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Egypt



LEXOLOGY

Telecoms & Media

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COMMUNICATIONS POLICY

Regulatory and institutional structure

Summarise the regulatory framework for the communications sector. Do any foreign ownership restrictions apply to communications services?

Egypt is one of the three largest economies in Africa and is strategically positioned at a crossroads between the East and the West, making the country a significant player in international trade in the Middle East and Africa. Egypt is home to the Suez Canal, which connects the Mediterranean Sea with the Red Sea and is a key artery in global trade.

The total area of Egypt is 1,001,450 square kilometres, including 995,450 square kilometres of land and 6,000 square kilometres of water. According to the Egyptian Central Agency for Public Mobilisation and Statistics, the population reached more than 107 million people in 2025. Egypt is divided into 27 governorates, 217 cities and 4,617 villages. The governorates with the highest population are Cairo (9.7 per cent), Giza (9 per cent) and Sharqiyya (7.5 per cent).

The Egyptian government has worked hard to attract more foreign direct investment (FDI) into the country. These efforts resulted in the recognition of Egypt as one of the top five destinations globally for greenfield FDI in 2016. In 2021, Egypt was named as one of the top 17 African countries with a tech ecosystem, according to *FDI Intelligence* in its report 'African Tech Ecosystems of the future 2021/2022'.

Egypt replaced South Africa as the second-ranked destination by projects in the region, experiencing a 60 per cent increase in the number of projects from 85 to 136, which cover both the Middle East and Africa. Software and IT services came out top of the project sectors.

Furthermore, Egypt managed to top all ranked countries in the Middle East and Africa for capital investment in 2019 by acquiring 12 per cent capital investment with a total value of US\$13.7 billion.

Despite international and local crises faced by the country over the years, including revolutions, the covid-19 pandemic, the Russia–Ukraine war, the Israeli–Palestinian conflict, inflation, devaluation of the Egyptian pound, foreign currency shortage and the threat of potential recession, Egypt has maintained strong liquidity and financial status as a result of FDI.

The telecom sector in Egypt is primarily governed by Telecommunication Regulation Law No. 10/2003 (the Telecoms Law). Also, there are several other key laws and regulations related to the telecom sector, including the following (as amended to date):

- Penal Code No. 58/1937;
- Presidential Decree No. 236/1985 approving the International Telegraph (currently Telecommunication) (ITU) Convention, which entered into force in Egypt on 10 October 1985;
- Presidential Decree No. 379/1999 regulating the Egyptian Ministry of Communication and Information Technology (MCIT);
- E-signature Law No. 15/2004 and its Executive Regulation;
- Economic Court Law No. 120/2008;

- Anti-Cybercrime Law No. 175/2018 (Anti-Cybercrime Law); and
- Personal Data Protection Law No. 151/2020 (the Data Protection Law).

The National Telecommunication Regulatory Authority (NTRA) is mainly empowered by the Telecoms Law to regulate and enhance telecommunication services in Egypt. In addition to the NTRA, other key entities are involved in the telecom sector, namely:

- the MCIT, which is empowered by Presidential Decree No. 379/1999 to, inter alia, expand, regularly develop and improve communication and information services as well as encourage investment in the telecom sector based on the antitrust basis;
- the Information Technology Industry Development Agency, which is empowered by the E-signature Law to, inter alia, promote and develop the information technology and communication industry, support small and medium-sized enterprises in using e-transaction and regulating e-signature services activities; and
- the Economic Court has executive jurisdiction over settling litigation related to the Telecoms Law.

Law stated - 9 April 2025

Authorisation/licensing regime

Describe the authorisation or licensing regime.

Under the Telecoms Law, no one is allowed to establish or operate any telecom network, provide any telecom service to third parties, transmit international calls or announce doing so unless a licence is obtained from the NTRA.

The term 'telecom' is defined by the Telecoms Law as 'any means of sending or receiving signs, signals, messages, texts, images or sounds of whatsoever nature and whether the communication is wired or wireless'.

The restriction above distinguishes between the different types of telecom services and includes only one exception for establishing or operating a private network that does not use a wireless system.

In practice, telecom services are generally classified as follows:

Main service	Sub - service
Fixed services	Fixed telephony
Virtual fixed telephony	
Access	
International services	International gateway
International submarine cable	

Data services	Class A
Class B	
Class C	
Global peering	
Registrar	
Cellular	Mobile services
Bulk SMS (one to many)	
Value - Added Service (VAS)	
Wireless trunk	
Nilesat	
Very - small - aperture terminal (VSAT)	
Satellite services	Global mobile personal communications services (GMPCS)
	Navigation services (aviation or maritime)
Infrastructure leasing	Infrastructure
Towers	
Automatic vehicle location	
Accounting authorities	
Wireless institutes	

The licence of each telecom service allows the relevant licensees to provide such service within a very specific scope.

Generally, all licences are granted under a licence agreement with the NTRA noting that all licences for major services (eg, fixed telephony and cellular) are granted by the NTRA through a bidding process. However, the other licences may be granted by the NTRA upon request.

This request is required to be assessed from a different perspective including, inter alia, the market demand and financial and technical adequacy of the applicant.

Licences are granted for a period between one and 15 years, depending on the services that are the subject of such licences.

The NTRA applies a different fee structure for issuing licences for each type of service as per the following examples:

Service	Applicable fees and security
Wireless infrastructure leasing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a one - time licensing fee of 50,000 Egyptian pounds; • 3 per cent of the total annual revenues; • a licence burden annual fee of 10,000 Egyptian pounds plus the inflation rate declared by the Central Bank of Egypt (CBE); and • a performance bond of 500,000 Egyptian pounds.
Registrar	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a one - time licensing fee of 50,000 Egyptian pounds; • 3 per cent of the total annual revenues; • a licence burden annual fee of 10,000 Egyptian pounds plus the inflation rate declared by the CBE; and • a performance bond of 20,000 Egyptian pounds.
GMPCS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • no one - time licensing fee; • 3 per cent of the total annual revenues; • a licence burden annual fee of 1,000 Egyptian pounds plus the inflation rate declared by the CBE; • annual charges for the equipment of the licensee's subscribers; and • a performance bond of 150,000 Egyptian pounds.

Access	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a one - time licensing fee of 1 million Egyptian pounds; • 8 per cent of the total annual revenues; • a licence burden annual fee of 500,000 Egyptian pounds plus the inflation rate declared by the CBE; • annual charges for the equipment of the licensee's subscribers; and • a performance bond of 50 million Egyptian pounds.
Class A	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • no one - time licensing fee; • 3 per cent of the total annual revenues; • a licence burden annual fee of 10,000 Egyptian pounds plus the inflation rate declared by the CBE; and • a performance bond of 500,000 Egyptian pounds.
Class B	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • no one - time licensing fee; • 3 per cent of the total annual revenues; • a licence burden annual fee of 10,000 Egyptian pounds plus the inflation rate declared by the CBE; and • a performance bond of 150,000 Egyptian pounds.
Global peering	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • no one - time licensing fee; • 3 per cent of the total annual revenues; • a licence burden annual fee of 10,000 Egyptian pounds plus the inflation rate declared by the CBE; and • a performance bond of 200,000 Egyptian pounds.

Bulk SMS (one to many)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a one - time licensing fee of 500,000 Egyptian pounds; • 3 per cent of the total annual revenues; • a licence burden annual fee of 1,000 Egyptian pounds plus the inflation rate declared by the CBE; • annual charges for the equipment of the licensee's subscribers; and • a performance bond of 500,000 Egyptian pounds.
VAS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • an upfront royalty fee of 3 million Egyptian pounds; • 3 per cent of the total annual revenues; • a licence renewal fee of one million Egyptian pounds; • a licence and liability fee of 20,000 Egyptian pounds; and • a cash deposit guarantee of 500,000 Egyptian pounds.
VSAT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • no one - time licensing fee; • 3 per cent of the total annual revenues; • frequency charges to be determined on a case - by - case basis; • a licence burden annual fee of 1,000 Egyptian pounds plus the inflation rate declared by the CBE; and • a performance bond of 100,000 Egyptian pounds.

Law stated - 9 April 2025

Flexibility in spectrum use

Do spectrum licences generally specify the permitted use or is permitted use (fully or partly) unrestricted? Is licensed spectrum tradable or assignable?

All spectrum licences generally specify the permitted use and are not tradeable or assignable, fully or partly, under the Telecoms Law unless prior approval is obtained from the NTRA. Also, all licence agreements include a change of control restriction, so that the licensee may not even merge with any third party unless prior written approval is obtained from the NTRA.

Law stated - 9 April 2025

Ex-ante regulatory obligations

Which communications markets and segments are subject to ex-ante regulation? What remedies may be imposed?

All licences are required, under the Telecoms Law, to include several ex-ante provisions concerning transparency, price control, cost accounting, accounting separation, access to and use of specific network facilities and non-discrimination.

For example, the NTRA has the right to review any audited financial statement including, inter alia, appointing an auditor other than the licensee's auditor to review the said financial statement. Furthermore, each licensee is required to obtain an approval from the NTRA before applying tariffs or changing them.

Law stated - 9 April 2025

Structural or functional separation

Is there a legal basis for requiring structural or functional separation between an operator's network and service activities? Has structural or functional separation been introduced or is it being contemplated?

According to the Telecoms Law, all licensed operators are required to not support one service in favour of another service. All licensed operators are required to comply with the ITU's recommendations and international standards. That said, if, for any reason, a structural or functional separation is required as per the NTRA's instructions, the ITU's recommendation or international standards, the relevant operator should comply with this requirement.

The first time the NTRA introduced structural or functional separation was for Telecom Egypt to ensure its non-discriminatory behaviour.

Law stated - 9 April 2025

Universal service obligations and financing

Outline any universal service obligations. How is provision of these services financed?

According to the Telecoms Law, the provision of any telecom service must be based on four principles, one of which is the availability of the universal service.

The NTRA is required by the Telecoms Law to transfer its budget's surplus, except for the amount allocated to the state by the Cabinet of Ministers, to the Universal Service Fund

on an annual basis. Any amounts to be transferred to the Universal Service Fund must be utilised on, inter alia, (1) infrastructure projects required for establishing the universal service, (2) reallocation of the frequency spectrum, (3) indemnifying telecom services operators and providers for price differences between the approved economical price for the services and that which may be determined in favour of the telecom consumers.

Law stated - 9 April 2025

Number allocation and portability

Describe the number allocation scheme and number portability regime in your jurisdiction.

There is a specific number allocation plan adopted by the NTRA, which is updated from time to time depending on the increase of telecom service subscribers in Egypt, whereby each operator has a dedicated first two to three digits. There are also dedicated numbers for emergency services (eg, ambulance, police and fire brigade).

There is also a mobile number portability regulation adopted by the NTRA whereby mobile subscribers may freely shift between operators without losing their numbers. This regulation includes several mandatory terms and conditions applied to both operators and subscribers.

Law stated - 9 April 2025

Customer terms and conditions

Are customer terms and conditions in the communications sector subject to specific rules?

Yes, all telecom service providers are required to have written contracts with their customers in Egypt. These written contracts are required to follow the form approved by the NTRA and cover, inter alia:

- the type of services that are subject to the customer agreement;
- the confidentiality requirement for the customers' data and communications;
- the terms of payment including interest, administrative fees, tax and any other burdens;
- the duration and its renewal;
- rights in the case of default or termination; and
- the agreement is personal and may not be assigned to any third party without the approval of the licensed telecoms provider.

Any violation of the requirements above will result in a penalty from the NTRA as per the Penalties Regulation. For example, in 2016, the NTRA imposed a penalty of 250,000 Egyptian pounds on Etisalat Misr for not complying with this mandatory requirement.

Law stated - 9 April 2025

Net neutrality

Are there limits on an internet service provider's freedom to control or prioritise the type or source of data that it delivers? Are there any other specific regulations or guidelines on net neutrality?

The provision of telecom services in Egypt must always be based on transparency; therefore, internet service providers may not control or prioritise the type or source of data they deliver.

The Administrative Courts rendered a judgment ordering the NTRA to block pornographic content; however, the NTRA challenged this judgment on the basis that the Telecoms Law does not grant this power to the NTRA.

However, the Anti-Cybercrime Law allows the competent authorities in Egypt to block any website that is broadcast from Egypt or abroad if that website contains any statements, digits, images, videos or any other advertising material that is deemed a crime under the Anti-Cybercrime Law. This blockage is subject to judicial review within 24 hours.

Law stated - 9 April 2025

Platform regulation

Is there specific legislation or regulation in place, and have there been any enforcement initiatives relating to digital platforms?

Digital platforms are mainly regulated by the following:

- the Telecoms Law;
- Law No. 180/2018 regarding press, media and the Supreme Council of Media (SCoM) Regulation (the Media Law) and its Executive Regulation; and
- SCoM Decree No. 26/2020, issuing the SCoM Licensing Regulation (the Media Licensing Regulation).

Digital platforms may not be created unless a licence is obtained from the SCoM. This licence also requires an approval from the NTRA.

According to the Media Licensing Regulation, companies carrying out any business activity related to creating digital or satellite platforms must be owned by the state with a minimum authorised capital of 50 million Egyptian pounds.

Law stated - 9 April 2025

Next-Generation-Access (NGA) networks

Are there specific regulatory obligations applicable to NGA networks? Is there a government financial scheme to promote basic broadband or NGA broadband penetration?

There is no specific well-developed regulation yet applicable to NGA networks. However, our law firm obtained the first-ever authorisation from the NTRA for using a wide area network or Multiprotocol Label Switching in Egypt.

The main general regulatory requirement, as currently adopted by the NTRA, is that NGA networks must be implemented by a licensed provider of Class A services.

Law stated - 9 April 2025

Data protection

Is there a specific data protection regime applicable to the communications sector?

There are two main laws in Egypt governing the use, collection, storage, transfer and protection of personal data in Egypt as follows.

Data Protection Law

The Data Protection Law applies to any personal data that is subject to any electronic processing whether partially or entirely.

The Personal Data Law shall not apply to any personal data that is being:

- saved by natural persons for third parties and that is processed for personal usage only;
- processed for official statistics purposes or in the application of laws or regulations in Egypt;
- exclusively processed for media purposes and provided that the said personal data is correct and accurate and not to be used for any other purposes without prejudice to any applicable press and media regulations in Egypt;
- related to judicial seizure records, investigations and lawsuits;
- held by the national security authorities; and
- held by the CBE and the entities that are subject to its control and supervision except for money transfer and forex companies provided that they take into account the rules established by the CBE regulating personal data.

It is worth noting that any entity that is subject to the Data Protection Law is required to legitimise its position with the provisions of the said Data Protection Law within a year starting from the issuance date of its Executive Regulation, which has not yet been issued.

Furthermore, as part of Soliman, Hashish & Partners' membership to the American Chamber of Commerce in Egypt, the authors attended a high-level discussion with regard to Egypt's New Personal Data Protection Law with key representatives from the Ministry of Communication and Information Technology overseeing the issuance of the Executive Regulation and establishment of the Data Protection Centre, whereby it was confirmed that the issuance of the Executive Regulation is subject to the establishment of the regulator first being the Data Protection Centre.

It was re-confirmed during the meeting that the Executive Regulation is already in an agreed form and ready for issuance; however, the Executive Regulation will only be issued after the establishment of the Data Protection Centre, noting that the following phases will very likely be followed by the government as highlighted during the said meeting:

- pre-launching phase: this phase will likely involve policy settling, guidelines and framework, capacity building and awareness, expert consultation and international relations;
- issuance of the Executive Regulation: this phase will likely involve expert consultation, policy harmonisation, collaboration, licensing permits and accreditation, data protection officer registration, cross-border data transfer, sector-specific guidance and international relations; and
- grace period for legitimisation with the Executive Regulation: during this phase, the persons who are subject to the Data Protection Law are granted, by law, one year as of the issuance date of the Executive Regulation to legitimise their position with the Executive Regulation.

Anti-CybercrimeLaw

According to the Anti-Cybercrime Law , any person, whether a natural or legal person, that uses, collects, or processes personal data whether a natural or legal person shall maintain the privacy of the data stored and not disclose the same without an order of a relevant judicial authority.

Furthermore, any IT services provider shall retain and store users' data for at least 180 days continuously including identification, the content of services' system, communication traffic, terminals and any other data required by the NTRA.

In addition to the Data Protection Law and the Anti-Cybercrime Law, few other laws deal with special nature personal data such as the Telecoms Law, whereby telecom services providers are required to ensure and maintain the confidentiality of any customer's data.

Law stated - 9 April 2025

Cybersecurity

Is there specific legislation or regulation in place concerning cybersecurity or network security in your jurisdiction?

Yes, the Anti-Cybercrime Law concerns any person providing, directly or indirectly, users with any information technology and telecom service including, inter alia, processing or data storage. These providers are required to retain and store users' data continuously for at least 180 days, including identification, the content of the services' system, communication traffic, terminals and any other data required by the NTRA.

Law stated - 9 April 2025

Big data

Is there specific legislation or regulation in place, and have there been any enforcement initiatives in your jurisdiction, addressing the legal challenges raised by big data?

Unfortunately, there is no special regulation yet for big data. However, it is within the NTRA's ongoing strategy to regulate it.

Law stated - 9 April 2025

Data localisation

Are there any laws or regulations that require data to be stored locally in the jurisdiction?

Consumer Protection Law No. 181/2018 and its Executive Regulation require all providers of services and products in Egypt, except for the entities that are subject to the supervision of the CBE and the Egyptian supervisory authority, to have all advertising, data, information, documents, invoices, receipts, contracts including e-documents with the consumer to be in Arabic or bilingual or multilingual form, providing that Arabic must be one of these languages.

Law stated - 9 April 2025

Key trends and expected changes

Summarise the key emerging trends and hot topics in communications regulation in your jurisdiction.

By the end of 2022, the Telecom Law was amended to extend the prohibition of the importation, manufacturing, assembling telecommunication equipment without a permit, to also possessing, using, operating or installing or marketing any telecommunication equipment until after obtaining a permit from the relevant authorities, being the NTRA and national security authorities. It increased the penalty for the violation of such requirement to a financial penalty between 2 to 5 million Egyptian pounds.

It is worth noting that Egypt aims to be a significant information and communications technology hub in the Middle East and North Africa, with the New Administrative Capital (NAC) being built as one of the many smart-city projects that are attracting and simulating investments into 5G and fibre broadband in Egypt. This comes in addition to the adoption of many internet of things and artificial intelligence solutions. One of the largest telecom companies in Egypt, Etisalat, plans on launching 5G in the NAC. In 2022, it was reported that the 5G trials – that were supposed to be held in Egypt – mainly focused on the NAC.

Thanks to Egypt's strategic geographical position, the international cable infrastructure became an important asset to the country. In 2021, Telecom Egypt, Egypt's first integrated telecom operator and one of the largest subsea cable operators in the region, planned to launch Hybrid African Ring Path by 2023, which is a new subsea system that will encircle the African continent. The system will connect Africa's eastern and western bounds to Europe, spanning South Africa, Italy and France along the continent's east coast, and to Portugal along its west coast. Highly reliable terrestrial routes will connect the cable landing points

within South Africa, Europe and Egypt, forming a complete ring around the continent. It is worth noting that, the 2Africa Cable had already made landing at Telecom Egypt's cable landing station in Ras Ghareb on the eastern coast of Egypt in November 2022. The latest landing of 2Africa Cable was in Port Said, at the northern end of the Suez Canal on Egypt's Mediterranean coast in April 2023.

Furthermore, in January 2023, Telecom Egypt – in connection with Huawei Technologies, the world's leading provider of information and communication technology, infrastructure and smart devices – announced the activation of the first eco-friendly wireless network tower made of fibre-reinforced polymer. This deal has resulted in Telecom Egypt being the first telecom operator in Africa to activate and install such a tower. This green tower emits less CO2 and is more environmentally friendly while contributing to improving the signal quality in comparison to standard antennas.

In late 2023, Telecom Egypt signed an agreement with the Internet Corporation for Assigned Names and Numbers (ICANN) to install and operate the ICANN Managed Root Server in the Egyptian company's regional data hub to speed up internet in Egypt. According to Speedtest by Ookla, Egypt ranked 99th globally for mobile speed and 86th for fixed broadband speed during March 2024.

In March 2024, agreements were enforced by the Information Technology Industry Development Authority, the executive IT arm of the Ministry of Communication and Information Technology, Telecom Egypt and three private companies including El-Sewedy Electrometer, El-Araby and a consortium of Bio Business Company, and HitekNOFAL Optics for the local manufacturing of routers.

More recently, in late 2024 and early 2025, proposed measures were announced to restrict the import of mobile phones from abroad and encourage domestic products. The NTRA is considering implementing an application mechanism for the operation of imported mobile phones into Egypt starting from 2025 and providing customers a grace period to reconcile. Otherwise, imported mobile phones with serial numbers unregistered at the NTRA will cease to work.

Furthermore, a Wifi calling service that allows mobile phone calls to be made via fixed internet networks was rolled out more recently in Egypt, with the aim of enhancing call quality and telecom services purposes.

Law stated - 9 April 2025

MEDIA

Regulatory and institutional structure

Summarise the regulatory framework for the media sector in your jurisdiction.

The media sector is governed by various laws and regulations, including the following:

- Investment Law No. 72/2017 and its Executive Regulation (the Investment Law);
- Law No. 180/2018 regarding press, media and the Supreme Council of Media (SCoM) Regulation (the Media Law);

- Prime Minister Decree No. 411/2000 establishing the Media Public Free Zone (MPFZ); and
- SCoM Decree No. 26/2020, issuing the SCoM Licensing Regulation (the Media Licensing Regulation).

Most of the key media projects in Egypt operate inside the MPFZ, which is a public free zone governed by various directives of the Chairman of the General Authority for Investment (GAFI).

All projects operating under the Investment Law are qualified by a large number of investment incentives.

For any media project to be qualified for operation inside MPFZ, the project must, in general, take a specific legal form and must comply with the Arab Media Ethical Charter and MPFZ's Business Controls and Principles.

The services generally allowed to operate inside the MPFZ include, inter alia, radio, television, information broadcasting, e-content production and marketing. The MPFZ may also authorise hotels, banks and malls to operate inside the MPFZ to provide their services to the licensed media projects.

According to the Media Law and the Media Licensing Regulation, which was published on 13 May 2020, SCoM is empowered, inter alia, to:

- receive notification for establishing Egyptian newspapers or non-Egyptian newspapers that are issued or distributed in Egypt;
- grant licences to visual, audio or digital channels that are either registered in Egypt with GAFI or non-Egyptian channels that are being broadcast from Egypt;
- determine and apply the rules and requirements protecting the audience in Egypt;
- grant licences to broadcast relay stations, websites, digital and satellite platforms, fibre satellite distribution and content distribution;
- authorise the importation of satellite and internet broadcasting devices; and
- authorise the importation of non-Egyptian prints.

Law stated - 9 April 2025

Ownership restrictions

Do any foreign ownership restrictions apply to media services? Is the ownership or control of broadcasters otherwise restricted? Are there any regulations in relation to the cross-ownership of media companies, including radio, television and newspapers?

According to the Media Law and the Media Licensing Regulation, which was published on 13 May 2020, foreign ownership restrictions apply to holding the majority stake or any stake giving the right to manage any Egyptian satellite or terrestrial television, as well as any Egyptian digital, wired or wireless station. However, non-Egyptian satellite and terrestrial television as well as non-Egyptian digital, wired and wireless stations may be licensed to operate in Egypt, provided that an approval is obtained from the SCoM. This approval

requires, inter alia, operating inside a specific media area, the ability to block any content involving, inter alia, violence, suicide, self-harm or nudity.

According to the Media Law and Media Licensing Regulations, non-Egyptian shareholders of newspapers or media outlets, whether natural or legal persons, may not own a percentage of shares that entitles them to the right of management, nor may they dispose of the newspaper or a share thereof, in whole or in part, to third parties or merge with or into another entity without obtaining prior written approval from the SCoM.

Law stated - 9 April 2025

Licensing requirements

What are the licensing requirements for broadcasting, including the fees payable and the timescale for the necessary authorisations?

According to the Media Law and Media Licensing Regulation, which was published on 13 May 2020, a licence from the SCoM is required for any company to be in a position to operate a broadcast relay station in or to Egypt. This licence requires the following:

- payment of 250,000 Egyptian pounds to the SCoM;
- obtaining an approval from the National Telecommunication Regulatory Authority; and
- incorporation of a company in the form of a sole person company, limited liability company or joint-stock company with a minimum authorised capital of 5 million Egyptian pounds.

If the licence request is accepted, it should be valid for five years, renewable upon a request at least six months before the end of the said five years.

Law stated - 9 April 2025

Foreign programmes and local content requirements

Are there any regulations concerning the broadcasting of foreign-produced programmes? Do the rules require a minimum amount of local content? What types of media fall outside this regime?

According to the Media Law and the Media Licensing Regulation, which were published on 13 May 2020, a licence from the SCoM is required for any company to be in a position to operate and distribute recorded or live content in Egypt, whether through satellite or the internet. This licence requires the following:

- payment of 500,000 Egyptian pounds to the SCoM for the company and 50,000 Egyptian pounds for each website; and
- incorporation of a company in the form of a sole person company, limited liability company or joint-stock company with a minimum authorised capital of 50 million Egyptian pounds;

If the licence request is accepted, it should be valid for five years, renewable upon a request at least six months before the end of the said five years.

All content must, inter alia:

- comply with the Egyptian Constitution, applicable laws, regulations and professional codes and ethics; and
- be stored for at least one year and hosted by a server that is located at a secure location in Egypt, which location may not be changed without prior approval from the SCoM.

Law stated - 9 April 2025

Advertising

How is broadcast media advertising regulated? Is online advertising subject to the same regulation?

The Media Law and the Media Licensing Regulation, which were published on 13 May 2020, differentiate between Egyptian and non-Egyptian media advertising companies as follows:

For Egyptian media advertising companies:

- a licence is required from the SCoM;
- non-Egyptians may not hold any majority stake or any other stake that allows them to manage the company;
- the company must be incorporated in the form of a sole person company, a limited liability company or a joint-stock company with a minimum authorised capital of:
 - 100,000 Egyptian pounds for holding websites;
 - 5 million Egyptian pounds for general or news television stations;
 - 2 million Egyptian pounds for specialised television stations;
 - 15 million Egyptian pounds for each broadcasting station; and
 - 2.5 million Egyptian pounds for each electronic, television station or channel; and
- shareholders must subscribe to at least 35 per cent of the company's capital.

For non-Egyptian media advertising companies:

- an approval is required from the SCoM;
- this approval requires, inter alia, operating inside a specific media area, the availability of blocking any content involving, inter alia, violence, suicide, self-harm or nudity; and
- payment of the licensing fee as per the following table.

Fee (Egyptian pounds)	Type of media
One million	General and news media

500,000	Specialised media
100,000	general website
3 million	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • social networking or promoting an individual's websites; • audio, video and text service on demand websites; and • goods, products and services marketing websites.
100,000	Any other website

Law stated - 9 April 2025

Must-carry obligations

Are there regulations specifying a basic package of programmes that must be carried by operators' broadcasting distribution networks? Is there a mechanism for financing the costs of such obligations?

The Media Law and the Media Licensing Regulation, which were published on 13 May 2020, do not specify any must-carry obligations or a mechanism for financing the cost of such obligation.

Law stated - 9 April 2025

Regulation of new media content

Is new media content and its delivery regulated differently from traditional broadcast media? How?

New media content is subject to the same regulation as advertising.

Law stated - 9 April 2025

Digital switchover

When is the switchover from analogue to digital broadcasting required or when did it occur? How will radio frequencies freed up by the switchover be reallocated?

The digital switchover started in Egypt in 2013. The National Telecommunication Regulatory Authority (NTRA) is empowered under Telecommunication Regulation Law No. 10/2003 to reallocate and manage radio frequencies.

Law stated - 9 April 2025

Digital formats

Does regulation restrict how broadcasters can use their spectrum?

No.

Law stated - 9 April 2025

Media plurality

Is there any process for assessing or regulating media plurality (or a similar concept) in your jurisdiction? May the authorities require companies to take any steps as a result of such an assessment?

The Media Law and the Media Licensing Regulation, which were published on 13 May 2020, do not specify any process of media plurality in Egypt.

Law stated - 9 April 2025

Key trends and expected changes

Provide a summary of key emerging trends and hot topics in media regulation in your country.

The Media Licensing Regulation entered into force in Egypt on 14 May 2020. It does not involve any practice in Egypt yet, and includes several provisions that need clarification on how they will be applied in practice.

However, it is worth noting that, SCoM is currently drafting new legislation that would require social media platforms to obtain a licence to access mobile users in Egypt, as announced by the head of the SCoM Karam Gabr in January 2023.

Law stated - 9 April 2025

REGULATORY AGENCIES AND COMPETITION LAW

Regulatory agencies

Which body or bodies regulate the communications and media sectors? Is the communications regulator separate from the broadcasting or antitrust regulator? Are there mechanisms to avoid conflicting jurisdiction? Is there a specific mechanism to ensure the consistent application of competition and sectoral regulation?

According to Antitrust Law No. 3/2005, as amended (the Antitrust Law), the Egyptian Competition Authority (ECA) is the competent regulator for antitrust. However, there has

been a dispute between the ECA and the National Telecommunication Regulatory Authority (NTRA) regarding jurisdiction over any antitrust issue related to the telecoms sector.

Law No. 180/2018 regarding press, media and the Supreme Council of Media (SCoM) Regulation (the Media Law) also grants SCoM the power to guarantee freedom of competition and to prevent dominant practices within the media sector. This is similar to the provisions included in Telecommunication Regulation Law No. 10/2003 and, given that the Media Law was just issued, we are not sure if there will be a dispute between the ECA and the SCoM as there has been between the ECA and the NTRA.

However, in all cases, the Egyptian administrative litigation courts have the jurisdiction to order which authority is the competent one.

Law stated - 9 April 2025

Appeal procedure

How can decisions of the regulators be challenged and on what bases?

All decisions of the regulator are subject to the review of the administrative litigation courts if these decisions are not in line with the applicable laws or reasonable. The administrative litigation courts have the jurisdiction to assess the validity or legality of each decision.

Furthermore, in the case of a dispute between the NTRA and any licence, the licensee may resort to arbitration under most of the telecom licence agreements.

Law stated - 9 April 2025

Competition law developments

Describe the main competition law trends and key merger and antitrust decisions in the communications and media sectors in your jurisdiction over the past year.

In December 2022, the Antitrust Law was amended by Law No. 175 of 2022, whereby these amendments have replaced the post-notification regime of notifying certain transactions to the ECA within 30 days after entering into the transaction, to a pre-merger control system, whereby the ECA is given the authority to review and approve proposed mergers and acquisitions prior to entering into the transaction.

The new pre-merger control requires pre-approval from the ECA for transactions that constitute 'economic concentration' between the contracting parties (namely, a change in control or material influence of a person resulting from a merger, acquisition or joint venture).

It is worth noting that the amended Executive Regulations of the said amended Antitrust Law, were issued in early April 2024, whereby such amendments officially entered into force as of 1 June 2024, and the pre-approval from the ECA is now required for any transaction meeting the stipulated conditions.

In September 2021, the NTRA and the ECA signed a memorandum of understanding to form a joint executive committee to enhance free competition practices in Egypt's telecom market.

This cooperation reflects both authorities' interest and goals in the welfare of the telecom market and the consumer in Egypt.

This cooperation would create and provide companies operating in the telecom sector with a fair environment, which would enable such companies to operate on a non-discriminatory basis. Furthermore, the NTRA would be enabled to communicate better with the ECA, therefore positively impacting the control of anti-competitive practices that could harm the telecom industry in Egypt as well as attracting further investments via the expertise exchanged between both authorities.

Moreover, cooperation between the ECA and NTRA will take place through the exchange of technical support provisions as well as the standardisation of methods of economic and legal analysis conducted in the telecom sector, especially those related to the definition of the relevant market and different means of control of practices that might harm free competition. In addition, the ECA aims to restrict any decrees or policies that may harm competition in the telecom sector to ensure competitive impartiality.

Law stated - 9 April 2025