004a: 19). Diaspora is also defined as a “socio-political formation, created as a result of either voluntary or forced migration, whose members regard themselves as of the same ethno-national origin and who permanently reside as minorities in one or several host countries. Members of such entities maintain regular or occasional contacts with what they regard as their homeland and with individuals and groups of the same background residing in other host countries” (Sheffer, 2003: 10-11). Sheffer’s definition of diaspora refers to a very important point, that is, the role of the diaspora as a socio-political formation. This is a key concept in helping to explain why the diaspora community can be perceived as a *collective* agent for development.

In this study, the term “diaspora” is used to refer to Egyptians abroad in general, regardless of their countries of destination (Arab countries or the West), their duration of stay, and their legal status during their time abroad. In the traditional Egyptian migration literature, migration to Arab countries is generally referred to as *temporary migration* (due to the nature of their movement as labour migrants) while migration to the West is referred to as *permanent migration* (as there is major potential for long term stay and the possibility of naturalization), This classification is also adopted by Egypt’s Central Agency for Public Mobilization and Statistics (CAPMAS).

II.2 Methodology

This study relies on two sources of data: a) secondary data which includes a desk study and review of existing literature on Egyptian communities abroad, and b) primary data which includes fieldwork in the three selected countries. As mentioned earlier a quantitative study was carried out using a structured questionnaire administered via the internet as well as personally with 323 respondents in Kuwait (Arab region), US and the UK (West). In addition, 49 in-depth interviews were conducted with Egyptian member of the diaspora, whose contact details were procured through their friends and colleagues in Egypt and from the diaspora communities in these three countries. Internet search, and snowball technique¹ were adopted to identify key figures, leaders of central organizations or well-known representatives of the respective diaspora groups. The snowball sampling technique was also used to identify some respondents. The desk study was carried out during February and March 2008 and the fieldwork was carried out between April and June 2008. Both the fieldwork and in-depth interviews took place in all Kuwaiti governorates; London and Manchester in the UK; New York and New Jersey in the US. A more detailed breakdown of the study population is provided in Table 1.

¹ **Snowball sampling** technique is used when the particular type of research respondents are difficult to locate. Snowball sampling relies on referrals from initial respondents/subjects to generate contacts for additional potential research subjects. While this technique has cost and other advantages, its use introduces bias because it reduces the likelihood that the sample will represent a good cross section of the research population.

Table 1: Data Collection Statistics for this Study (2008)

Destination	Country	Standard Questionnaires	In-depth Interviews
Arab Countries	Kuwait	158	22
Western Countries	UK	94	14
	US	71	13
	Sub-total	165	27
Total		323	49

Questionnaire Design and Administration

Questionnaire Design

The questionnaire consisted of five sections as described below. The questionnaire is also attached as an annex to this report.

Section I: Migratory process and profile of the Egyptian diaspora abroad

This section includes questions related to the following: Duration of stay abroad, year of birth, gender, educational background, current occupation, reasons for migration, frequency of visits to Egypt, awareness of current affairs in Egypt, and membership status (member or non-member) in diaspora organizations (whenever such organizations existed in the country of destination).

Section II: Needs, concerns and priorities of the diaspora communities

This section tries to extract the feelings of diaspora communities toward their country of current residence as well as Egypt and the major problems that they encounter while maintaining their ties to Egypt.

Section III: Diaspora resources, including skills that could be linked to the development process in Egypt

This includes questions on remittances (financial capital), skills (human capital) and social capital that migrants can use or transfer to Egypt to benefit the country. Furthermore, this section also includes questions regarding the migrant's plan (if any) for permanently returning to Egypt.

Section IV: Appropriate policies to address the concerns of the diaspora

This section seeks for suggestions from the diaspora communities regarding what the Egyptian Government and the concerned ministries could do to improve the conditions of Egyptians living abroad and strengthen their ties with Egypt.

Section V: Suggested institutional mechanisms and incentives to facilitate diaspora engagement in the development of Egypt

This section explores suggestions on institutional organization and incentives to facilitate and encourage diaspora engagement in the development of Egypt.

Questionnaire Administration

In Kuwait, the questionnaires were distributed in hard copies through some resident Egyptians who volunteered to help. In the UK and the US, the questionnaire was distributed through Egyptian colleagues and, in addition, an electronic version of the questionnaire was posted online and the link to the questionnaire was forwarded to Egyptian diaspora e-mail listserves. Out of 165 questionnaires distributed through the internet in the US and UK, 53 completed questionnaires were received.

In-depth Interviews

In addition to the structured questionnaire, 49 in-depth interviews were conducted with Egyptians in these three countries. The in-depth interviews were integral tools of data collection aimed at acquiring thorough information.

The broad questions addressed by the in-depth interviews were as follows:

1. What are the factors behind emigration and the factors that push Egyptians to leave their country?
2. How do Egyptians interact with each other within the diaspora community and what are the venues of communication and the structure of the diaspora organizations (formal vs. Informal)?
3. What are the concerns and the priorities of the Egyptian diaspora? and
4. How can the Egyptian diaspora be linked to the development process in Egypt?

The interviews took place in public spaces – coffee shops, parks, workplaces and sometimes at the residence of interviewee. Interviewees perceived the research in a positive way and they were very cooperative. Many of them offered to help and suggest other names for potential interviewees. Mr. Karem Issa from the UK volunteered to work as a Research Assistant during the course of the field research in UK.

II.3 Selection of Countries

One may justifiably ask the rationale behind selecting Kuwait, UK and US as research locations to conduct this study. There are two crucial reasons behind the selection. First, the selected countries represent the two main migration streams from Egypt– migration to the Arab countries and migration to the West. Among the Gulf countries, Kuwait is one of the major destination countries for Egyptians in the Gulf (second to only Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (KSA)). Although it is not possible to extrapolate the findings from Kuwait to all other Gulf countries, however, given certain similarities among the Gulf countries, some of the findings from Kuwait can be cautiously extended to other Gulf countries. The decision to select US was because outside the Arab world, one of the major destinations for the Egyptians is the US. The UK was selected to represent some dynamics of the Egyptian diaspora living in the Western European

countries. Second, due to the pilot nature of the study it was not feasible to include more than three countries.

II.4 The Study Sample/Population

There is no sampling frame of Egyptian diasporas available in Kuwait, US or UK. Therefore, it was not possible to use a probability sample. However, to increase the representativeness of the sample, multiple contact points were used alongside the different modes of data collection. However, the resulting study population was self-selected and hence the data produced from this study must be interpreted within the perimeter of this constraint. The results of this study cannot be generalized to the global Egyptian diaspora population as a whole. It only provides us with a picture of a subset of the Egyptian diasporas living in the Gulf countries and the West.

II.5 Limitations of the Study

The main limitation of the study and data analysis relates to the lack of a sampling frame for Egyptians in the countries of destination. This meant that the study relied on a purposive sample¹ and snowball technique rather than a random probability sample. The questionnaire and the interviews were completed by those who selected themselves to be part of the study. Hence, it is not possible to generalize the findings and draw large typologies regarding the characteristics and opinions of the entire Egyptian diaspora populations living in these three selected countries.

Nevertheless, the wide range of groups and individuals that was surveyed helped ensure as wide and diverse a sample as possible.

² This type of sampling requires selecting a particular/targeted group of sample. Hence, it is non-random and introduces a selection bias.

III. Migration, Diaspora and Development

This section includes a summary of the prevailing migration-development nexus, diaspora as agents for development, the different approaches and methods of researching diaspora, and a brief portrait of some existing studies on Egyptian diaspora.

III.1 The Migration-Development Nexus

The nexus between migration and development is receiving renewed attention from policymakers and academics alike. In broader terms, migration implies a change of place of usual residence and development refers to a dynamic process involving growth, advancement, empowerment, and progress with the goal of increasing human capabilities and better living conditions. Assessing the relationship between these two concepts is not an easy task (IOM, 2004b; Skeldon, 1997).

Less than a decade ago, there was a debate as to whether migration is linked to development at all. As migration increasingly became a significant part of the international political and economic reality, its linkage and multifaceted effects on development became amply clear. There is now a consensus among the policymakers, migration experts and the wider development community that there is a strong link between migration and development. However, whether the link is a positive or a negative one varies according to the different country contexts and migration scenarios.

An understanding of the connection between migration and development largely depends on the theoretical model that is selected as well as on how the connection is perceived. As said, the cause-effect relationship between migration and development is not always the same (IOM, 2004b) and needs to be viewed through the lenses of individual country experience. There are two different

schools of thought that explore the relationship between migration and development.

The first is the ‘balanced growth approach’ theory. This theory stems out of liberal economic theory and it suggests that by reducing domestic labour market pressure (alleviating unemployment) and providing economic support through remittances and development of migrants’ skills, migration enhances development in countries of origin. This leads to an improvement in the standard of living in the countries of origin which eventually makes migration unnecessary in the longer run (IOM, 2004b).

The second school of thought is known as the ‘systematic view’. This school of thought does not agree that migration, through remittances and return of skills, automatically accelerates development in the country of origin. Rather, this theory purports that migration often distorts the development process through *brain drain*¹ and its resulting effect on widening of income disparities in the country of origin (IOM, 2004b).

Nevertheless, the socio-economic environment of the country of origin, and to some extent, the country of destination, will influence which of these approaches is most applicable or relevant in a specific migration context. The nexus between migration and development will be understood in different ways depending on where a country lies on the continuum of development. For instance, the more developed the country of origin, the less ‘brain drain’ it will experience from skilled emigration and hence the negative effects will be felt negligibly by the country, while at the same time, it will gain from the increased amount of inward remittances. However, a country with limited pool of skilled workers will experience a negative effect on its country’s development process if their skilled workforce engages in international migration.

¹ IOM defines *brain drain* “as emigration of trained and talented individuals from the country of origin to a third country, due to causes such as conflict or lack of opportunities” (IOM, 2004a:10).

In the context of return migration, the link between diaspora and their effect on the development process of their country of origin is relatively less contentious. Diasporas contribute to the country of origin in three principle ways—financial capital (remittances they sent while being abroad and foreign reserves that they bring back with them once they return), human capital (the skills that they acquire while they are abroad) and social capital (the network of people that they meet as a result of being an expatriate in the destination country).

Migrants, particular those interviewed for this study, showed keen interest in maintaining ties and communication channels with their home countries. They also showed a willingness to transfer their knowledge and skills that they acquired in their destination countries. Furthermore, some migrant organizations are directly engaged in providing services, not only to migrant communities in destination, but also to their communities in the country of origin.

The Egyptian diaspora community in the study sample, drew attention to the importance of linkages between the country of origin and destination as they have become a part of what is referred to as the “*transnational community*” (Skeldon, 2008).

If the country of origin has an effective return migration management process, then it might be able to reap maximum benefit from each of these three kinds of capital that returnees bring with them to their countries of origin. Nevertheless, an important point to remember is that return migration could be particularly challenging for the countries of origin if it is ‘sudden’ and in ‘mass scale’. For instance, sudden mass scale return migration due to an outbreak of war or emergency in the country of destination might cause challenges for the country of origin if it lacks the necessary capacity to effectively and orderly manage this mass scale return migration.

III.2 Literature Review: Studies on Diaspora Communities

In recent years especially due to the increasing importance of linking diaspora communities to the development of their home countries several empirical studies were carried

out to study and understand the African, Latin American and Asian diasporas worldwide. The study of Bloch (2005) on Zimbabwean diaspora in the UK and South Africa is one of the typical empirical diaspora studies. Bloch surveyed 1,000 Zimbabwean nationals in the UK and South Africa. The objectives of the research were to compile a profile of Zimbabweans living in the UK and South Africa and to examine the link between the Zimbabweans living in these two countries with their country of origin with regards to participation in skills transfer and/or development activities benefiting Zimbabwe. The results of the study indicated that the Zimbabwean diaspora community could act as important development agents for their country of origin. The study also found that among the 1000 participants almost everyone (96%) maintained regular social contact with their families still living in Zimbabwe. The diaspora community maintained strong economic ties with their families left behind. Approximately 74 per cent of the respondents of the study sent remittances to their families in Zimbabwe. Furthermore, 73 per cent of the respondents were willing to participate in a skills transfer programme that will benefit their country of origin.

In addition to conducting empirical studies such as the one mentioned above, some countries collect information by posting online questionnaires in the websites of the ministries concerned with overseas manpower. This method of data collection and analysis is less expensive but might not be as accurate as the field surveys. Another method of gathering information about the diaspora communities is through tracking, developing and maintaining databases of diasporas living in different countries. For example, the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA) created a database called “Database of African Experts and the Diaspora” which was launched during the Third African Development Forum (ADF III) held in March 2002 in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. This database can be accessed online.

III.3 Studies on Egyptian Diaspora

Few studies have been conducted focusing solely on Egyptian diaspora. There are two notable studies—one conducted by Morsi (2000) and the other conducted by Baraulina et al., (2007). Morsi’s study focuses on the

experiences of Egyptians living in the Arab/Persian Gulf countries. The author used to be an Egyptian diplomat overseeing consular services in the Arab/Persian Gulf countries. His research is primarily based on his personal as well as professional experiences. The study explores the living conditions of Egyptians in the Gulf countries and the relatively weak relation between these Egyptians abroad and their respective embassies and consulates. He attributed this weak relation to the prevalence of a culture of mistrust between the Egyptians and their government in general.

The study of Baraulina et al., (2007) was carried out by the Institute for Migration Research and Intercultural Studies (IMIS) of the University of Osnabrück together with the Migration Research Group of the Hamburgische Welt-Wirtschafts-Archiv (HWWA) as well as the Hamburg Institute of International Economics (HWWI). This study predominantly relied on 80 in-depth interviews conducted in various cities in Germany with some prominent figures from three diaspora communities in Germany– Egyptians, Afghans, and Serbs. Some of the interviews were also carried out in Belgrade and Cairo. With respect to the Egyptian diaspora, this study found that significant portion of the Egyptians living in these countries is well educated and well-integrated into the host society with high rates of naturalization. These diasporas were usually organized in the form of professional associations or Egyptian culture clubs.

This current study helps to fill a gap in the existing research literature on Egyptian diaspora. It covers two main destination regions for the Egyptians–the Arabian countries and the Western countries. Furthermore, this study utilizes both qualitative and quantitative methods to draw a more detailed picture of the Egyptian diaspora.

IV. Conceptualizing Egyptian Diaspora

Over the last four decades, two distinct destination regions have emerged for Egyptian migrants—Arab Gulf countries and the industrialized countries of the west. Egyptian emigrants have been moving to the countries of the Arab Gulf mainly on the basis of temporary work contracts, without any prospective of permanent stay or right to citizenship privileges. Since the 1960s, growing numbers have been migrating to Europe, North America and Australia with the intention of staying permanently in the destination countries. This section includes a description and analysis of the Egyptian diaspora community—their main features, characteristics, specificities and destinations.

IV.1 The History of the Egyptian Diaspora

Different migration phases can be identified in the Egyptian migration evolution, determined and defined by changing international conditions, events and labour market needs, particularly in the Arab region. These phases overlap and hence, the beginning and end points of each phase are not discrete. There are no standard phases in the Egyptian migration literature that are agreed-upon by all researchers (Zohry, 2006). Nevertheless, one can identify the main phases as the following:

Phase 1: The early phase of migration (before 1974)

Phase 2: The expansion phase (1974-1984)

Phase 3: The contraction phase (1984-1987)

Phase 4: The deterioration phase (1988-1992)

Phase 5: The recent phase (1992-current)

In the first phase, prior to 1974, the Government of Egypt was motivated to bear the burden of providing job opportunities in the public sector. However, increasing

population growth along with the lack of growth in the economic and technological sectors diminished the state's ability to provide such jobs. The government authorized permanent and temporary migration in 1971 and lifted restrictions on labour migration in 1974. Large numbers of temporary migrants began to work in the Arab Gulf countries where oil revenues had quadrupled in 1973 due to the oil embargo. Between 1970 and 1974, an estimated 300,000 Egyptians migrated compared to 70,000 in 1970.¹ This was followed by an expansion phase (1974-1984). The increased oil prices fuelled ambitious development projects in the Arab oil-producing countries which in turn led to an increase in the demand for foreign labour. To address domestic unemployment problems and use inward remittances to finance deficits and private projects, the government further eased migration procedures and created the Ministry of State for Emigration Affairs in 1981. This ministry sponsored Egyptian emigrants and drew up an overall migration strategy.² The strategy involved encouraging emigration and protecting migrants' rights in addition to linking Egyptians abroad to development efforts in Egypt by providing them with incentives for investing in Egypt. The number of Egyptian emigrants increased to about two million by 1980, with an increasing demand for Egyptian teachers in Arab countries.

The contraction phase (1984-1987) began after the start of the Iran-Iraq war, which depressed oil revenues and temporarily pushed down the number of Egyptian emigrants to about 1.4 million in 1985. Egyptian emigrants had to face a number of problems due to a declining demand for construction workers in Arab countries along with the policy of replacing expatriate workforce with national labour in the Arab Gulf States. The Egyptian government promulgated the Emigration and Sponsoring Egyptians Abroad Law in 1983.

¹ Estimations obtained from the Central Agency for Public Mobilization and Statistics (CAPMAS)

² The "overall migration strategy" was not translated into any form of a written document.

The contraction phase was followed by the deterioration phase (1988-1992) which was characterized by stagnation in the number of Egyptian emigrants coupled with a significant flow of return migrants into Egypt from the Gulf States. The 1990 Gulf War forced about one million Egyptians in Iraq and Kuwait to return home. However, by 1992 (recent phase), outmigration from Egypt started increasing and reaching to approximately 2.2 million by the end of the year (Zohry, 2003). According to the CAPMAS estimates, the number of Egyptian migrants abroad increased to approximately 3.9 million (CAPMAS, 2008).

IV.2 Contemporary Egyptian Diaspora

KSA hosts almost 50 per cent of current Egyptian migrants closely followed by Kuwait, Libya and Jordan which together host another 40 per cent of the Egyptian migrants. Among the stock of Egyptian migrants that reside in non-Arab countries, 78.6 per cent of them are concentrated within five industrialized countries: US (318,000 or 38.6%), Canada (110,000 or 13.3%), Italy (90,000 or 10.9%), Australia (70,000 or 8.5%) and Greece (60,000 or 7.3%). The remaining of the Egyptian migrants are mainly in Western European countries including UK, Holland, France, Germany, Switzerland, Austria and Spain (refer to Table 2 and Figures 1 and 2).

It is important to note that the CAPMAS figures are estimates drawn from sources such as reports of Egyptian Consulates in the respective destination countries, records of cross-border flows from the Ministry of Interior, emigration permits from the Ministry of Manpower, etc. As a result, these estimates differ considerably from estimates provided by the destination countries. For instance, in the case of Switzerland the difference between these two estimates is over 900 per cent (Table 3). These differences could be due to a number of factors such as differences in the definition of a migrant, illegal immigration, change of status after obtaining citizenship in the destination country, etc. Furthermore, collecting migration-related data is complex and expensive. The true figures may very well lie at a point between the estimates provided by Egypt and the destination country.

Table 2: Number of Egyptian Migrants by Country of Destination (2000)

Receiving Country	Number of Egyptian Migrants	Distribution by Destination (%)	Overall Distribution (%)
KSA	923,600	48.3	33.7
Libya	332,600	17.4	12.2
Jordan	226,850	11.9	8.3
Kuwait	190,550	10.0	7.0
UAE	95,000	5.0	3.5
Iraq	65,629	3.4	2.4
Qatar	25,000	1.3	0.9
Yemen	22,000	1.2	0.8
Oman	15,000	0.8	0.5
Lebanon	12,500	0.7	0.5
Bahrain	4,000	0.2	0.1
Total in Arab Countries	1,912,729	100.0	69.9
United States of America (USA)	318,000	38.6	11.6
Canada	110,000	13.3	4.0
Italy	90,000	10.9	3.3
Australia	70,000	8.5	2.6
Greece	60,000	7.3	2.2
Netherlands	40,000	4.9	1.5
France	36,000	4.4	1.3
United Kingdom	35,000	4.2	1.3
Germany	25,000	3.0	0.9
Switzerland	14,000	1.7	0.5
Austria	14,000	1.7	0.5
Spain	12,000	1.5	0.4
Total in Non-Arab Countries	824,000	100	30.1
Total	2,736,729		100

Source: CAPMAS (2001), "The Permanent Migration of Egyptians 2000".

Figure 1: Distribution of Egyptian Migrants in Arab Countries by Country of Residence (%)

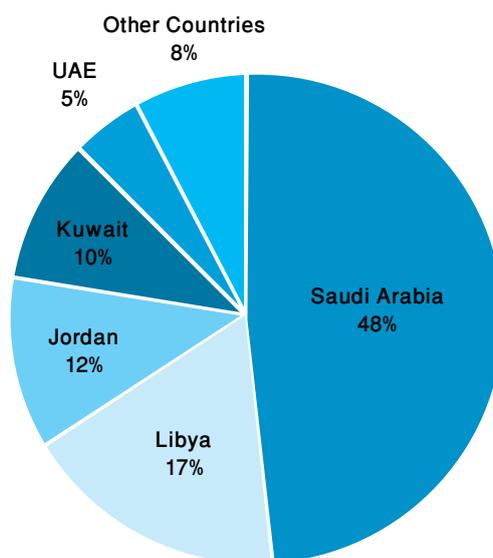
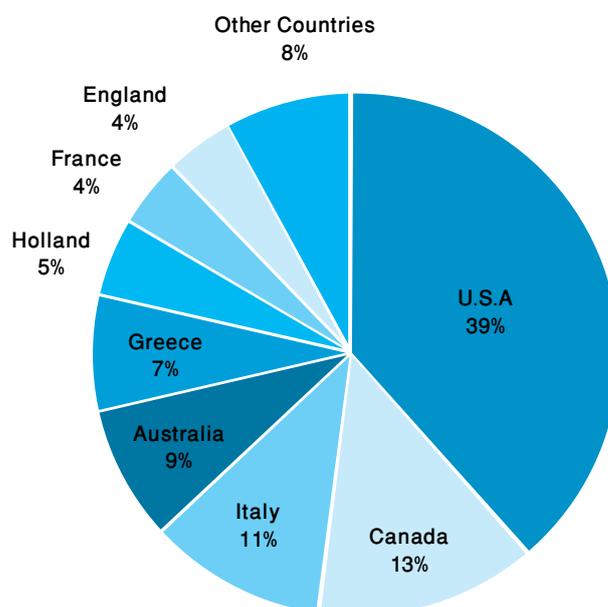


Figure 2: Distribution of Egyptian Migrants in the Western Countries by Country of Residence (%)



Towards the end of the 1980s, Egyptians in KSA and other Gulf countries comprised a much smaller proportion of the foreign workforce than in the late 1970s. In the 1980s, Egyptian workers represented 40 per cent of the total foreign labour in KSA. A smaller workforce was in Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar and the United Arab Emirates (UAE). During the same period, the number of workers from South-East Asia increased. Furthermore, the

fluctuation in the magnitude of Egyptian migrant labour to Iraq and Libya in the last three decades was caused by political tensions including the Iran-Iraq War, the Gulf War, and the political and economic sanctions on Libya. In recent years, and after the end of its civil war, Lebanon and Jordan have become a new destination for Egyptian workers, mostly unskilled.

Table 3: Number of Egyptian Migrants according to the Statistics of Egypt (Country of Origin) and Destination Countries (Circa 2000)

Country of Destination	Country where Migrants are Counted			
	Country of Destination	Country of Origin (Egypt)	Difference between the estimates of Egypt and Destination Countries	
			Value	%
Austria	4,721	14,000	9,279	197
France	15,974	36,000	20,026	125
Germany	14,477	25,000	10,523	73
Greece	7,448	60,000	52,552	706
Italy	40,879	90,000	49,121	120
Netherlands	10,982	40,000	29,018	264
Spain	1,567	12,000	10,433	666
United Kingdom	24,705	35,000	10,295	42
Australia	33,370	70,000	36,630	110
Canada	35,975	110,000	74,025	206
Jordan	124,566	226,850	102,284	82
Switzerland	1,369	14,000	12,631	923
United States of America (USA)	113,395	318,000	204,605	180
Sub-total	429,428	1,050,850	621,422	145
Arab countries*	N/A	1,685,879		
Total		2,736,729		

Source: Fargues, 2005: 21.

* Excluding Jordan as it is listed above in the table.

IV.3 Egyptian Diaspora in the Arab Countries

The total number of contracts issued to Egyptian migrants increased from a very low level of 589 in 1991, after the Gulf War, to almost 83,500 between 1993 and 1994. After a sharp decrease to less than 5,000 in 1997, the number of contracts issued increased again in the recent years. Year 2005 had a record number of contracts issued (100,839) indicating an increase in demand for Egyptian labour in the Arab countries (Table 4).¹ However, this latest number is rather inflated as approximately 40 per cent of this figure includes migrant workers going to Jordan after new regulations for immigration came into force in Jordan.²

Nevertheless, even after excluding migrants to Jordan, the number of contracts issued has increased.

With respect to trends in Egyptian migration to Arab countries since the 1990s, one notices an increase in the percentage share of Egyptian migrants in KSA; the share of Egyptian migrants as a percentage of the total migrant stock in KSA increased from 29.3 per cent in 1990 to 48.3 per cent in 2000. Egyptian migrants in Iraq decreased sharply from 44.1 per cent in 1990 to 3.4 per cent in 2000. This sharp decline can be mainly attributed to the political instability in Iraq. Egyptian migrants in Libya increased from 3 per cent in 1990 to 22.9 per cent in 1993, and then decreased to 17.4 per cent in 2000 (Farrag, 1999; CAPMAS, 2001). One

¹ Data collected from the General Directorate for External Employment, Ministry of Manpower and Emigration, Egypt

² In the past it was easy for Egyptian labour to enter, stay, and work in Jordan without any restrictions, but since 1998 Egyptians who wish to work in Jordan need to secure a work contract through their relatives or friends before being able to enter the Jordanian lands. If this procedure is not followed, then the passport of the Egyptian worker will be stamped with "Not Allowed to Work in Jordan" seal upon entry.

should not ignore the undocumented Egyptian migrant in Libya during the last decade since up until March 2007, Egyptian nationals were not obliged to obtain visas or work contracts to enter and work in Libya (Table 5).

Table 4: Number of Contracts Issued to Egyptians to Work in Arab Countries (1991-2005)

Year	Number of Contracts
1991	589
1992	39,812
1993	83,464
1994	83,458
1995	49,372
1996	9,601
1997	4,643
1998	7,201
1999	6,586
2000	17,652
2001	14,722
2005*	100,839

Source: General Directorate for External Employment, Ministry of Manpower and Emigration, Egypt.

* For the period from 1 July 2004 to 30 June 2005.

Table 5: Distribution of Egyptians by Country of Destination (Arab Countries) 1990-2000 (%)

Country	1990*	1993*	2000**
Iraq	44.1	6.9	3.4
KSA	29.3	45.9	48.3
Kuwait	9.3	9.0	10.0
Jordan	6.5	9.4	11.9
UAE	4.3	2.9	5.0
Libya	3.0	22.9	17.4
Yemen	1.6	0.9	1.2
Qatar	1.0	1.1	1.3
Oman	0.6	0.6	0.8
Bahrain	0.1	0.2	0.2
Other Arab Countries	0.2	0.2	0.7
Total	100	100	100

Source: * Farrag, 1999.

** CAPMAS, 2001.

While dependence on migrant workers has increased over the last 30 years in the Arab Gulf states, the share of migrant workers from Arab countries with respect to other expatriates in the Arab Gulf states more than halved between 1975 and 1996 plummeting from 72 per cent to 31 per cent. Table 6 shows the considerable, though uneven, decline in all six states of the Gulf Cooperation Council.¹

Table 6: Share of Arab Nationals among the Expatriate Workforce in the Arab Gulf Countries in percentage points (1975-1996)

	1975	1985	1996
Bahrain	22	15	12
Kuwait	80	69	33
Oman	16	9	11
Qatar	33	33	21
KSA	91	79	30
UAE	26	19	10
Total	72%	56%	31%

Source: Shah, 2004.

A major reason for this phenomenon has been the mounting competition of immigrant workers from Asia. Indeed, workers from countries east of the Gulf region (Pakistan, Bangladesh and other South-East Asian countries) started to arrive in the 1980s, accepting lower salaries and poorer working conditions. As can be seen in table 7, in the case of Kuwait, Arab workers fell from being 60 per cent of the total expatriate population in 1989 to 45 per cent by 2001. In contrast, the Asian share rose from 39 per cent to 54 per cent during the same period. Nevertheless, it is true that similarities in culture and language conferred the Egyptian workforce some competitive advantage over the others.

¹ Countries in Gulf Cooperation Council are: Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates.

Table 7: Expatriate Population in Kuwait (1989 and 2001)

Nationalities	1989		2001	
	Numbers	As a % of Total Expatriate Population	Numbers	As a % of Total Expatriate Population
Arab	870,454	59	621,022	45
Asian	577,948	39	746,092	54
Others	15,552	1	20,633	1
Total	1,463,954	100	1,387,747	100

Source: Shah, 2004.

With respect to type of residence permit, the data show that more than two-thirds of Egyptians in Kuwait are working in the private sector (Table 8). The characteristics of the Egyptian diaspora clearly indicate a masculine trend—majority of them are male. For instance, according to

the data obtained from the Restructuring Labour Force Program in the State of Kuwait, 81 per cent of Egyptians living in Kuwait are male and only 19 per cent are female.

Table 8: Number of Egyptians in Kuwait by Gender and Type of Residence Permit as of end 2007

Type	Gender		Total
	Male	Female	
Temporary Permits	1,463	434	1,897
	(77.1%)	(22.9%)	(0.5%)
Governmental Permits	25,588	11,034	36,622
	69.9	30.1	(8.8%)
Private Sector Labour	271,838	7,533	279,371
	(97.3%)	(2.7%)	(67.3%)
Business	21	2	23
	(99.3%)	(8.7%)	(0.0%)
Domestic Help	1,811	123	1,934
	(93.6%)	(6.4%)	(0.5%)
Family Reunification	35,729	59,436	95,165
	(37.5%)	(62.5%)	(22.9%)
Study	18	6	24
	(75.0%)	(25.0%)	(0.0%)
Self Residence Permit	122	188	310
	(39.4%)	(60.6%)	(0.1%)
Total	336,590	78,756	415,346
	(81%)	(19%)	(100%)

Source: Special tabulation, Restructuring Labour Force Program, State of Kuwait.

IV.4 Egyptian Diaspora in the West

Since the beginning of the 1960s, political, economic, and social developments led some Egyptians to migrate permanently to North America and Western Europe. Nevertheless, migration from Egypt to the West can be dated back to the beginning of the 19th century after Napoleon's Egypt Campaign (1798-1801) when Mohamed Ali, the founder of modern Egypt, sent the first Egyptian mission to Italy in 1813 to study printing arts followed by another mission to France in 1818 to study military and maritime sciences in order to form a strong Egyptian Army based on European standards. Since that time, there were always channels of communication between Egypt and Europe. Today, many active and successful Egyptians live in large metropolitan cities in several Western countries (Zohry, 2006).

Though it is extremely difficult to infer migration flows from existing data on stocks, nonetheless, some conclusions can still be drawn from census, register data, and other sources in the major destination countries in Europe regarding Egyptian migration. There has been a considerable outflow of Egyptian migrants to Europe during the period 1971 to 2000 which has steadily increased the number of migrants living in many European countries (Table 9).

With respect to Egyptian migrants in the US, the last two US population censuses (1990 and 2000) recorded an increase in the number of Egyptians from 78,574 to 142,832—an increase of 81.8 per cent (US Census Bureau, 2003). This growing flow of Egyptian migrants into Western destinations is consistent with the stagnation or even reduction of similar migration flow into the Arab Gulf countries.

The sex-segregated statistics provided by the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) sheds some more light on Egyptian diasporas in several OECD countries (Table 10). From Table 10, it can be seen that the composition of Egyptians by sex is relatively more gender balanced in OECD countries than in Arab countries (See Table 8 above for percentage of Egyptian men and women in Kuwait). Among the total Egyptian migrant

force in the selected OECD countries, the percentage of males is 57.6 per cent whereas the percentage of females is 42.4 per cent.

With respect to the educational level of Egyptians in the West, data extracted from the OECD online database reveals a high educational profile of the Egyptian diaspora in the West (Table 11). The percentage of Egyptians in the West with a tertiary education (university or graduate degree) ranges between 21 per cent in Italy and 65.4 per cent in Canada with an average of 47 per cent. This rate is almost five times the level of their counterparts in Egypt which is 9.59 per cent (CAPMAS, 2008).

Table 9: Change in Stocks of Egyptian Immigrants in European Countries (1971-2000)

Country	1971	1981	1991	1997	1998	1999	2000
France		4,300	6,300				
Germany	5,349	8,587	8,640	13,595	13,927	13,976	13,811
United Kingdom				3,000	4,000	6,000	
Italy				25,272	27,286	30,582	
Spain					778	919	972
Greece	1,116	2,415	4,012	6,903	6,599		
Austria	781	1,574	4,509				
Switzerland					1,624	1,534	1,591
Norway						111	131
Sweden						596	605
Denmark							576
Belgium						613	
Hungary					449	451	456
Finland					217	220	218
Netherland			4,546	3,105	3,101	2,933	2,771

Source: Arab Labor Organization (2001), "Bulletin of Arab Migration Statistics in European Countries 1971-2000."

Table 10: Number and Sex composition of Egyptian Immigrants in some Selected OECD Countries

Country of Residence	Males	Females	Total
Australia	16,369 50.9%	15,812 49.1%	32,181
Austria	6,096 72.9%	2,263 27.1%	8,359
Belgium	1,202 66.4%	607 33.6%	1,809
Canada	18,275 53.4%	15,945 46.6%	34,220
Denmark	817 67.2%	398 32.8%	1,215
France	12,962 61.5%	8,107 38.5%	21,069
Greece	16,866 52.1%	15,500 47.9%	32,366
Ireland	417 73.2%	153 26.8%	570
Italy	20,667 63.9%	11,676 36.1%	32,343
Spain	1,340 69.1%	600 30.9%	1,940
Sweden	1,485 66.1%	760 33.9%	2,245
Switzerland	2,524 58.5%	1,792 41.5%	4,316
United Kingdom	12,548 54.2%	10,610 45.8%	23,158
United States of America (USA)	63,340 58.9%	44,236 41.1%	107,576
Total	174908 57.6%	128459 42.4%	303367 100%

Source: Data Extracted on 2008/07/24 from OECD Statistical Database.

Table 11: Egyptian Immigrants in some Selected OECD Countries with Tertiary Education or Advanced Research Programmes (%)

Country of Residence	Percentage (%)
Australia	31.3
Austria	30.6
Belgium	41.5
Canada	65.4
Denmark	33.3
France	43.5
Greece	26.0
Ireland	58.9
Italy	21.7
Spain	33.0
Sweden	47.2
Switzerland	51.2
United Kingdom	43.5
United States of America (USA)	62.7
Total	47.0

Source: Data Extracted on 2008/07/29 from OECD Statistical Database.

IV.5 Egyptian Diaspora and Development

Macroeconomic Impact of Remittances

Remittances are among Egypt's largest sources of foreign currency along with Suez Canal receipts and tourism. As early as 1979, these remittances amounted to 2 billion USD, a sum equivalent to the country's combined earnings from cotton exports, Suez Canal, transit fees and tourism (Nassar, 2005). As shown in Table 12, between 1990 and 2006, workers' remittances accounted for an average of 6.1 per cent of Egypt's annual GDP. Even though their contribution to GDP has declined from 14.6 per cent in 1992 to 5.0 per cent in 2006, remittances remain an important capital inflow for Egypt.

Table 12: Trends in Remittances of Egyptian Migrants (in billion current USD, 1990-2007)

Year	Remittances	GDP	Remittances as a Percentage of GDP
1990	4.28	43.13	9.9
1991	4.05	36.97	11.0
1992	6.10	41.86	14.6
1993	5.66	47.20	12.0
1994	3.67	51.90	7.1
1995	3.23	60.16	5.4
1996	3.11	67.65	4.6
1997	3.70	75.87	4.9
1998	3.37	82.08	4.1
1999	3.24	89.09	3.6
2000	2.85	99.43	2.9
2001	2.88	98.48	2.9
2002	2.95	89.85	3.3
2003	2.96	82.43	3.6
2004	3.32	78.50	4.2
2005	5.02	89.69	5.6
2006	5.33	107.48	5.0
2007	5.87	n/a	n/a

Source: World Bank's World Development Indicators Database, 2008.

Out of the USD5.3 billion sent home by Egyptian migrants in 2006, the largest amount (USD1.7 billion) came from the US (32% of the total remittances). Kuwait ranked second at USD982.7 million (18.4% of the total share) UAE ranked third at USD823.8 million (15.5% of the total share) followed by KSA (USD785 million or 14.7% of the total share).

Remittances from these four countries together comprised more than 80 per cent of all remittances to Egypt (80.6%). Remittance inflows from Western Europe represent 12.6 per cent of the total amount (USD675.1 million) with Germany, UK and Switzerland being the biggest contributors (Table 13) (Central Bank of Egypt, 2007).

Table 13: Remittance Inflows into Egypt by Country of Destination (2006, in million USD)

Country	Remittances	Percentage
United States of America (USA)	1,703.6	32.0
Kuwait	982.7	18.4
UAE	823.8	15.5
KSA	785.0	14.7
Germany	215.7	4.0
United Kingdom	167.6	3.1
Switzerland	142.4	2.7
Qatar	84.4	1.6
France	54.9	1.0
Italy	38.3	0.7
The Netherlands	34.8	0.7
Bahrain	30.7	0.6
Lebanon	25.4	0.5
Oman	20.1	0.4
Greece	14.1	0.3
Canada	9.4	0.2
Spain	7.3	0.1
Japan	3.8	0.1
Libya	1.2	0.0
Other Countries	184.3	3.5
Total	5,329.5	100%

Source: Central Bank of Egypt, Monthly Statistical Bulletin (October, 2007).

Remittances transferred through informal channels or brought by travellers and returnees are unlikely to be captured in official records. Nonetheless, as World Bank's 2006 report states these unofficial remittance inflows represent a substantial amount that is not captured in the official estimates (World Bank, 2006). Hence, one should not ignore informal or in-kind remittances made by Egyptian migrants not only from Arab countries, but also from European countries. In-kind remittances that are sent or brought with migrants mainly include clothes and

electronic equipment (Brink, 1991; Eurostat, 2000; Zohry, 2005). A significant proportion of remittances from the Arab Gulf and Libya are sent through informal channels, for instance, through colleagues or relatives and in some cases migrant themselves bring it when they are coming home for holidays or returning permanently. Libya in particular is an example of a country from where Egypt receives a significant amount of remittances through informal channels as majority of the Egyptian migrants in Libya are engaged in the informal sector of the Libyan economy

with no fixed salaries or bank accounts (Zohry, 2005). The option of sending remittances through formal channels is only available to those who have formal work contracts with the Libyan government or large companies there. Indeed, one can conclude that migrants in these countries opt for informal or formal channels depending on numerous factors including the ones stated above. There is also a link between the choice of remittance sending channels and the method through which the migrant initially migrated. For instance, if one migrated through a network of brokers originating from his village, he is likely to use some parallel informal network to remit, for instance, through returning migrants who are from the same village.

Research on the use of remittances in Egypt has shown that 75 per cent of these funds are used for daily household expenses such as food, clothing and health care followed by expenditures on building new houses and education (Zohry 2005b).

Impact of Remittances on Investments, Enterprise Creation and Employment

Broadly speaking, only a small percentage of remittances are used for savings and *productive investments*, i.e., for activities with multiplier effects in terms of income and employment creation (Brink 1991; Eurostat 2000; Zohry, 2005). However, the entrepreneurial activities undertaken by return migrants contribute to the Egyptian economy and might have similar positive multiplier effects. Investments by return migrants are a continuation of their support to the national economy. According to Nassar (2005), about 10 per cent of returnees invest in economic projects in Egypt. They finance capital for small businesses, engage more in service industry and formal sector creating 1.4 more jobs per establishment than non migrants entrepreneurs. Furthermore, McCormick and Wahba (2003) found that the amount of savings going back to urban areas in the form of investment is more than three times that going to rural areas; majority of investments are being made in Cairo.

In addition, remittances help families to establish family-based and family-managed small projects such as raising cattle, opening a mini market, or buying and operating a taxi. This is especially common in the rural areas of the country. Many taxi drivers in Cairo and other governorates

bought their taxi upon their return from abroad and operate it either themselves or rent it out to other taxi drivers.

However, attempts to attract Egyptian diaspora to invest in Egypt seem to have met with less than expected success rate. One of the main reasons behind the establishment of the former Ministry of Emigration and Egyptians Abroad and for the promulgation of the Egyptian Migration Law was to attract Egyptians abroad to maintain relationships with their home country and to invest in Egypt. However, government bureaucracy, administrative obstacles, and the long-lasting culture of mistrust between Egyptians abroad and the government have created barriers to a significant flow of investments into the country, especially from the Western diaspora (Zohry, 2007).

Remittances and Financial Sector Development

Remittances help develop the domestic financial sector through increasing the aggregate level of deposits or credits mediated by the local banking sector and popularizing the culture of banking amongst Egyptians. In addition to banks, specialized transfer institutions such as Western Union and Money Gram handle transfer of migrants' remittances. Along with contributing to financial sector expansion, these transfer institutions are also a source employing local labour force.

IV.6 Multiple Diasporas

It is clear from the analyses above that Egyptians abroad can be grouped into two categories. The history of Egyptian migration to Arab countries and countries in the West influenced Egyptian communities abroad and led to the formulation of two different Egyptian diaspora communities. The Egyptian diaspora in the Arab countries is characterized by high male population and a mixed skill level (low as well as high skill diaspora population). The Egyptian diaspora population in the West seem to be more *gender balanced*— similar percentages of Egyptian men and women live in most of these countries). The Western diaspora community also exhibits relatively higher education and skill levels compared to their Arab counterparts. The analysis in this report is structured to compare these two Egyptian diaspora communities.

V. Results of the Empirical Study

V.1 Background Characteristics

With respect to age of diasporas, the mean age of Egyptian diasporas surveyed is 35.5 years. These figures are higher than the national average which is 22.9 years (Zohry, 2008). The mean age of Egyptians in the West is higher than that of Egyptians in the Arab countries (38.1 vs. 32.9 years). This may be due to the fact that the vast majority of Egyptians in Arab countries are required to return once their employment contract is over. As a result, the majority of the diaspora community in the Arab countries tend to be in their early working age. The older generation tends to return to their country of origin.

The study data also found that overall the educational profile of the Egyptian diasporas living both in the West as well Arab countries were higher compared to the educational profile of the Egyptian population living in Egypt. More than 85 per cent of Egyptians abroad have attained a university degree or higher levels of education. Diasporas with a doctoral degree represent 17.3 per cent of the total surveyed population. According to the results of the latest Egyptian population census of 2006, only 9.6 per cent of Egyptians living in Egypt have a university degree or a higher level of education (CAPMAS, 2008). With respect to the educational profile by destination, it is clear that the educational profile of Egyptians in the West is higher than that of Egyptians in Arab countries. While more than one quarter of Egyptians in Arab countries have a “less than university” degree, the comparative figure is 3.6 per cent in the West. Moreover, about 56 per cent of Egyptians in the West have a post graduate degree and 20 per cent of them have completed a doctoral degree. This may be explained, in part, by the fact that Europe and North American were – and to some extent still are – the major destinations for Egyptians who wish to pursue their graduate study abroad. Many end up settling permanently in these countries upon their graduation.

With respect to occupation, it is important to differentiate between the nature of labour migration to Arab countries

and the West. Migrants to Arab countries leave Egypt mainly for work opportunities. Most of these migrants have work contracts and work permits so when they arrive in these countries they already have an arranged employment for themselves. In the West, Egyptians are working, studying, and in some cases searching for job opportunities including moving from one job to another. Egyptians in Arab countries are working under the *Kafeel* system (the local sponsor system). Egyptians who work under a “virtual or institutional sponsor”, such as government organizations and the public sector are more secure than those who work under a personal *kafeel* (sponsor). As already mentioned before, contrary to their counterparts in the West, Egyptians in Arab countries have little opportunity of obtaining citizenship of the destination country. As a result, many do not expect or plan to stay there for an indefinite period of time.

Egyptians in Arab countries are working in two main sectors– the government sector and the private sector. Those who work in the government sector are better educated, well-paid and financially more secure compared to those who are working in the private sector. Those who work in the private sector, especially for smaller firms, are usually paid much less and have a high degree of job insecurity. Those who are employed in the private sector mainly work in sales, marketing or administrative jobs. The low-paid jobs in the private security service industry absorb the vast majority of new comers and unskilled workers from Egypt. The restaurant and marketing sector absorbs the medium skilled Egyptian workers.

In majority of the Western countries there are options for Egyptians to obtain the right to citizenship after fulfilling certain legal requirements along with completing a specified duration of stay in the those countries. Egyptian diasporas in the West can be found in all sectors, participating in different economic activities starting from street vending to researching and working at universities as professors. This study found that in the West the older generation of diaspora is more likely to be involved in

the education sector working as university professors, researchers and civil servants. The newer generation has been more inclined to work in the fields of sales and marketing, consulting for businesses, etc.

Table 14: Background Characteristics of Research Respondents (Diaspora) by Destination

Background Characteristics	Destination		Total
	Arab Countries	Western Countries	
Age of respondents			
<20	0 (0%)	2 (1.2%)	2 (0.6%)
20-24	25 (15.9%)	22 (13.4%)	47 (14.6%)
25-29	51 (32.5%)	20 (12.2%)	71 (22.1%)
30-34	20 (12.7%)	36 (22.0%)	56 (17.4%)
35-39	29 (18.5%)	26 (15.9%)	55 (17.1%)
40-44	10 (6.4%)	10 (6.1%)	20 (6.2%)
45-49	13 (8.3%)	10 (6.1%)	23 (7.2%)
50-54	9 (5.7%)	16 (9.8%)	25 (7.8%)
55-59	0 (0%)	14 (8.5%)	14 (4.4%)
60-64	0 (0%)	2 (1.2%)	2 (0.6%)
65+	0 (0.0%)	6 (3.7%)	6 (1.9%)
Total	157 (100.0%)	164 100.0%)	321 100.0%)
Mean Age (years)	32.9	38.1	35.5
Sex			
Male	103 (65.2%)	112 (67.9%)	215 (66.6%)
Female	55 (34.8%)	53 (32.1%)	108 (33.4%)
Total	158 (100%)	165 (100%)	323 (100%)
Education			
Less than University	40 (25.3%)	6 (3.6%)	46 (14.2%)
University	70 (44.3%)	67 (40.6%)	137 (42.4%)
Diploma/Masters	25 (15.8%)	59 (35.8%)	84 (26%)
Ph.D.	23 (14.6%)	33 (20%)	56 (17.3%)
Total	158 (100%)	165 (100%)	323 (100%)

V.2 Migration Dynamics

In the context of this study, migration dynamics are defined as factors and procedures associated with the migration experience in origin as well as destination countries. These factors include duration of stay abroad, reasons of emigration, linkages with homeland, feelings towards current country of residence and feelings towards Egypt, membership in diaspora organizations, etc.

Duration of Stay Abroad:

Due to the previously mentioned nature of migration, the mean duration of migrant's stay in Arab countries is only 8.8 years while the mean duration of stay for their counterparts in the West is 15.1 years. Egyptians in the Arab countries in general stay between 5 and 14 years.

Few of them stay less than 5 years. This may be due to the fact that migrants to Arab countries need between two to three years to recover their initial cost of migration, especially those who work in the private sector and pay for labour brokers to secure a work contract in the destination country.

As already mentioned in this study, one of the reasons why Egyptian diasporas in the West stay longer than their counterparts in the Arab countries is because they have the possibility of obtaining permanent residency and subsequently citizenship in the country of destination. However, it should be mentioned here that almost a quarter of the surveyed population in the US and UK have been living there for less than five years. Nevertheless, they have mentioned about the benefits of having this potential for applying for citizenship.

Table 15: Duration of Stay Abroad

Duration	Destination		Total
	Arab Countries	Western Countries	
<5 years	14 (8.9%)	39 (23.6%)	53 (16.4%)
5-9 years	73 (46.2%)	25 (15.2%)	98 (30.3%)
10-14 Years	59 (37.3%)	20 (12.1%)	79 (24.5%)
15-19 years	12 (7.6%)	21 (12.7%)	33 (10.2%)
20+	0 (0%)	60 (36.4%)	60 (18.6%)
Total	158 (100%)	165 (100%)	323 (100%)
Mean Duration of Stay (years)	8.8	15.1	12

Reasons behind Emigration: Testimony from Some Respondents

Reasons for leaving Egypt as mentioned by the surveyed population vary according to the different destination countries. While Egyptians living in the Arab countries mostly migrated due to economic pressures, migrants in the West migrated mainly for achieving professional development, adventure and to escape the perceived corruption and prejudice in Egypt.

“If I could have found a job opportunity in Egypt then I would not have risked coming here to work in such harsh conditions in Kuwait. I work here for 100 Dinars per month and I must work for no return for the first two years to cover the cost of the contract I purchased to come here. People in my village envy me as they think that we are enjoying a good life here,” said M. N., an Egyptian youth working in a security company in Kuwait.

Most Egyptians in the Arab countries live a meagre life as they consider their stay abroad as an opportunity to save money to secure their future and the future of their children once they return to Egypt.

“When I first arrived in Kuwait 7 years ago my aim was to save money to buy a new apartment in Egypt, but when I saved the money I was faced with the booming of the construction sector in Egypt and the increases in the price of housing units. I lost seven years of my life just for a reasonable apartment, not for investment, but for my family and now I have to stay more years to save more money,” said Dr. N. A., an economic expert in the Kuwaiti government.

Egyptians in the West mentioned few main reasons behind leaving Egypt including seeking venues for personal development (29.1% of respondents), escaping perceived corruption and prejudices prevailing in Egypt (24.2%), seeking adventure by exploring a new country (20.6%), escaping economic hardships in Egypt (14.5%), escaping political instability (12.7%). Furthermore, 19.4 per cent mentioned the possibility of earning better incomes in the Western countries as a pull factor encouraging them to

emigrate from Egypt. It is important to mention that only one-fifth of the study respondents surveyed in the US and UK were born outside Egypt.

The 20.6 per cent of Egyptians who travelled to the West seeking adventure and to see another country may empathize with the experience of Mr. A. S. who left Egypt for the US in 1976:

“After Egypt opened its doors at the time of Sadat, many of my friends and colleagues left the country for the US– the land of dreams. We were young ambitious graduates. My parents were against my plans to leave the country and I remember that I borrowed money to pay for the cost of my trip to the US. My first year in New York was very difficult as I changed my workplaces and professions several times.”

Another important reason behind the migration of Egyptian youth – mainly males - to the Arab countries is to save money to pay for marriage expenses. With the rising costs of marriages in Egypt, many single Egyptian males attempt to secure a work contract in the Gulf countries to save money for marriage and to build their own families when they return. The minimum cost of marriage varies by social stratum and place of residence – urban versus rural and Upper Egypt versus Lower Egypt. Egyptian singles may need to work for at least three years to secure the minimum cost of a marriage. This cost includes preparing an apartment for the new family – usually rented but unfurnished, paying dowry to the bride’s family, and a minimum of 70 grams of gold accessories (about 9,000 Egyptian Pounds) for the bride and the expenses of the marriage ceremony. According to the Egyptian customs and norms, the bridegroom bears most of the expenses of the marriage.

Table 16: Reasons for Leaving Egypt by Country of Destination

Reasons behind Emigration	Destination		Total
	Arab Countries	Western Countries	
Difficult political situation in Egypt	4 (2.5%)	21 (12.7%)	25 (7.7%)
Difficult economic situation and poverty in Egypt	65 (41.1%)	24 (14.5%)	89 (27.6%)
Impossibility of getting employment in Egypt	28 (17.7%)	8 (4.8%)	36 (11.1%)
Impossibility of personal development and improvement in Egypt	19 (12%)	48 (29.1%)	67 (20.7%)
Corruption and prejudice in Egypt	42 (26.8%)	40 (24.2%)	82 (25.5%)
Insufficient income opportunities in Egypt	41 (25.9%)	32 (19.4%)	73 (22.6%)
Adventure and the desire to see a new country	10 (6.3%)	34 (20.6%)	44 (13.6%)
Born abroad	16 (10.1%)	36 (21.8%)	52 (16.1%)
Other reasons	9 (5.7%)	57 (34.5%)	66 (20.4%)

* Percentages do not sum to 100 due to multiple responses provided by respondents.

Linkages with Homeland (Egypt):

Frequency of Visiting Egypt

Diaspora networks play an important role in linking migrants to their homeland and stimulating new migration streams. The link between diasporas and their home country is a means for exchanging mutual benefit. Frequent visits to the homeland create an important physical connection between diasporas and their home countries. The surveyed Egyptians were asked about their frequency of visits to Egypt as one of the proxies for their linkages to Egypt. As presented in Table 17 below,

and contrary to popular commentary, Egyptians in the West visit Egypt more frequently than their counterparts in the Arab countries. The percentage of Egyptians in the West who visit Egypt a few times per year is about 31 per cent, while it is only 5.7 per cent for those who live in Arab countries. Egyptians in the Arab countries usually visit Egypt once per year especially during their summer vacations (62% of respondents). On the contrary, only 30 per cent of the Egyptians in the West reported visiting Egypt only once per year. Furthermore, the study data shows that the number of Egyptians who rarely visit Egypt or have lost complete touch with Egypt is higher

in the Western countries as oppose to the Arab countries (9.1% vs. 5.1%).

The reasons behind the rare visits to Egypt differ according to destination. Egyptians in the Arab countries refrain from visiting Egypt frequently in order to save money or to avoid familial obligations, such as, buying gifts for family, friends and neighbours as expected according to Egyptian tradition. On the contrary, Egyptians in the West who do not visit Egypt frequently reported as having lost touch with their extended families or because they have their immediate family members with them abroad.

“I have nothing and no one to visit in Egypt. Both my parents passed away and my last visit was 16 years ago when my mother passed away. I’m married to a Hispanic woman and I own three restaurants in New York so I do not have many reasons to visit Egypt. However, I do sometimes receive visitors

from Egypt who come and stay with my family for few weeks,” said S. S., an Egyptian businessman in New York.

As mentioned above, Egyptians in Kuwait have different reasons for not visiting Egypt frequently.

“I’m alone here and I wish to visit Egypt every year like others but I can’t. It costs me a lot of money to visit Egypt every year; not only the cost of the airline ticket but to meet the expectations of my family and neighbours. They perceive me as a money machine and everyone complains about living conditions in Egypt and then asks me for a work contract in Kuwait or to lend them some money. They do not know about my miserable living and working conditions here,” said H. Z., a labour from Minia governorate in Egypt working in the Kuwaiti construction sector.

Table 17: Frequency of Visiting Egypt

Frequency of Visiting Egypt	Destination		Total
	Arab Countries	Western Countries	
Few times per year	9 (5.7%)	51 (30.9%)	60 (18.6%)
Once per year	98 (62%)	64 (38.8%)	162 (50.2%)
Once in two or three years	29 (18.4%)	32 (19.4%)	61 (18.9%)
Once in five years	14 (8.9%)	3 (1.8%)	17 (5.3%)
Less than once in five years	8 (5.1%)	15 (9.1%)	23 (7.1%)
Total	158 (100%)	165 (100%)	323 (100%)

Awareness of Current Affairs in Egypt

The degree of awareness of current affairs in Egypt is another important proxy of the interest of Egyptian diasporas in maintaining strong links with their home country. The results of the field survey and the in-depth interviews indicate a high degree of awareness of current affairs amongst Egyptian diasporas. As shown in Table 18, more than 80 per cent of Egyptians abroad stated that they are either *very well informed* or *mainly informed*

about the current affairs in Egypt (52.5% and 29.1% respectively). However, Egyptians in the Arab countries seem to be better informed about current affairs in Egypt. This may be attributed in part to the fact that Egyptians in the Arab countries are always preparing for the time when they will return to Egypt. Furthermore, it might also be due to the widespread reach of Egyptian media in the Arab countries.

Table 18: Degree of Awareness of Current Affairs in Egypt

Degree of Awareness	Destination		Total
	Arab Countries	Western Countries	
Very well informed	91 (57.6%)	77 (47.5%)	168 (52.5%)
Mainly well informed	46 (29.1%)	47 (29%)	93 (29.1%)
Neither well informed nor poorly informed	21 (13.3%)	29 (17.9%)	50 (15.6%)
Mainly poorly informed	0 (0%)	7 (4.3%)	7 (2.2%)
Very poorly informed	0 (0%)	2 (1.2%)	2 (0.6%)
Total	158 (100%)	162 (100%)	320 (100%)

Source of Information on Current Affairs in Egypt

The communication revolution and the improvement of this sector in Egypt made it possible for Egyptian diasporas to stay in touch with their homeland. Egyptians abroad communicate with their families and friends in Egypt and stay informed about current affairs in Egypt through using the Internet (52.9% of respondents), followed by television¹

(36.8% of respondents), and email and telephone calls (30.7% of respondents). As can be seen in Table 19, choice of communication channels with Egypt varies according to destination. For instance, while internet, email and telephone calls with family and friends are the preferred means in the West (63% and 51.5% respectively), Egyptians in the Arab countries prefer the Internet and the television (42.4% and

¹ Though, television is not a means of 'communication' with Egypt, but talk show programmes made it possible for Egyptians diasporas to participate in a two-way communication with Egypt.

31% respectively). The in-depth interviews with Egyptians in the Arab countries and the West indicate that Egyptians in the Arab countries communicate with their families in Egypt more frequently than Egyptians in the West. This may be partially attributed to the masculine and non-familial nature of the Egyptian diaspora in Arab countries (single male migrant mostly) and the need to communicate with families and the relatives in Egypt.

The television plays a pivotal role in raising awareness among diasporas about current affairs in Egypt. Egyptians in the West, as well as Egyptians in the Arab countries watch Egyptian Satellite Channels on a regular basis. They mainly watch the talk-show programmes in the Egyptian Satellite Channel as well as Orbit Channel Alyoum, Mehwar Channel and Dream Channel. Majority of them watch the talk-show programme “Ebeit Baytak” or “The Home is yours” broadcasted every night by the official Egyptian Satellite Channel.

“Elbeit Beitak is the main source of our information on current affairs in Egypt. I think all the Egyptians whom I know in Birmingham watch this programme,” said K. I., an Egyptian youth residing in Birmingham in UK.

The use of online chat programmes is predominant in the Arab countries because of its availability in countries of origin as well as destination. Egyptian youth in the Arab countries use the internet to chat online with their families for a very low cost. Telephone calls are usually used for emergencies only.

“I chat with my family more than two hours a day. I also help my daughter who is in grade 4 with her study and homework as if I’m still in Egypt. I work as an online private tutor for her, thank God the internet made it easy for me to help my family while being here,” said M. H., an Egyptian working in the Ministry of Education in Kuwait. Similarly, S. S. uses the internet everyday to chat with his fiancée, *“I chat with my fiancée everyday; I will get married during my next vacation so it is helpful that I can communicate with her and organize everything from here.”*

Egyptians in the West do not spend a long time chatting via the internet. They mainly use the internet to read online Egyptian newspapers. They are active in creating listserv and internet groups for Egyptian diaspora communities such as, “Egyptians in the United Kingdom” and “Egyptians in the United States.”

Table 19: Source of Information on Current Affairs in Egypt

Source	Destination		Total
	Arab Countries	Western Countries	
Newspapers	41 (25.9%)	42 (25.5%)	83 (25.7%)
Internet	67 (42.4%)	104 (63%)	171 (52.9%)
Television	49 (31%)	70 (42.4%)	119 (36.8%)
Email and telephone calls with family & friends in Egypt	14 (8.9%)	85 (51.5%)	99 (30.7%)
Other sources	0 (0%)	17 (10.3%)	17 (5.3%)

* Percentages do not sum to 100 due to multiple responses provided by respondents.

Importance of being Aware of Current Affairs in Egypt

How important is it for Egyptians abroad to know about the prevailing situation in Egypt? The results of the field survey and the in-depth interviews indicate that more than 80 per cent of the Egyptians in the West as well as in the Arab countries consider being aware of current affairs in Egypt as a *very important* or *mainly important* issue.

Table 20: Importance of being Aware of Current Affairs in Egypt

Degree of Awareness	Destination		Total
	Arab Countries	Western Countries	
Very important	66 (41.8%)	97 (59.5%)	163 (50.8%)
Mainly it is important	70 (44.3%)	52 (31.9%)	122 (38%)
It is neither important nor unimportant	18 (11.4%)	14 (8.6%)	32 (10%)
Mainly it is not important	3 (1.9%)	0 (0.0%)	3 (0.9%)
It is not important at all	1 (0.6%)	0 (0%)	1 (0.3%)
Total	158 (100%)	163 (100%)	321 (100%)

Membership in Egyptian or Arab Diaspora Organizations

Approximately 25 per cent of Egyptians abroad participate in some sort of Egyptian, Arabic, Islamic or Coptic organizations. Research suggests that participation in these ethnic organizations depends greatly on the host country. For instance, 40.5 per cent of Egyptians in the West are members of such organizations whereas only 8 per cent of the Egyptians in the Arab countries are members of similar organizations, mostly due to the fact that foreigners in Arab countries are not allowed to establish any kind of societies or non-governmental

organizations. For example, Kuwaiti legislation (Law No. 24/1979) restricts foreigners including Egyptians from forming any societies or non-governmental organizations in Kuwait. Therefore, all diaspora organizations in the Arab countries are informal. This may explain the low percentage of Egyptians in the Arab countries who are members of such organizations.

Table 21: Membership in any Egyptian, Arabic, Islamic, or Coptic organizations

Degree of Awareness	Destination		Total
	Arab Countries	Western Countries	
Membership in any <i>Egyptian</i> organization	14 (8.9%)	68 (42.2%)	82 (25.7%)
Membership in any <i>Arabic, Islamic, or Coptic</i> organization	12 (7.6%)	62 (38.3%)	74 (23.1%)

Egyptian diasporas in the West belong to a wide array of organizations. After September 11, 2001, and as a reaction of the perceived Islamophobia, many Egyptians in the West started to sacrifice their Egyptian identity for broader and supranational identities such as being an Arab and a Muslim.

“I do not represent myself as an Egyptian; I represent myself as a Muslim and I founded with other Muslims in California, an Islamic society to represent Muslims here and to defend our common values and to work against Islamophobia. We have members from Pakistan and other Muslim countries. I believe that this is better than representing myself as an Egyptian,” Said R. S., an Egyptian teacher in the US.

Despite the fact that Arabism is perceived as old fashioned, dating back to the Nasserist era in the Arab countries, Arabism witnesses a strong revival in the US through Arab nationals who started to represent themselves distinctly in the face of occupation of Iraq. A. I., an Egyptian housewife living in New Jersey, reacted to September 11 events and the occupation of Iraq by launching a monthly newspaper called “Arab Faces” to promote the picture of Arab-Americans in the American Society. In every single issue of the paper, she portrays an Arab figure in the States. The paper is bilingual (Arabic and English).

“After September 11 and the occupation of Iraq, I decided to do something to show the people here that we are not terrorists. I remember the time

when my daughter returned from school and told me that her colleagues said that she belongs to the terrorist group that attacked the towers. I decided to do something and with the help of some Lebanese friends I started this paper. People here are very nice but many of them are ignorant about what is going on in the World. We should have our say, we shouldn’t be passive,” said Mrs. A. I., an Egyptian journalist in New Jersey.

Christians usually belong to the Coptic Church. In the last three decades the number of Coptic Churches in the western world has burgeoned from two to forty in the US, from two to nine in Canada and from two to thirteen in Australia. In Europe, the Egyptian Church established two churches in London, a Coptic Centre and a Church in Birmingham; four churches in Scotland, Wales, Manchester and Ireland; seven churches and a monastery in Germany, two churches in Austria, and one in each of the following cities: Amsterdam, Copenhagen, Brussels, Athens, Milan, Rome, Paris, Marseilles, Geneva and Zurich. The Coptic Church in every country works as a focal point for Christian Egyptians. Many mentioned about visiting their churches every Sunday where they communicate with other Egyptians, speak Arabic, eat Egyptian food, etc.

A successful example of Egyptian diaspora organization is the “Egyptian Association-UK” which was founded by an Egyptian in London in 1997. The association is registered as a charity in UK. This association established language classes to teach Arabic and bring together the Egyptian

community, specifically the second generation. This contributed in building strong social networks and helped several Egyptians to network and find jobs. Another Egyptian diaspora organization is the “Association of Egyptian American Scholars”, founded by Prof. Z. B. of Saint John’s University in New York as a forum for Egyptian American Professors and Egyptian Professors in Egypt. The association convenes a bi-annual conference between Egyptian scholars in the US and their counterparts in Egyptian Universities.

“Alwan for the Arts” is another Arab organization in the US that promotes Arab culture and works as a focal point for Arabs in New York. Alwan for the Arts was founded by a group of Arabs in 1998. It serves the Arab community in New York and educates the broader public through a range of cultural events, thus, helping to enrich cross-cultural and artistic encounters. Alwan maintains a space for reflection and dialogue on arts and cultures for the Arab community. In 2003, Alwan established a centre in lower Manhattan which provides a physical space to carry out diverse cultural activities. In addition, there are also specialized Egyptians diaspora societies such as, “The Coptic Medical Society UK” and “The Egyptian Medical Society in the UK”.

There are also many virtual Egyptian organizations which sometimes tend to be more active than the physical ones. The virtual groups utilize the internet and other communication technologies to keep in touch with its members. Many Egyptian diasporas established groups with Yahoo, MSN and Facebook. For example, there are more than 200 facebook groups created by Egyptians abroad. These facebook groups include “Egyptians Society London,” “Egyptians in New Jersey,” “Egyptians in Dubai”, etc. Number of members in each of these groups varies according to the location. For instance, in the case of “Egyptians in Dubai” facebook group there are 2,110 members whereas in the case of “Egyptians in Sudan” facebook group there are only 19 members.¹ Noticeably, contrary to the physical world, Egyptian diasporas in the Arab countries have several virtual groups with a large number of members (Table 22).

Accessibility of internet technology has made it possible for Egyptians in both major destinations—Arab countries and the West—to communicate and create virtual organizations regardless of their current residence. The members of such virtual organizations are usually young (between 18 and 39 years old) and computer literate. The groups’ activities differ from one another. While some groups just communicate about Egyptian news, rumours, commercials, jokes, etc., many groups organize activities to promote Egyptian culture and national solidarity like inviting members to go to a movie together or to go support the Egyptian national football team when it plays abroad. More active groups move beyond the virtual world and organize trips for the group members, invite group members to convene in public places and organize Egyptian dinner parties, lectures, etc. Some groups are also formed with the aim to lobby against the current political issues and debates in Egypt.

Feelings towards Current Country of Residence

What are the feelings of Egyptians abroad towards their current country of residence (host country)? Are they satisfied being there? This study found that Egyptians abroad have positive feelings regarding the country of their current residence. To be precise, approximately, 42.5 per cent of respondents have positive feelings towards their current country of residence, 12.5 per cent of respondents reported about having more positive feelings than before² about their current country of residence. It is clear that the percentage of Egyptians who have negative feelings about their current country of residence is higher among Egyptians in the West than Egyptians in the Arab countries (29.6% vs. 8.2%). It is important here to refer to the fact that more than one-third of the Egyptian diaspora in the Arab countries did not give a precise answer to this question and preferred to state that they “haven’t paid attention to this.” This may indicate that Egyptians in the Arab countries are less vocal than their counterparts in the West in expressing their feelings towards their current country of residence.

¹ These numbers were collected during the writing of this study. Hence, these numbers are likely to vary with time.

² “before” refers to respondent’s perceptions few years ago.

Table 22: Feelings towards Current Country of Residence (Host Country)

Feelings	Destination		Total
	Arab Countries	Western Countries	
They are positive now as they were earlier	62 (39.2%)	74 (45.7%)	136 (42.5%)
They are more positive now than they were before	17 (10.8%)	22 (13.6%)	39 (12.2%)
I have not paid attention to this	59 (37.3%)	17 (10.5%)	76 (23.8%)
They are more negative now than they used to be	13 (8.2%)	48 (29.6%)	61 (19.1%)
They had never been positive	7 (4.4%)	1 (0.6%)	8 (2.5%)
Total	158 (100%)	162 (100%)	320

V.3 Problems and Concerns of the Egyptian Diasporas

The study found that one of the major concerns of the Egyptian diaspora involved their perceptions about the staff working at the Egyptian Embassies and Consulates abroad. Approximately 29.4 per cent of the respondents thought that staff were ignorant about most of the diaspora issues and were negligent about dealing with their concerns and problems. A further 23.5 per cent of respondents voiced their concerns about the insufficient cultural cooperation with homeland. Finally, another 22 per cent complained about the high rates of administrative taxes and fees that they have to pay for several official procedures and services at the diplomatic/consular offices. Another 24.5 per cent of the respondents reported their concerns about their children's future. They fear that their children will be completely assimilated into the host country's culture and way of living thus forgetting their Egyptian roots and culture. Diasporas also raised concerns regarding the complexity of obtaining documents from the embassies and consulates abroad (16.7%). Others,

especially the younger generations, mentioned about their concerns regarding the military service requirement in Egypt (6.2%). The current military service requirement in Egypt requires any Egyptian youth under the age of 30 years, regardless of their place of birth, to have to go through military service as long as they are holding Egyptian nationality. The only way to get exemption is through obtaining a document from the Egyptian government exempting the the particular youth from the service.

Nevertheless, these problems of the diasporas in relation to Egypt vary according to their current destination. In the West, the problems of the second generation and the fear of their assimilation seem to be the main concern among the respondents (43.6%). This was coupled with their concern about insufficient cultural cooperation and information exchanges with Egypt (36.4% of respondents). Another crucial problem for Egyptians in the West is related to the need of preservation of national identity (32.7% of respondents). Ignorance and negligence of the staff in embassies and consulates of Egypt is regarded as a problem by 27.9 per cent of Egyptians living in the

West. Additionally, the inability to vote and politically participate in Egyptian politics while being abroad is perceived as a problem by 25.5 per cent of respondents.

It seems that the problems of the Egyptian diasporas in the Arab countries are more related to consular and administrative issues. The high rates of administrative taxes and fees that diasporas have to pay in the diplomatic/ consular offices (36.1% of respondents) along with their perceived negative views regarding the Embassy staff (31.0% of respondents) are the main problems of Egyptians living in Arab countries.

With respect to differential treatment and discrimination, the study found that in Arab countries discrimination against foreigners in general is practiced more overtly and severely compared to the West. In Kuwait, for example, expatriates are not admitted in the government schools. Only the children of expatriate teachers and administrators who are working in government schools are allowed to enrol in those schools. With respect to housing, nationals usually live in compounds far from the residences of expatriate communities. With respect to work and employment, wages of nationals performing the same work as expatriates are generally higher than those of expatriates.

Table 24: Problems and Concerns of the Egyptian Diaspora

Problems & Concerns	Destination		Total
	Arab Countries	Western Countries	
Perceived ignorance and negligence of the staff member in embassies and consulates of Egypt	49 (31%)	46 (27.9%)	95 (29.4%)
Problems of the second generation and the fear of their assimilation	7 (4.4%)	72 (43.6%)	79 (24.5%)
Insufficient cultural cooperation and information exchanges with Egypt	16 (10.1%)	60 (36.4%)	76 (23.5%)
High rates of administrative taxes charged by the diplomatic/consular offices of Egypt	57 (36.1%)	14 (8.5%)	71 (22%)
Preservation of national (Egyptian) identity (ex : language, norms, and traditions)	14 (8.9%)	54 (32.7%)	68 (21.1%)
Inability to vote and politically participate while being abroad	23 (14.6%)	42 (25.5%)	65 (20.1%)
Problem of getting documents from Egypt	21 (13.3%)	33 (20%)	54 (16.7%)
Problems related to fulfilling military service in Egypt	10 (6.3%)	10 (6.1%)	20 (6.2%)
Other problems	5 (3.2%)	31 (18.8%)	36 (11.1%)

* Percentages do not sum to 100 due to multiple responses provided by respondents.

V.4 Diaspora Resources (including skills) that could be utilized in the Development Process of Egypt

Remittances to Egypt

Remittances are the most important economic contribution of the diaspora communities towards the development process of their home countries. Within the surveyed

population, about 70 per cent of Egyptians abroad remit money to Egypt for personal and family reasons and more than 60 per cent remit money to Egypt for other purposes such as investment towards buying a housing or other economic activities. The percentage of Egyptian diasporas who send money for non-familial purposes, such as investment, is higher among diasporas living in the Arab countries compared to Diasporas living in the West (76.6% vs. 45.7%).

Table 25: Remittances to Egypt

Reasons for Remitting	Destination		Total
	Arab Countries	Western Countries	
Egyptians who are remitting money to Egypt for personal or family reasons	147 (93%)	77 (46.7%)	224 (69.3%)
Egyptians who are remitting money to Egypt for other purposes such as investment	121 (76.6%)	74 (45.7%)	195 (60.9%)

Use of Remittances

It is clear from the study that majority of remittances are used to meet the daily household expenses of the migrant's family. Nonetheless, a smaller percentage of remittances are also used for investments. There are mainly three types of investments that are undertaken by the migrant household. Among those who remit money for investment, 38.1 per cent informed that they use it to purchase properties for themselves or for other real estate investment. Due to the boom experienced by the construction sector in Egypt, it is important to consider the multiplier effects of investment in this particular sector. Any investment in the construction sector is likely to create local employment and stimulate demand for local products (Skeldon, 2008). A further 36.7 per cent mentioned that their money is used to either set up a new business or maintain an existing business in Egypt. Another 25.7 per cent reported using their money for community or social charitable projects.¹

The utilization of remittances varies according to the destination of the diaspora community. For instance, the study found that 54.2 per cent of Egyptians in the Arab countries are more likely to invest in creating a new business or maintaining their existence business back in Egypt. Many of these businesses involve trading between the migrant's destination country and Egypt. Another 38.9 per cent mentioned about investing in real estate business. On the contrary, 67.6 per cent of respondents in the West focused mainly in supporting community, social projects and charitable activities in Egypt and another 36.5 per cent invested in real estate. About 8 per cent of respondents in the West sent money for investing in the Egyptian stock market.

While the available data on remittances at the national level (Egyptian) are insufficient to permit inferences about the percentage of remittances used for investment, interviews conducted for this study revealed a wide spectrum of

¹ This includes, among others, sending money to charitable Islamic and Coptic institutions, hospitals and other community development associations.

experiences with respect to remittance use for investment purposes, ranging between USD 35,000 for investing in housing or setting up a small family-owned business up

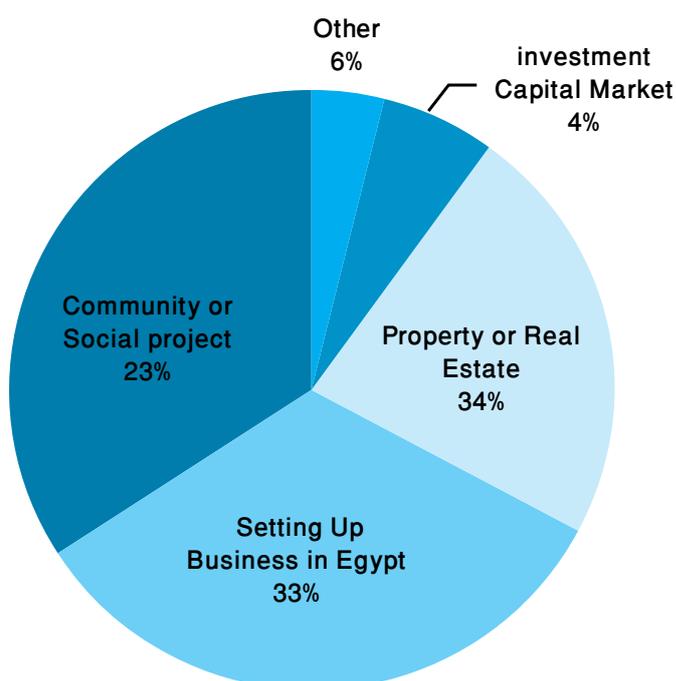
to approximately USD 6 million for investment in land reclamation or agricultural projects.

Table 26: Remittances used for Investment Purposes

Use of remittances	Destination		Total
	Arab Countries	Western Countries	
Investment in the Capital Market (Stock exchange)	5 (3.5%)	6 (8.1%)	11 (5%)
Buying Property/Real Estate	56 (38.9%)	27 (36.5%)	83 (38.1%)
Setting up own Business or Running a Business in Egypt or trading with Egypt	78 (54.2%)	2 (2.7%)	80 (36.7%)
Community or Social projects – Charitable projects	6 (4.2%)	50 (67.6%)	56 (25.7%)
Other	5 (3.5%)	9 (12.2%)	14 (6.4%)

* Percentages do not sum to 100 due to multiple responses provided by respondents

Figure 3: Remittances Directed Towards Investment



Investment Potentials and Obstacles Encountered by the Diasporas

Investment Potentials

Promoting investment in Egypt by the Egyptian diaspora is an important objective of the Egyptian Government. The Law 111/1983 details a series of incentives designed to encourage the Egyptian diaspora to invest in Egypt. These incentives include exemption from all taxes and fees on the return made by Egyptian diasporas on their deposits in any one of the Egyptian banks operating in Egypt. Furthermore, this law allows the Egyptian diasporas to enjoy all the incentives and benefits that are provided to non-Egyptian (foreign) investors in Egypt (See Appendix II for more details).

More than two-third of the surveyed population expressed their interest in investing in Egypt (67.9% of respondents). However, Egyptians in the Arab countries are more interested in investment opportunities, for instance, doing business or investing in real estate in Egypt than their counterparts in the West (79.1% vs. 57.1% of respondents). This difference may be partly attributed to the fact that Egyptians in the West often times have the opportunity to invest in their countries of destination whereas Egyptians

in the Arab countries have no such options of investing in the country of their destination.

Investment Obstacles

Although there a strong desire to invest in Egypt why do we not see a lot of diasporas investing? What are the obstacles that prevent the Egyptian diaspora from investing in Egypt? The respondents of this survey mentioned factors such as poor infrastructure, poor or lack of proper market research identifying the current Egyptian market needs/demands and trends, lack of information on investment opportunities and overall weak transparency and accountability in the Egyptian structure as significant barriers to investment.

With respect to differences between Egyptians in the Arab countries and Egyptians in the West, it is clear that lack of information on investment opportunities (32.9% of respondents) and the perceived lack of infrastructure (32.3% of respondents) are the primary factors preventing Egyptians in the Arab countries from investing in Egypt. On the other hand, for Egyptians in the West, the primary restricting factor is the perceived lack transparency and accountability in the Egyptian structure (44.2% of respondents). Examples of others' unsuccessful attempts to invest were cited as a further reason discouraging them to invest in Egypt.

Table 27: Perceived Obstacles that Prevent Egyptian Diasporas from Investing in Egypt

Obstacles	Destination		Total
	Arab Countries	Western Countries	
Poor or lack of information on investment opportunities	52 (32.9%)	57 (34.5%)	109 (33.7%)
Poor or no infrastructure enabling respondents to invest even if they are aware of probable investment opportunities	51 (32.3%)	51 (30.9%)	102 (31.6%)
No suitable investment opportunities	40 (25.3%)	30 (18.2%)	70 (21.7%)
Lack of transparency and accountability	42 (26.6%)	73 (44.2%)	115 (35.6%)
Personal reasons	13 (8.2%)	26 (15.8%)	39 (12.1%)
Other reasons	1 (0.6%)	30 (18.2%)	31 (9.6%)

* Percentages do not sum to 100 due to multiple responses provided by respondents.

Transfer of Knowledge and Skills from the Diaspora Communities

Transfer of knowledge and skills from the diaspora communities can play an equally crucial role towards enhancing the economic development of Egypt. An important question that this study asks is: do Egyptians diasporas believe that their skill levels have enhanced as a result of staying and working abroad? Approximately, 71.3 per cent of respondents believed that their skill levels have *enhanced* as a result of being in their host country. However, the percentage of Egyptian diasporas who think that they acquired *new skills* while being abroad varies dramatically by destination. An overwhelming majority (97.5%) of Egyptians in the Western countries indicated that they acquired new skills during their stay abroad, whereas, only 44.3 per cent of Egyptians in the Arab countries reported the same.

The reason behind the relatively low percentage of Egyptians in the Arab countries who indicated that they acquired new skills may be attributed to the fact that there are a lot of similarities between the juridical, political and bureaucratic systems of Egypt and other Arab countries. Hence, the opportunities for expatriates Egyptians to get exposed to new technologies and skills are somewhat limited.

The study also asked the diaspora communities if they thought the skills that they acquired abroad can be applied in Egypt. On average, 25.7 per cent of the surveyed diasporas responded that they can apply their acquired knowledge and skills in Egypt. With respect to responses by destination, 37.3 per cent of Egyptians in the Western countries indicated that they can apply their acquired skills in Egypt, while only 13.9 per cent of Egyptians in the Arab countries responded that their skills are applicable in Egypt. This difference in percentages could be partly attributed to the fact that many respondents in the Arab countries migrated after negotiating “a leave without pay” agreement with their employers in Egypt. Hence, they are expected to return to their previous jobs in Egypt after their negotiated leave period is over. Hence, this group of diasporas informed that they will not have an opportunity to utilize their skills once they resumed their previous positions.

“I acquired a lot of skills here but when I return to Egypt I will have to resume my job there. Furthermore, Egypt doesn’t have the same resources and modern equipment as my host country,” said K. H., an Egyptian Engineer working in a Kuwaiti construction company.

Reasons Preventing Egyptians Abroad to Apply their Skills in Egypt

What are the obstacles Egyptians face when trying to transfer their skills and knowledge to Egypt? Egyptians abroad regard corruption as the main obstacle preventing them from applying their skills if they decide to return (31.1% of respondents). The *unsuccessful examples* of fellow diasporas trying to utilize their skills and knowledge in Egypt were mentioned by 23.8 per cent of respondents as a reason discouraging them from attempting to apply their skills or knowledge in Egypt. These two factors – corruption and unsuccessful examples – were identified as the two main inhibiting factors by both the Arab and Western Egyptian diaspora communities.

“I founded the Egyptian American University Professors Association and we hold our annual meetings one year in US and other year in Egypt (Cairo). When we go to Cairo we are cordially received but we can see the lack of commitment from the side of the Egyptian government. No one listens to our recommendations. We are not receiving the kind of cooperation that we were expecting from our Egyptian government officials. It is difficult to get appointments and attention from the senior government officials. The whole experience is frustrating and disappointing,” said Z. B., Professor in a New York-based University.

Another similar example was stated by Mr. S. E. in Kuwait.

“Corruption is a chronic and crucial problem in Egypt. I founded a company with a friend in Egypt but the results were very disappointing due to corruption and I ended up losing a major part of my savings in this company. I will never do it again and I will wait until I return to run my own company.”

While many Egyptians are willing to volunteer their resources (time and money) to help Egypt, individually or collectively, some Egyptians do not feel that Egypt needs diaspora skills to help with its development process.

“I do not think that Egypt lacks trained doctors or equipment to conduct surgeries in Egypt. There are enough skilled Egyptian doctors. Migrant doctors

who conduct surgeries during their visit to Egypt are not aware of what they can really provide to better help Egypt. Migrant doctors like me can provide plans to restructure the health sector and medicine training in Egypt. This is more beneficial to Egypt than conducting surgeries in Egypt,” said H. E., Professor of Medicine in a college in London.

Table 28: Reasons that Prevent Egyptian Diasporas to Apply their Skills/Knowledge in Egypt

Reasons	Destination		Total
	Arab Countries	Western Countries	
Bureaucracy	31 (23%)	25 (22.9%)	56 (23%)
Poor or no infrastructure enabling the application of skills and knowledge transfer	16 (11.9%)	24 (22%)	40 (16.4%)
Corruption	49 (36.3%)	27 (24.8%)	76 (31.1%)
Unsuccessful examples of other fellow diasporas	39 (28.9%)	19 (17.4%)	58 (23.8%)
Other	0 (0%)	14 (12.8%)	14 (5.7%)
Total	135 (100%)	109 (100%)	244 (100%)

* Percentages do not sum to 100 due to multiple responses provided by respondents.

Plans of return

More than 60 per cent of respondents indicated that they will either *probably* or *surely* return to Egypt. The percentage of Egyptians in the Arab countries who indicated that they will probably or surely return is higher than their counterparts in the West (79.6% vs. 41.9% of respondents). Nevertheless, both these percentages are quite high. The percentage of those who indicated that they will probably or surely not return to Egypt is higher among the Western Egyptian diaspora (36.9% vs. 9.5%

of respondents). Nevertheless, as mentioned earlier in the report, one of the reasons why it is only 9.5 per cent among Egyptians living in the Arab countries is because they cannot attain citizenship or other legal rights in their host countries regardless of the length of their stay.

“I know that sooner or later I will have to return to Egypt, but I will not do it myself. Despite all the problems here, life is better here than in Egypt. If they fire me to appoint a Kuwaiti graduate I will have no choice but to return to Egypt, otherwise,

I will stay here till the end of the last oil barrel,” said. S. G., an Egyptian statistician in the Ministry of Health in Kuwait.

Some Egyptians return from the Arab countries for the university education of their children:

“This is my last year here. I will have to go back to Egypt because my daughter needs to pursue her university education in Egypt from next year. I’m glad that we are here as my daughter enjoys quality education, away from the problems of the secondary diploma in Egypt. However, university education is expensive here and I cannot afford the fees. So, we will have to return to Egypt,” said Mr. A. A., an Egyptian economist working for the government of Kuwait.

The study found that a significant percentage of Egyptian diasporas in the West expressed their interest in returning

home if they had the possibility of an employment with decent income (43.9% of respondents), options for professional development along with an improvement in the overall economic situation in Egypt (20.5% of respondents). In relation to Egyptians in the Arab countries who will have to return to Egypt sooner or later, 31.5 per cent expressed that they will be happy to return if they had the possibility of employment with a decent income. Furthermore, another 39.7 per cent expressed interest about returning to Egypt if the country enjoyed an improvement in its economic situation. An average of 18 per cent of respondents (both Arab and Western diasporas) also indicated the importance of changes in the political situation as an important deciding factor in their return. Another 18.3 per cent of respondents mentioned about the significance of an improvement in the services and infrastructures of the country. Personal reasons also play an important role in the decision to return to Egypt (24.1% of respondents).¹

Table 29: What are your plans regarding Return to Egypt?

Reason	Destination		Total
	Arab Countries	Western Countries	
I am sure I will not return to Egypt	11 (7%)	25 (15.6%)	36 (11.4%)
Probably I will not return	4 (2.5%)	34 (21.3%)	38 (12%)
I am not sure	17 (10.8%)	34 (21.3%)	51 (16.1%)
Probably I will return	24 (15.3%)	39 (24.4%)	63 (19.9%)
Surely I will return	101 (64.3%)	28 (17.5%)	129 (40.7%)
Total	157 (100%)	160 (100%)	317 (100%)

¹ Personal reasons include, among others, taking care of the left behind family members and the desire to enable their children to grow up in the Egyptian social-cultural environment.

Table 30: Which Factors Influence Most in the Decision to Return to Egypt?

Factors	Destination		Total
	Diasporas living in Arab Countries	Diasporas living in Western Countries	
Possibility of employment with a decent income	46 (31.5%)	58 (43.9%)	104 (37.4%)
Possibility of professional improvement	15 (10.3%)	41 (31.1%)	56 (20.1%)
Improvement in services and infrastructure	23 (15.8%)	28 (21.2%)	51 (18.3%)
Improvement in the economic situation	58 (39.7%)	27 (20.5%)	85 (30.6%)
Regulations and simplifying of administrative procedures	4 (2.7%)	28 (21.2%)	32 (11.5%)
Change of political scene	21 (14.4%)	29 (22%)	50 (18%)
Personal reasons	33 (22.6%)	34 (25.8%)	67 (24.1%)
Other (Specify):	0 (0%)	20 (15.2%)	20 (7.2%)

* Percentages do not sum to 100 due to multiple responses provided by respondents.

VI. Policy Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study, this chapter puts forward recommendations to address the concerns of the Egyptian diasporas with an ultimate aim of increasing their contribution towards the development process of Egypt. While the Egyptian government has implemented some measures to harness the potential contribution of the diaspora, these initiatives remain largely unknown to Egyptians abroad. Future initiatives ought to be accompanied by an integrated and targeted communication strategy, to enhance their impact for the benefit of Egypt and its citizens abroad. Finally, because the recommendations below pertain to the mandate of various ministries, it is important that future diaspora policies that the Egyptian government may wish to implement are coordinated among all the actors involved to ensure consistency and enhance the effectiveness of these policies.

Preservation of National (Egyptian) Identity

An important concern raised by the diaspora communities both in the Arab and the Western countries has been in relation to preserving their national identity. To this end, the Ministry of Culture in cooperation with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and concerned bodies in Egypt have a crucial role to play. There needs to be effective initiatives undertaken to strengthen the link between Egyptian diasporas and their homeland. There is a need for regular and frequent outreach programmes and the government needs to actively support the work of Egyptian cultural centres both in Egypt as well as abroad. Holding discussion sessions, consultation meetings and promoting Egyptian cultural heritages among the diasporas is an important function that could be undertaken by the Egyptian missions abroad. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs could engage in issuing an online weekly bulletin/magazine with pertinent political and economic information regarding Egypt. This will ensure that a sizeable proportion of the diasporas would be able to gain information about Egypt from the Egyptian authorities. A spill over positive effect of this action would be that it will help to also promote positive image about the government authorities and highlight their commitments

towards the Egyptian diasporas. There could be programmes specifically targeting the diaspora communities abroad on the Egyptian National Satellite Channel which as the study found is a popular channel among the diasporas. The long-standing successful radio programme *abna'ona fel-khareg* or “Our Sons Abroad” could be revamped and broadcasted via Satellite TV to reach Egyptians abroad.

Addressing Diaspora Concerns Regarding their Second Generation

The fear of assimilation of their children into the host country's culture has been voiced as an important concern by the diasporas. If the second generation loses ties with their parents' home country, the development linkages between Egypt and the diaspora will no longer exist. The Ministries of Education and Higher Education and the National Youth Council could play a pivotal role in addressing this concern. They might initiate programmes and events where youth Egyptian diasporas from abroad could be invited to participate. The high schools and universities in Egypt could establish student exchange programmes whereby youth from Egypt could go abroad and youth Egyptian diasporas could come to Egypt. Different exchange programmes need to be designed targeting different age groups. Summer camps could be established for targeting teenagers whereas university exchange programmes could be designed to target the youth. Nevertheless, all the programmes need to be made gender sensitive keeping in mind the social and cultural norms and traditions of the Egyptian society. Furthermore, there could also be exchange programmes whereby a youth diaspora would be hosted by a local Egyptian family during his/her time in Egypt.

An important means to communicate with the youth is through using internet technology. The government of Egypt could help to increase the *online* visibility of the Egyptian cultural centres abroad. Maintaining an up-to-date website, posting online about upcoming Egyptian events held in the host country as well as in Egypt will be an important avenue of disseminating information to the youth. Furthermore, as

this study found there are a large number of internet based Egyptian groups, such as the facebook groups, that have sprung across the globe. These internet-based groups could be regarded as a new platform to communicate with both the younger as well as the older generation of diasporas.

Egyptian Consulates Abroad

Despite the fact that improved services are now available in Egyptian Embassies and Consulates abroad, Egyptians abroad still complain about the lack of understanding and negligence of the staff working in the embassies and consulates of Egypt. It seems that there is a powerful stereotype concerning Egyptian diplomatic missions abroad. Many of the interviewees had never visited an embassy or a consulate of Egypt abroad, but nonetheless hold an opinion that the officials there are unhelpful and negligent. It is important for the Government of Egypt to take actions to promote a positive image about its role and functions among its citizens abroad. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs needs to conduct an evaluation or assessment to better understand the performance of the Egyptian missions abroad and to launch a media campaign to promote a more positive image of its consulates and embassies throughout the world. If indeed the performance evaluation finds that there are rooms for improvement in service provisions and performance of the staff abroad, then the Ministry of Foreign Affairs needs to launch effective change programmes addressing these issues for its offices abroad.

The fees charged by the consulate for their services are perceived by Egyptians abroad as exorbitant. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs along with the other concerned ministries need to discuss and investigate into ways in which these costs might be reduced particularly with regards to the issuance of much needed Egyptian documents to the diaspora communities.

Concerns Regarding the Military Service Requirement in Egypt

According to the Egyptian rule, military service is compulsory for males below the age of 30 regardless of whether they were born abroad or become citizens of another country as long as they still hold their Egyptian

nationality. The way to get exemption is through obtaining a document saying so from the Ministry of Defence in Egypt. Nevertheless, many diaspora communities complained that it is a very lengthy and complicated procedure to obtain this document as they have to wait for missions from the Ministry of Defence to arrive in their host country. The Ministry of Defence could address this concern by trying to increase the frequency of sending its missions abroad particularly to those countries where there is a large number of youth Egyptian diaspora. In many cases, this might prevent many youth Egyptian diasporas from visiting Egypt. Without this exemption document there is a serious fear of arrest among these youth diasporas once they arrive in the airports of Egypt. In addition to this, the Ministry of Defence may allow the temporary return of Egyptian double nationals for vacations and short-term visits through temporary exemptions from military service, like in the case of many other Arab and non-Arab countries

Political Participation of the Diaspora

Egyptians abroad complain about their inability to vote in elections taking place in Egypt. The People Assembly and the Government of Egypt should consider changing the election law to allow Egyptians to vote in the Egyptian elections while they are abroad. Many countries in the world including some Arab countries, such as Algeria allow their citizens to vote in national elections while being abroad.

Suggested Institutional Mechanisms and Initiatives Facilitating Diaspora Engagement in the Development of Egypt

An important way to facilitate diasporas' engagement in the development process of Egypt is by strengthening links with diaspora networks and organizations such as, churches, associations, and venues of engagement created and maintained by the diaspora themselves. With the prevalence of the culture of mistrust between the Egyptian diaspora communities and the government, any strong attempts to impose policies or regulations on current institutions including suggesting a formal structure or governmental run organization to engage diasporas may be regarded as an attempt by the government to control Egyptians living abroad. Instead, the government can provide support to

help bridge the gaps between existing organizations and the government bodies in Egypt to foster unified effort and cooperation. Two significant ways in which the diaspora communities could strongly contribute to the development process of Egypt are a) through remittances and investment in Egypt and b) through transferring knowledge and skills (through brain circulation).

Promoting Investment

Despite the fact that the Egyptian Emigration Law No. 111/1983 set a series of incentives for Egyptians to be engaged in the development of Egypt, most Egyptians abroad are not aware of the existence of such incentives. Therefore, there is a need for the government to disseminate this information to the diaspora communities using all possible channels (the Egyptian missions abroad and the ministries at home dealing with Egyptian migrant labour). However, these incentives are relatively general and lack a significant link to the real investment opportunities in Egypt. The Ministry of Investment in cooperation with other concerned ministries in Egypt should prepare a list of sample projects that can be implemented by Egyptians abroad, explain the mechanisms of engagement, and the detailed procedures of implementation of such projects. The government also needs to conduct rigorous market research on the different governorates identifying investment opportunities that would be successful in each of the governorates. Often times, it has been seen that diasporas upon return want to start a business in their own locality (governorate). The government needs to *market* its investment needs to the diaspora communities and inform them of the recent improvements in business legislation and initiatives such as the “One stop shop” at the Ministry of Investment, where potential investors can file the necessary documents and obtain most types of business licences in one process. This information could be disseminated through user-friendly brochures as well as by holding information sessions for the diasporas in the consulates and embassies abroad. A consolidated web site can also help in linking the diaspora to Egypt and updating them on current affairs. This website can be used as a means to promote investment in Egypt by diasporas. The web site of the Emigration Sector of the Ministry of Manpower and Emigration could be restructured to accommodate such initiatives.

Transfer of Knowledge and Skills (Brain Circulation)

Diasporas play a critical role in the transfer of knowledge and skills and can act as a link between specialized institutions and their home countries (IOM, 2007). Despite its pitfalls, the experience of the “Association of Egyptian American Scholars” can be regarded as a model of cooperation between the diaspora communities and Egypt. Similar mechanisms can be set to engage the Egyptian diasporas with their counterparts in Egypt, not only in academia, but also in areas such as health sector, public administration, training institutions, etc. Egyptian institutions could invite subject experts among the diaspora communities to come and teach courses, lecture or train local experts. An important resource would be to build a diaspora database and make it available online similar to the Database of African Experts and Diasporas created by UNECA. Thus, it will help to establish links between experts in the diaspora communities and the local communities and also between different diaspora communities (within Arab countries and also between diaspora communities in the Arab countries and the West).

The Government of Egypt should set a list of priorities and probably model projects and plans to engage the diaspora. The current mechanism that the Government of Egypt employs to communicate with the diasporas is through conducting national conferences for Egyptian diasporas. However, these conferences are designed for all diasporas without specifically targeting the investor groups. It might be more effective if the government invited smaller groups of potential diaspora investors and cater to their specific needs and interests. Clearly, investment will only take place when the investors find that there are opportunities for them to invest in the kind of activities that they are most interested in. By inviting smaller groups, the government will have a better idea about the group dynamics, its needs and hence would be in a favourable position to *market* its potential investment needs. There also needs to be strong follow-up mechanisms that will help to portray the genuine interest and commitment of the government towards future projects funded by diasporas.

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Appendixes

Appendix I

The Study Questionnaire

Dear Egyptian Abroad

Greetings from Cairo! My name is Ayman Zohry, I'm an Expert on Migration Studies and the President of the Egyptian Society for Migration Studies (EGYMIG). In cooperation with the International Organization for Migration (IOM), Cairo Office, I'm conducting "A Study on the Dynamics of the Egyptian Diaspora: Strengthening Development Linkages" in three countries; the United States of America, the United Kingdom, and Kuwait. You are kindly requested to participate in this study by filling the questionnaire below. For any inquiry feel free to call me +2010-279-7171 or email me azohry@zohry.com.

To maximize data quality, you are kindly requested to disclose your name and email address. Data of this study will be solely used for the purposes of research. Strict anonymity will be preserved. The use of pseudonyms will be employed where appropriate in the analysis.

Basic Info:

Name	
email address	
Country of Current Residence	1. United States of America (USA) 2. UK 3. Kuwait

SECTION I: Migratory process and profile of the Egyptian diasporas abroad

Serial Number	Questions	Coding Categories				
Q101	Duration of stay in current country (in years – if less than one year please type 0)	<table border="1" style="display: inline-table; vertical-align: middle;"> <tr> <td style="width: 40px; height: 20px;"></td> <td style="width: 40px; height: 20px;"></td> </tr> </table>				
Q102	Year of Birth	<table border="1" style="display: inline-table; vertical-align: middle;"> <tr> <td style="width: 20px; height: 20px; text-align: center;">1</td> <td style="width: 20px; height: 20px; text-align: center;">9</td> <td style="width: 20px; height: 20px;"></td> <td style="width: 20px; height: 20px;"></td> </tr> </table>	1	9		
1	9					
Q103	Gender	Male Female				
Q104	Highest Educational Level	Less than University University Diploma/Master Ph.D.				
Q105	Current Occupation	<p>-----</p> <p>-----</p>				
Q106	Choose the <u>three most important</u> reasons why you decided to go abroad?	<p>Difficult political situation in Egypt.</p> <p>Difficult economic situation and poverty in Egypt.</p> <p>Impossibility of getting employment in Egypt.</p> <p>Impossibility of personal development and improvement in Egypt.</p> <p>Corruption and injustice in Egypt</p> <p>Insufficient income in Egypt .</p> <p>Adventure and the desire to see the World</p> <p>Born abroad</p> <p>Other (specify):</p> <p>-----</p> <p>-----</p> <p>-----</p>				
Q107	How often do you come to Egypt?	<p>A few times per year.</p> <p>Once per year.</p> <p>Once in 2 or 3 years.</p> <p>Once in five years.</p> <p>Less than once in 5 years.</p>				
Q108	How well are you informed about current affairs in Egypt?	<p>I am very well informed.</p> <p>Mainly I am well informed.</p> <p>I am neither well informed nor badly.</p> <p>Mainly I am badly informed.</p> <p>I am very badly informed.</p>				

Q109	How do you usually get informed on current affairs in Egypt?	Newspapers Internet TV Email and telephone calls with family & friends in Egypt Other (specify): ----- ----- -----
Q110	How much is it important for you to know what is going on in Egypt?	Very important. Mainly it is important. It is neither important nor unimportant. Mainly it is not important. It is not important at all.
Q111	Are you a member of any <i>Egyptian</i> organization (association, club, society, or union) in diaspora or somehow connected with it?	Yes No
Q112	Are you a member of any <u>Arab, Islamic, or Coptic organization</u> (association, club, society, or union) in diaspora or somehow connected with it?	Yes No

SECTION II: Needs, concerns, and priorities of diaspora communities

Serial Number	Questions	Coding Categories
Q201	What are your feelings towards the country you live in now?	They are positive now as they were earlier They are more positive now than they were before I have not paid attention to this They are more negative now than they used to be They had never been positive
Q202	What are your feelings towards Egypt?	They are positive now as they were earlier They are more positive now than they were before I have not paid attention to this They are more negative now than they used to be They had never been positive
Q203	Select <u>three</u> of the most important problems of the Egyptian diaspora	Insufficient cultural and informative cooperation with homeland Preservation of national (Egyptian) identity (ex : language, norms, and traditions) Problem of military service in Egypt Problem of getting documents of Egypt Ignorance and negligence of the staff in embassies and consulates of Egypt High costs of administrative taxes in diplomatic-consular representative bodies of Egypt Problems of the second generation and the fear of assimilation Inability to vote and politically participate while being abroad Other: ----- -----

SECTION III: Diaspora resources, including skills, that could be linked to the development process in Egypt

Serial Number	Questions	Coding Categories
Q301	Do you send money to Egypt for personal or family responsibilities?	Yes No
Q302	Do you send money to Egypt for other purposes (other than personal or family responsibilities) such as investment?	Yes No
Q303	What is the money used for? Please check all applicable statements	Investment in the Capital Market (stock exchange) Property or Real Estate Setting up Business or running a business in Egypt or trading with Egypt Community or Social projects – Charitable projects Other (Specify): ----- -----
Q304	Would you be interested in investment opportunities in Egypt?	Yes No
Q305	What do you believe are the main obstacles preventing you from investing more or at all in Egypt? (Select a maximum of three)	Poor or lack of information on investment if at all Poor or no infrastructure to enable me to invest even when I'm aware of opportunities No suitable investment options Lack of transparency and accountability Personal Other (Specify): ----- -----
Q306	Do you think that your skill level has increased as a result of staying and working abroad?	Yes No
Q307	If you decided to return to Egypt, do you think your acquired skills while being abroad can be applied in Egypt?	Yes No
Q308	Why you believe you can't apply your skills in Egypt? (Select the most important reason)	Bureaucracy Poor or no infrastructure to enable me to apply my skills in Egypt Corruption Unsuccessful examples I heard about Other (Specify): ----- -----

Serial Number	Questions	Coding Categories
Q309	What are your plans regarding return to Egypt?	I am sure I will not return to Egypt. Probably I will not return. I am not sure. Probably I will return. Surely I will return.
Q310	Choose the most important preconditions for your return to Egypt. (Select a maximum of three)	Possibility of employment with a decent income. Possibility of professional improvement. Improving services and infrastructure Improvement of the economic situation Regulation and simplifying of administrative procedures. Change of political scene. Particularly private and personal problems Other (Specify): ----- -----

SECTION IV: Appropriate policy to address the concerns of the diasporas

Serial Number	Questions	Coding Categories
Q401	Kindly write any suggestions on what the Egyptian Government and the concerned ministries could do for the improvement of the position of Egyptians abroad and strengthening their homeland connection.	Free text field

SECTION V: Suggested institutional mechanisms and incentives facilitating diaspora engagement in the development of Egypt

Serial Number	Questions	Coding Categories
Q501	Kindly write any suggestions on institutional organization and incentives facilitating diaspora engagement in the development of Egypt.	Free text field

Appendix II

Emigration and Sponsoring Egyptians Abroad Law no. 111 of the year 1983

Law no. 111 of the year 1983 for promulgating the Emigration and Sponsoring Egyptians abroad law. In the name of the people, the president of the Republic, the people's Assembly decided the following law, which has been promulgated.

Article (1)

The provisions of the attached Emigration and Sponsoring Egyptians Abroad law shall be put into force and applied. Any other provisions counter to the provisions herein shall be made null and void.

Article (2)

Ministers of Defense, Interior, and Emigration Affairs are to issue the executive resolutions of the provisions of this law in six months starting from the date of putting this law into force. The Minister Concerned with Emigration Affairs is to issue the executive regulation of this law after coming into agreement with the Minister of Interior during the said period.

Article (3)

This law shall be published in the official newspaper, and put into force on the day following the publication date. This law shall be sealed by the seal of the state, and put into force as one of its laws.

Promulgated at the presidency of the Republic on 22 Shawal 1403 Hijra, Corresponding to August 1st, 1983 A.D. (**Hosni Mubarak**)

Emigration and Sponsoring Egyptians Abroad Law

Chapter 1

General provisions

Article (1)

Egyptians, whether individuals or groups, shall have the right to permanent or temporary migration, whether the purpose of migration necessitates permanent or temporary stay abroad, in accordance with the provisions of this law and other laws in force. Egyptians shall keep their Egyptian nationality according to the Egyptian nationality law. Their permanent or temporary migration shall not result in violating the constitutional or legal rights they enjoy in their capacity as Egyptian citizens, as long as they do continuously keep their Egyptian nationality.

Article (2)

The state shall sponsor Egyptians abroad and do its best to strengthen their ties with Egypt. The Minister concerned with Emigration Affairs shall take all necessary measures, issues all resolutions necessary for achieving this purpose, and specifies the means of ensuring this sponsorship, such as:

- A) Holding and organizing conferences and seminars inside and outside the country to consider and solve Egyptian migrants' problems, acquaint them with the affairs and national issues of their homeland, and know their opinions and suggestions.
- B) Delegating some of the Egyptian mission attaches abroad to be responsible for sponsoring Egyptians' affairs in the countries of emigration, in agreement with the Minister Concerned and in accordance with the objectives of the law herein.
- C) Appointing honorary consuls in the cities that include large Egyptian gatherings, where no Egyptian missions are available, in agreement with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and in accordance with the diplomatic and consular corps law.

- D) Promoting the establishment of Egyptian unions, clubs, and leagues in the countries of emigration, and supporting the existing ones both spiritually and materially, with a view to establishing strong Egyptian gatherings.
- E) Providing the mass media suitable for addressing the issues of interest for Egyptians abroad, as well as providing them with reliable information about their homeland.
- F) Maintaining the Arab language and culture, the national heritage as well as the spiritual ties among migrants, and disseminating them among their new generations through the following:
 - 1 – Enabling migrants’ children to pursue their education according to the Egyptian educational systems.
 - 2 – Establishing Arab cultural centers where migrant gatherings exist, and providing them with libraries.
 - 3 – Encouraging the conferences and seminars that address national issues.
- G) Facilitating migrants’ visits to their homeland, as well as their relatives’ visits to the countries of emigration.

Article (3)

The Minister concerned with Emigration Affairs shall, in cooperation with the ministries and entities concerned, undertake the following responsibilities:

- A) Sponsoring Egyptian migrants abroad.
- B) Planning, organizing, implementing and following up emigration policies with a view to strengthening Egyptian ties with their homeland, and contributing to the objectives of social and economic development and the national interests of the country.
- C) Preparing draft laws and resolutions related to emigration.
- D) Preparing draft agreements with foreign countries so as to open new emigration markets for Egyptians, in addition to facilitating Egyptians’ residence in the countries of emigration and securing their rights and interests guaranteed by these countries.
- E) Suggesting means of capitalizing on the expertise and know how of Egyptian scientists abroad in the development and production fields in their homeland.
- F) Considering and suggesting the means that enable Egyptian migrants abroad to contribute with their savings in productive development projects in Egypt.
- G) Preparing an overall routine survey of the numbers and categories of Egyptians abroad, in collaboration with other entities.

Article (4)

Setting up a Supreme Committee for Emigration headed by the Minister concerned with Emigration Affairs. The membership of this committee shall include the representatives of the following ministries, from among high-ranking officials:

- 1 – The Ministry of Manpower and Training
- 2 – The Ministry of Education and Scientific research.
- 3 – The Ministry of Foreign Affairs.
- 4 – The Ministry of Interior.
- 5 – The Ministry of Economy.
- 6 – The Ministry of Planning.
- 7 – The Ministry of Defense.
- 8 – The Ministry of Information.
- 9 – The Ministry of Tourism and Civil Aviation.
- 10- The Ministry of Insurance.
- 11- The Ministry of Finance.

Setting up the said committee and organizing its work shall take place by virtue of the Prime Minister’s resolution based on the suggestions of the Minister of Emigration Affairs. The prime Minister may also issue a resolution to add a representative of any other ministry or entity, viewed by the Minister of Emigration Affairs as necessary in the membership of the said Committee.

Article (5)

The Supreme Committee for Emigration stated in the above mentioned article shall be responsible for the following:

- A) considering the establishment of professional centers for training potential migrants, especially in the fields of agriculture

and industry The Ministries and entities concerned shall issue resolutions for establishing these centers, and organizing its work as well as the rules of joining them, without prejudice to the private sector's right to provide training opportunities in its industrial, professional and production units.

- B) Considering the organization of specialized courses aiming at qualifying potential migrants. The Minister concerned with Emigration Affairs is to issue a resolution for organizing these courses and defining its programs.
- C) Providing Egyptians abroad with the necessary cultural, media, and national materials that maintain their ties with their homeland; in addition to providing the means of diffusing the Arabic language among migrants' children; and supporting the efforts exerted by Egyptian religious entities to deepen the spiritual heritage among Egyptians abroad .
- D) Suggesting the facilitations to be granted to migrants, whether before their departure, or during their residence abroad, or after temporarily or permanently returning back home.

Article (6)

Without prejudice to the Egyptians' right to Emigration, temporary potential migrants shall request to be registered in a record prepared for this purpose in the Ministry concerned with Emigration Affairs. The Emigration opportunities shall be distributed among the registered persons according to their fields of specialization and capacities and the fields of specialization required in the countries of emigration, providing that priority of registration is observed. The Minister concerned with Emigration Affairs is to decide the priorities of some specializations or qualifications required in the countries of emigration or exceeding the needs of Egypt. A resolution issued by the Minister concerned with Emigration Affairs shall regulate registration in the record referred to, as well as registration procedures and conditions.

Article (7)

Persons holding certificates from the training centers and qualification courses referred to in items (a) and (b) of article (5) herein shall be prioritized in getting the emigration or work opportunities abroad, available for the ministries and entities concerned , in accordance with the needs and fields of specialization required .

Chapter 2 **Permanent Emigration**

Article (8)

A permanent migrant is the Egyptian who stays abroad permanently, by obtaining the nationality of a foreign country , or a permanent residence permit to stay in this country ; or who stays abroad for at least ten years, or obtains an emigration permit from one of the countries of emigration specified by a resolution of the Minister concerned with Emigration Affairs .

Article (9)

The Egyptian citizen who seeks permanent emigration is to be granted a permanent emigration permit by the administrative entity concerned in the Ministry of Interior, after submitting an application according to the procedures and conditions demonstrated in the executive regulation of this law. In order to get an emigration permit, the following conditions must be fulfilled:

- A) Obtaining the permission of the country of emigration.
- B) Obtaining the permission of the entity concerned in the Ministry of Defense, according to the rules and conditions stated in a resolution issued by the Minister of Defense, after consultations with the Minister Concerned with Emigration Affairs. People granted a permanent emigration permit shall be registered in a record prepared for this purpose in the Ministry concerned with Emigration Affairs. The said record and the registration process shall be controlled by the executive regulation of this law.

Article (10)

A Permanent migrant shall have the right to acquire the country of emigration nationality along with preserving his Egyptian nationality. The same right is applicable to the migrant's wife and dependent children who emigrate with him, as well as the

migrant's foreign wife, if she applied for acquiring the Egyptian nationality, in accordance with the provisions and procedures stated in the Egyptian Nationality law.

Article (11)

Each person born of an Egyptian permanent migrant shall enjoy the same rights and advantages enjoyed by his father. This is applicable to the children of an emigrating mother, who still preserve their Egyptian nationality.

Article (12)

A permanent migrant status may be dropped in the following two cases:

- A) If the person does not travel to the country of emigration within six months after getting the emigration permit.
- B) If the person returns to stay in his homeland for more than one continuous year, providing that his stay is not due to force majeure or necessitated by his work conditions. In all cases, it is imperative for the migrant who stays in Egypt for more than the period specified to get the permission of the Ministry concerned with Emigration Affairs so as to be considered of a migrant status. Migrants at conscription age, who return back to their homeland and stay for more than six months and have not previously performed the military service, must obtain the permission of the Ministry of Defense. A citizen who is no longer considered of a migrant status shall consequently be deprived of the advantages acquired by migrants, starting from the date the migrant status is dropped.

Chapter 3 **Temporary Migration**

Article (13)

A temporary Egyptian migrant is the Egyptian Citizen, who is not a student, or seconded employee, who settles and sets up his main activity abroad, and has a job to make his living, providing that he has stayed abroad for one year and has not taken the permanent emigration procedures stated herein, or that he has taken the said procedures and returned to his homeland before fulfilling any of the conditions stated in article (8) herein. The period of one year referred to in the above mentioned paragraph is to be considered a continuous year even if it is interrupted by intervals not more than thirty days . This provision shall not prejudice the extension of sponsorship duty to all Egyptians abroad.

Article (14):

A temporary migrant status shall be dropped in the following cases:

- A) IF the citizen returns home and stays for more than six continuous months.
- B) If the citizen returns to work at his homeland. A citizen whose migrant status is dropped shall consequently be deprived of all the advantages he acquires in his capacity as migrant, starting from the date the migrant status is dropped.

Chapter 4 **Migrants' rights**

Article (15)

The returns of the investment of Egyptian migrants' deposits in one of the banks operating in Egypt shall be exempted from all taxes and fees. Egyptian migrants' or expatriates' capital utilized in projects or investments in the country shall be granted all the advantages decided for foreign capital operating in the same field , or national capital, which is better .

If capital is to be treated in various ways according to the foreign capital nationality, then the capital of migrants contributing in the said fields shall be treated according to the most advantageous way.

Article (16)

Taking into consideration the provisions of the president of the Arab Republic of Egypt's resolution in law no. 73 of the year 1971 ,

in relation to the treatment of Egyptian expatriates who return to their homeland , an Egyptian worker who emigrated and had been working in the government , one of the local governance units, general agencies or public sector, and whose resignation had been accepted for the purpose of permanent emigration, and who returned back home within two years from the date his resignation has been accepted, shall be re-appointed at the entity where he had been working before emigration if he applied for this within three months from the date of his final return . A worker shall be appointed to his last post, if it is still vacant, or to another similar post. A person whose emigration duration exceeds the period referred to in the previous paragraph may be reappointed, if he meets the conditions required for filling the post. In such case, the said person shall be exempted from the examination procedures or the contest required for filling the post.

Chapter 5

Concluding and transitional provisions

Article (17)

In all cases, temporary and permanent migrants as well as their children residing in Egypt or abroad must get the approval of the entity concerned in the Ministry of Defense, in accordance with the rules and conditions stated in the resolution issued by the Minister of Defense, after consultation with the Minister concerned with Emigration Affairs.

Article (18)

The one-time compensations stated in Social Insurance laws may not be granted to temporary migrants.

Article (19)

The Egyptian citizen who emigrated and has become considered a migrant on the date of putting this law into force may apply for registering his name in the permanent emigration record. In such case, he shall enjoy all the rights granted to those permitted to permanent emigration according to the provisions of the law herein. Submission of the application referred to in the above paragraph, as well as admission conditions shall be controlled by the executive regulation of this law.

Article (20)

A person who had emigrated before putting this law into force, and who was registered in the permanent emigration record according to the provisions of the above mentioned article, shall have the right to retain his Egyptian nationality, upon his request, if it has been dropped. Consequently, his minor children shall acquire the Egyptian nationality; his foreign wife also may be granted the Egyptian nationality if she applies for this within two years from the reply date, as long as the Minister of Interior does not object within two years from the application date; his major children may also apply for acquiring the Egyptian nationality within two years from the date of putting this law into force. Submitting the applications referred to in the previous paragraph shall be controlled by a resolution from the Minister of Interior after agreement with the Minister concerned with Emigration Affairs.



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