

## Egypt

### **EU engagement to date**

Currently, at EU level, there is no cooperation instrument or process in place dedicated to readmission. The EU-Egypt Association Agreement, which refers to readmission obligations of own nationals, entered into force in June 2004. The EU deployed in 2019 a EURLO in Cairo to support operational cooperation in identification and returns.

### **Cooperation on readmission**

In 2019, 6 020 Egyptian nationals illegally staying in the Member States were issued return decisions and 995 effectively returned to Egypt resulting in a **return rate** of 17%. Member States submitted 745 readmission requests to Egyptian authorities, who issued 117 travel documents resulting in an **issuance rate** of 16%.

A total of 20 Member States reported having approached the authorities of Egypt for readmission matters related to its nationals in 2019.

Two Member States reported having **bilateral agreements/arrangements** in place with Egypt, whose relevant provisions are in one case always/almost always respected and in the other case often respected.

Half of the responding Member States assess the overall cooperation with Egypt in the **identification procedure** as good to very good. It is average for five Member States, where almost two-thirds of all Egyptian nationals ordered to leave are to be found.

This is reflected in more than half of the responding Member States having an established business routine for cooperation on identification, which is in two-thirds of the cases often to always effectively implemented.

For three quarters of responding Member States consular interviews are often or always performed upon their request, with, on average, acceptable or very satisfactory outcomes for half of the responding Member States.

However Egyptian authorities always or often requested interviews in cases where sufficient evidences to establish nationality was already provided (e.g. valid or expired travel documents) from over half of the Member States.

For half of the responding Member States, accounting for 45% of the return decisions issued to Egyptian nationals, the **issuance of travel documents** often to always takes place in a timely manner. It is rarely to never the case according to eight Member States, where half of all Egyptian nationals ordered to leave are present.

Four Member States report that returns by **charter flights** are accepted and one that they are not. Eight of the responding Member States report restrictions in case of returns by **scheduled flights**. In all cases this concerns visas for escorts.

## RESTREINT UE/EU RESTRICTED

In general, Member States have assessed the **overall cooperation on return and readmission** as mainly stable. It has improved according to three Member States and deteriorated according to two.

*With a total of 6 020 Egyptian nationals ordered to leave in 2019, Egypt ranks 19<sup>th</sup> amongst visa-bound third countries whose nationals have been issued return decisions in the Member States. Overall, two thirds of Member States interact with Egypt on readmission and two have bilateral agreements whose provisions are respected. No jointly agreed procedures are in place at EU level, however a readmission routine is in place for more than half of the Member States. This routine delivers mixed results with average performance on identification and no timely issuance of travel documents for Member States representing half of the return decisions issued. For a more effective and predictable readmission cooperation, the better cooperation practices would need to be extended to all Member States. Identification processes would need to be expedited and followed through swiftly with issuing travel documents, also without interviews for documented cases. Clear, agreed procedures would provide for a more predictable and efficient process and the EURLO in Cairo could support such process. Further improvements could be envisaged by accepting charter flights from all requesting Member States. This should result in a better rate of issuance of travel documents and a higher return rate.*