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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 the crossroads between East and West, making the country a significant player in international trade across the Middle East and Africa. Egypt is home to the Suez Canal, which connects the Mediterranean Sea to 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 exceeded 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%), Giza (9%) and Sharqiyya (7.5%).

The Egyptian government has actively sought to attract more foreign direct investment (FDI) into the country. In 2025, Egypt was ranked ninth among global source and destination economies for FDI according to the UN Trade and Development in its world investment report. In 2025, Egypt was a principal driver in the growth of greenfield project value, recording a 30% increase in its value along with a 4% rise in the number of projects. It is also worth noting that Egypt was ranked just outside the top 10 primary destinations for digital economy greenfield projects in 2025, while leading in Africa.

Furthermore, Egypt has witnessed a growth in gross domestic product of 5.3% in Q1 of the fiscal year of 2025-26, as reported by London-based Big Four accountancy firm PwC. Domestic and intra-regional transactions were the primary drivers of M&A activity in 2025, with Egypt completing 172 transactions in 2025, as reported by PwC in early 2026.

Additionally, as reported by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development in 2025, smart cities use digital technologies to boost citizen well-being and deliver more efficient, sustainable and inclusive services and environments. Accordingly, Egypt is increasingly adopting strategies to develop smart cities to modernise infrastructure systems and improve the quality of life, whereby Egypt stands out for its large-scale investments in the construction of new smart cities such as the New Administrative Capital and New Alamein, whose efforts are supported by, inter alia, technology firms.

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 shortages and the threat of potential recession, Egypt has maintained relative financial resilience supported by FDI inflows.

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;
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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 Regulations;
- Economic Courts Law No. 120/2008;
- Anti-Cybercrime Law No. 175/2018 (the 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 communications 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;
- the Personal Data Protection Centre, which is empowered by the Data Protection Law to, inter alia, ensure the protection of personal data of natural persons in Egypt and cooperating with relevant entities to ensure compliance and guarantee that proper measures are implemented and required licences or permits are obtained; and
- the Economic Court has executive jurisdiction over Telecoms Law-related disputes.

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 telecommunications network, provide telecommunications services to third parties, or 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 categories of telecom services and includes a limited 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
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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 defined and limited 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 covered by the licence.

The NTRA applies different fee structures 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% 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% 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% of the total annual revenues; •

	<p>a licence burden annual fee of 1,000 Egyptian pounds plus the inflation rate declared by the CBE;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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% 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% 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% 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% of the total annual revenues; • a licence burden annual fee of 10,000 Egyptian pounds plus the

	<p>inflation rate declared by the CBE; and</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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% 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% 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% 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 transferable or assignable, whether fully or partly, under the Telecoms Law unless prior approval is obtained from the NTRA. Also, all licence agreements include a change of control restrictions, 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 statements including, inter alia, appointing an auditor other than the licensee's auditor to review the said financial statements. Furthermore, each licensee is required to obtain an approval from the NTRA before applying or modifying tariffs.

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 not to favour one service over another. 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 pursuant to the NTRA's instructions, the ITU's recommendation or international standards, the relevant operator shall comply with such requirement.

The first time the NTRA introduced structural or functional separation was in respect of Telecom Egypt to ensure its compliance with non-discrimination obligations.

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 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 transferred to the Universal Service Fund must be utilised for, inter alia:

- infrastructure projects required for establishing the universal service;
- reallocation of the frequency spectrum; and
- indemnifying telecom services operators and providers for price differences between the approved economic 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 is assigned dedicated number ranges identified by the 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 switch between operators without losing their numbers. This regulation includes several mandatory terms and conditions applicable 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 provided under the customer agreement;
- the confidentiality requirement relating to the customers' data and communications;
- the terms of payment including interest, administrative fees, tax and any other charges;
- the duration of the agreement and renewal terms;
- 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 telecom 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 accessible from Egypt or abroad if that website contains any statements, digits, images, videos or any other advertising material that is deemed a criminal content under the Anti-Cybercrime Law. This blockage is subject to judicial review within 24 hours of issuance of the blocking decision.

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 prior 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 in Egypt.

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. Any processing or controlling requires, inter alia, obtaining a licence or permit from the Data Protection Centre in Egypt.

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

- saved by natural persons for third parties and 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. Accordingly, the Executive Regulations of the Data Protection Law have been issued in November 2025 by virtue of Decree No. 816 of 2025, and have become effective as of 2 November 2025.

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 data, 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 specific regulation yet for governing big data. However, it is within the NTRA's ongoing strategy to regulate this area.

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 entities subject to the supervision of the CBE and the Egyptian supervisory authority, to have all advertising materials, data, information,

documents, invoices, receipts, and contracts including e-documents, provided to consumers to be in Arabic or in bilingual or multilingual form, providing that Arabic must be included as one of the 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 on the importation, manufacturing, or assembly of telecommunications equipment without a permit, to also include the possession, use, operation, installation or marketing of any telecommunications 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 million Egyptian pounds 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 stimulating 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 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.

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 Wi-Fi 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.

In 2025, the NTRA introduced new measures in order to combat spam calls and enhance transparency and reduce nuisance calls, by launching caller ID for phones to display the caller's identity including promotional callers, and showcasing the name of the calling entity, as well as the caller's role or occupation within the organisation. Furthermore, the NTRA started to suspend any device using unregistered lines to make promotional calls.

In June 2025, the NTRA officially launched 5G mobile services in Egypt, with the four mobile network operators, Vodafone Egypt, Orange Egypt, e& Egypt and Telecom Egypt offering the service to their customers after investing approximately US\$2.7 billion in 5G spectrum and licences since 2019. The Minister of Communications and Information Technology stressed that 5G technology will transform and boost ongoing digital transformation and improve the telecom sector in Egypt.

More recently, in early 2026, the Prime Minister witnessed the signing of the largest frequency deal in the history of the telecom sector since the introduction of mobile services in Egypt, for the allocation of radio spectrum and providing new frequency bands available to the four telecom operators, with the deal totalling US\$3.5 billion. The size of the newly allocated frequency bands is equivalent to the total size of spectrum that was assigned to mobile operators since the introduction of mobile services in Egypt, as reported by the NTRA. This expansion adds to what was achieved in June 2025 with the launch of 5G services, ensuring the readiness of networks to accommodate future applications.

The Minister of Planning, Economic Development, and International Cooperation, Dr Rania Al-Mashat, emphasised in 2025 that as the ICT sector is crucial in Egypt to facilitate the adoption of big data, cloud computing and artificial intelligence across all sectors, as part of the 2025-26 plan, 13 billion Egyptian pounds in public investments will be directed towards the ICT sector. The Minister highlighted that the 2025-26 plan aims to boost Egypt's total annual digital exports to US\$ 8.5 billion, of which US\$ 6 billion will come from outsourcing services.

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 eligible for a wide range of investment incentives.

For any media project eligible to operate 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 authorised 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 prior 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 an application submitted 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 authorised 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.

Furthermore, a licence is required to be obtained from the Ministry of Culture for the display or broadcast of audio or audio-visual works in public places, or distributing, renting, trading or offering them for sale, as per the Law No. 430 of 1955 regarding the censorship of movies and works.

Any such audio, audio-visual works, whether performed live, fixed, recorded on tapes, discs, or any other technical means, shall be subject to censorship for the protection of public order, morals and the interests of the state.

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 exercise management control over 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% of the company's capital.

For non-Egyptian media advertising companies:

- 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
1 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

The SCoM has also issued a number of regulations and codes regulating the principles and ethics to be adhered to by media institutions, and governing the advertisement of certain products or services, including, inter alia, the advertisement of health and medical products or services, food products, competitions, and codes on the protection of intellectual property rights.

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 obligations.

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 advertisements

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 is empowered under Telecommunications 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 framework governing 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 appear to have been fully implemented in practice to date, 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 issues or matters 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 unreasonable. 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 licensee, the licensee may resort to arbitration under most of the telecom licence agreements.

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 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 (ie, 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 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.

Furthermore, in 2023, the NTRA and ECA met with real estate developers and mobile operators in the presence of New Urban Communities Authority's representatives to discuss governance and regulation of telecom services for the dwellers of closed urban compounds following complaints about the limited choice presented at such compounds. The outcome of the meeting made certain that guidelines were to be implemented by real estate developers and telecom operators to undertake comprehensive measures within such compounds to ensure the users' freedom of choice when selecting their most suitable operator, in compliance with Telecommunication Regulation Law No. 10/2003 (the Telecoms Law) and the Antitrust Law.

