





## **Preamble**

This report documents one of the most important events witnessed by Egypt in recent years: the 2015 House of Representatives (HoR) elections, the conclusion of establishing the State's constitutional institutions, as well as the completion of the political roadmap developed by the Egyptian people following the June 2013 revolution. Moreover, this election marked the end of an era and laid down the foundation for a future where the Egyptian people's aspirations for a strong, safe country that is heading towards progress and growth can be realized. With this, Egypt can retrieve its rightful place and leading role among civilized countries.

We hope that this report will help researchers, and those interested in Egypt's parliamentary life, quench their thirst for knowledge and find answers to their unanswered questions, thus adding a new brick to the body of accumulated knowledge and helping new generations.

God bless our efforts,

Chairman of the High Elections Committee  
President of Cairo Court of Appeal  
Judge/ Ayman Abbas  
Member of the Supreme Judiciary Council

**This is an unofficial English translation of the original text in Arabic.  
In case of any discrepancy between the English and Arabic versions, the Arabic text prevails.**



## Introduction

Egypt was one of the first countries that introduced a parliamentary system. Two centuries ago, in 1428, Egypt established a 24-member Supreme Council. While some of these members were elected, the remaining members were appointed by virtue of their positions. Throughout its long history, Egypt's parliamentary life witnessed many ups and downs.

One of the most important milestones in the history of Egypt's parliamentary system was the adoption of the bicameral parliament system (Senate and House of Representatives) after the 1923 Constitution came into force. However, following the July 1952 Revolution, the 1956 Constitution once again adopted the unicameral parliament system (Maglis al-Umma, i.e. "*Council of the Nation*"). In 1980, the constitutional legislature re-adopted the bicameral parliament system (People's Assembly and Shura Council), which remained in force until it was revoked by the 2014 Constitution that instituted a unicameral parliament system (House of Representatives).

The 2015 HoR elections were conducted according to the rules set by the High Elections Committee (HEC), which constituted the framework governing the HEC's work. During the elections, the HEC was committed to ensuring that laws and decrees were applied to all electoral stakeholders without exception, court rulings were enforced no matter how they were perceived, and the electoral procedures and decrees were announced with transparency and clarity. Moreover, the HEC has always been keen on facilitating the procedures for electoral stakeholders and introducing all the necessary technical developments for improving performance and speeding up the implementation of procedures. As a result, the HEC's methodology ensured that elections were successfully conducted.

This report will document the procedures, proceedings, challenges, and results of these very important elections. These elections are linked to the founding of the House of Representatives that concludes the political roadmap of the nation, as well as the constitutional institutions of the country.

This report will include an introduction to the HEC and the General Secretariat, which is the body responsible for managing the electoral process, as well as details on its members and authorities. This report will also provide information on the HEC's legal framework, the procedures in preparation for this election, the operations conducted during the election days, and the results.

This report will also present the vision and feedback (both positive and negative) of local and foreign organizations and delegations that observed the elections, as well as the results of electoral polls which reflect the opinions and trends of voters.

This report will highlight the role that information technology (IT) played in the elections, including the automation of some procedures as well as the output of statistics and analysis of recorded data.



Additionally, the report sheds light on a pioneer example in these elections pertaining to the in-take and archiving procedures of electoral documents.

A section of this report is dedicated to women's participation to highlight the importance of their role, as they constitute half the population and enjoy affirmative action in parliamentary councils (quotas). Hence, women should play a role that is commensurate with such importance and should be encouraged to unleash their potential and efforts in service of their country.

The HEC is keen in this report to reveal its allocated finances, illustrate the expenditures incurred by each court and governorate, and lay out the expenditures of printing and publication.

The report concludes with a number of challenges and recommendations, and presents the lessons learned from this experience so that the National Electoral Authority (NEA) would not have to start from scratch.

### **Report Methodology:**

Upon the conclusion of the 2015 HoR elections and the announcement of the successful formation of the HoR composed of elected members (568 members), the Chairman of the HEC issued a decree establishing a committee to develop a general draft report on these legislative elections, named the "Report Committee". This committee was tasked with accurately documenting all the details of the 2015 HoR elections, being one of the most important events in the history of Egypt's contemporary political life. This draft report was then submitted to the HEC for issuance, for the purpose of creating an honest reference and being a substantive addition to Egypt's accumulated resources on electoral experience.

Upon its establishment, the "Report Committee" met and set an action plan and implementation timeline. The committee then assigned roles and responsibilities to its members, who held meetings on a bi-monthly basis, then on a weekly basis starting early 2016, until the completion of the Draft Report at the end of May of that year.

Since the very beginning, the "Report Committee" realized the crucial significance of this report and decided to adopt a methodology that is in line with such importance. Accordingly, the Committee gathered information, data, and statistics from reliable and informed sources, such as reports issued by relevant entities (e.g. civil society organizations, delegations, international missions). The HEC's website served as a primary source of data and statistics. Other sources were also used for the development of the report, such as State Council's courts' rulings and official papers issued by competent committees and other entities supporting the HEC.

The Report Committee covered the events which took place during the election period without exaggeration or understatement. In doing so, the Committee relied upon the documentation of events and accurate statistics.

Additionally, the "Report Committee" covered the new achievements, procedures that were upgraded, as well as the practical challenges and difficulties which cannot be ignored or overlooked. The ultimate goal of this report is to provide an honest



evaluation of this electoral experience, in order to benefit from the positive aspects and avoid the negative ones in the upcoming elections.

### **Communicating with the Media**

Prior to polling, communication between the HEC and the media occurred through daily press releases that were electronically sent to media personnel registered with the General Secretariat. Communication also took place through live meetings with the Official Spokesman of the HEC every Thursday morning, during which time he responded to enquiries by Radio or TV programs to the extent possible. The HEC Spokesman also participated in seminars and educational meetings on elections, as well as press interviews.

During polling days, the HEC Spokesman held two aired press interviews on a daily basis; the first was held at the end of the first half of the Election Day at 2:30 PM, and the second was at the end of the second half of the Election Day at 9:00 PM. These interviews aimed at reviewing all the events that took place during that Election Day. At the end of each round, results were announced by the Chairman of the HEC in a press conference.

### **Cooperation with the HEC**

The roles of all entities that took part in this major event must be documented, as all the State's institutions, without exception, have worked on the accurate and timely implementation of the HEC's decisions; specifically, the ministries of Defense (MoD), Interior (MoI), Foreign Affairs (MoFA), Finance (MoF), Communications (MCIT), State for Administrative Development (MSAD), Local Development (MoLD), and the State Information Service (SIS).

Moreover, the Supreme Judiciary Council (SJC), the Special Council for each of the following: State Council, the Administrative Prosecution Authority, and the State Litigation Authority cooperated with the HEC which led to facilitating its work.

The International Foundation for Electoral Systems (IFES) and the International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance (IDEA) took part in financing some activities such as training costs and the procurement of logistical materials (e.g. serially numbered plastic seals, poll workers vests). Additionally, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) financed the procurement of bags used for archiving, as well as other electoral tools and devices including the servers used to host the voter database and the HEC's website.

### **Honorary Board:**

Throughout these elections, the Egyptian people made various sacrifices. All participants in these elections handled difficulties and overcame obstacles; they were not intimidated by the two horrific road accidents that resulted in the martyrdom of Judge/ Saber Saied Salama and Judge/ Haytham Ahmed el-Qott, of the State Litigation Authority, nor were they threatened by the terrorist attack that led to the martyrdom of Judge/ Omar Mohamed Hammad, of the State Council, and Prosecutor/ Amr Mostafa Hosni, of the Public Prosecutor's Office. Many others were also injured



in this terrorist attack which targeted the hotel where judges supervising elections in the city of Arish, in North Sinai, were staying.

The Egyptian people joined hands and residents of the valley, residents of Sinai, the army, the military, the police, and the judiciary united their efforts to hold elections on schedule. This was done in accordance with the Constitution and law to uphold the State's sovereignty over all Egyptian territories no matter what the sacrifices were.

Elections were held in all constituencies. The HEC announced the names of the (568) elected members of the HoR, which is the number of members set by law.



## **Chapter 1: Introducing the HEC and the General Secretariat**

Article (228) of the 2014 Constitution tasked the HEC with the full supervision of the first legislative elections following the effective date of the Constitution. This is in accordance with the Constitutional Article (102) which lays down the minimum number of HoR members, sets out some candidacy requirements, and allows the President of the Republic to appoint no more than 5% of the HoR members.

### **I: The HEC:**

Introducing the HEC requires a detailed explanation of its composition, as well as the authorities granted to it by law.

#### **Composition of the HEC:**

According to Article (4) of Decree Law #45/2014, the HEC shall be composed of a chairman and six (6) members as follows:

- President of the Cairo Court of Appeal;
- The two most senior Deputies of the President of the Court of Cassation;
- The two most senior Deputies of the President of the State Council; and
- The two most senior Presidents of Courts of Appeals following the President of the Cairo Court of Appeal in order of seniority.

Presidential Decree #231/2014 on HEC formation, for the period starting from 12/07/2014 till 09/08/2015 was promulgated.

Then, Presidential Decree #232/2014 amending the HEC formation was promulgated on 11/08/2015.

Finally, Presidential Decree #422/2015 amending the HEC formation was promulgated and declared effective until the end of the elections, as follows:





Chairman and members of the HEC for the 2015 Parliamentary elections, and the HEC spokesman.

#### **HEC Chairman:**

Judge/ Ayman Mahmoud Kamel Abbass, the President of the Cairo Court of Appeal.

#### **HEC Members:**

Councilor/ Mostafa Gamal Eldin Mohamed Shafiq, Deputy of the President of the Court of Cassation

Councilor/ Mohamed Adel Elshorbagi Ramzy Elsayed Elshorbagi, Deputy of the President of the Court of Cassation

Councilor/ Mohamed Ibrahim Qeshta, First Deputy of the President of the State Council

Councilor/ Mahmoud Ismail Raslan, Deputy of the President of the State Council

Councilor/ Serry Mohamed Badawy Elgamal, the President of Alexandria Court of Appeal

Councilor/ Ahmed Sabry Yussef Mahmoud, the President of Tanta Court of Appeal

#### **HEC Authorities:**

According to Article (7) of Decree Law #45/2014, the HEC shall be responsible for the following:



1. Issuing Internal Regulations for itself, as well as for the General Secretariat and the Committees provided for under this Law;
2. Providing opinion with regards to draft laws related to legislative elections;
3. Overseeing registration in the voters' database, and its periodical update, amendment and filtration;
4. Calling for legislative elections, in accordance with the provisions provided for under the Constitution as related to calling voters;
5. Specifying the dates of, and establishing a timeline for the elections;
6. Establishing all the rules and procedures of elections and referenda in such a manner as to ensure the safety of such procedures, their impartiality and integrity;
7. Putting in place regulations for the gradual shift to automatic or electronic voting;
8. Putting in place and implementing a system for the determination of symbols referring to candidates, provided that such system is impartial and warrants equality and equal opportunity;
9. Providing Egyptian civil society organizations, foreign or international bodies, and media outlets with permits to observe elections and referendum processes. The HEC may determine these organizations, based on their main licensed activities;
10. Establishing and determining the headquarters of the General Committees and Polling Stations provided for under this Law;
11. Appointing secretaries and substitutes for General Committees and polling stations;
12. Issuing the necessary decrees to maintain order during the legislative election and referendum; and
13. Announcing the results of the election or referendum.

## **II: The General Secretariat:**

The General Secretariat is the executive body tasked with the implementation of the HEC decrees and instructions, the examination and preparation of paperwork, and the grievances that must be presented for taking action.

Referring to the General Secretariat, Article (11) of Decree Law #45/2014 states:

“The Chairman of the HEC shall form a permanent General Secretariat to be referred to in this Law as the “General Secretariat”, of which composition shall comprise one of the Deputies of the President of the Court of Cassation, or someone of similar rank, as its Head; and the membership of a sufficient number of judges, or judicial officers of similar rank, from among the members of the Judicial Authorities and Bodies, upon the approval of their respective High Councils, and representatives of the relevant Ministries as specified by the HEC who are selected by the competent Ministers.

The Chairman of the Committee may request the seconding of any civil servant or expert to assist in any of the matters of the General Secretariat.

In all cases and throughout the duration of the secondment, the entity from which such person is seconded shall be responsible for all financial



remunerations that are due to the seconded person as if that person is still working for it”.



Members of the General Secretariat

**- Report Committee:**

HEC Decree #50/2015 was issued for the establishment of a Committee to be responsible for developing a report on the HoR elections which ended in December 2015. This Committee shall be chaired by the HEC Spokesman Judge/ Omar Marwan and shall comprise the following members:

1. Councilor/ Nady Mohamed Abdel Latif
2. Councilor/ Mohamed Mahmoud Raslan
3. Councilor/ Abdel Salam Mahmoud Abdel Salam
4. Judge/ Yasser Elsayed Elma'abdi
5. Judge/ Ahmed Mohamed Ref'at Qassem
6. Judge/ Ahmed Mostafa Sohiem
7. Engineer/ Sayed Ramadan Mohamed
8. Engineer/ Mona Hatem Mohamed

Such members shall be assisted by a number of the administrative staff at the General Secretariat.

Article (3) of the aforementioned Decree stipulates that the Draft Report shall be presented to the HEC for necessary action.



## **Chapter 2: Laws and Decrees Governing the Electoral Process**

In this section, an overview of the most important laws and decrees governing the electoral process is provided, taking into consideration that the full text is available on the HEC's website and is also published in the Official Gazette.

### **I: Laws:**

The electoral process is governed by three basic laws, as follows:

Decree Law #45/2014 on the Regulation of the Exercise of Political Rights, amended by Decree Law #92/2015;

Decree Law #46/2014 on the House of Representatives, amended by Decree Law #92/2015; and

Decree Law #202/2014 on Boundary Delimitation of the House of Representatives Election, amended by Decree Law #88/2015.

The provisions of Decree Law (#202/2014) stipulated that the Arab Republic of Egypt shall be divided into 205 constituencies assigned for the Individual System; and 4 constituencies for the List System.

In its session dated 17/03/2015, the Administrative Court issued a ruling on Lawsuits No. 24178 and 26447 of the Judicial Year No. 69, annulling HEC Decree #1/2015 calling voters to elect members of the HoR and all consequences resulting therefrom. This Court ruling is based on the Supreme Constitutional Court (SCC) ruling issued in its session dated 01/03/2015 on Lawsuits No. 15 and 17 of the judicial constitutional year No. 37. This ruling declared Article (3) of Presidential Decree Law # 202/2014 on the boundary delimitation of the House of Representatives Elections as unconstitutional, specifically as applicable to the individual system and the attached annexed table (first) on the individual system. The SCC ruling on those two lawsuits was published in the Official Gazette on 01/03/2015. As a result, Decree Law #88/2015 amending Decree Law # 202/2014 was promulgated. This new Decree Law stipulated that the Arab Republic of Egypt shall be divided into 205 constituencies assigned for the Individual System. However, the remaining four constituencies assigned to the List System remained as is upon the rejection of the challenge filed against their constitutionality.

In addition, in its session dated 07/09/2015, the Administrative Court issued a ruling on Lawsuit No. 67959 of the Judicial Year No. 69 suspending the implementation of the Cabinet's (the General Secretariat) Decree published in the Official Gazette Issue No. 29, dated 16/07/2015, and annulling the amendment of Table "I" attached to Decree Law #88/2015 together with all consequences resulting therefrom.

The HEC issued Decree 86/2015 to enforce this ruling.

### **II: HEC Decrees:**

The HEC issued (134) decrees on the electoral process.



The HEC and its Chairman thereof issued decrees on the formation of specialized committees under the General Secretariat. Such decrees detail the competencies and roles of such specialized committees, which are grouped into two categories as follows:

**I: Specialized Committees Established by Law:**

Governorate Election Committees, governorate-level Candidacy Application Examination Committees, Voter Database Update Committee, Governorate-level Committees Reviewing Registration in the Voter Database, Electoral Campaigning Monitoring Committees, Media Coverage Monitoring Committee, General Committees, Polling Stations, Out-of-Country-Voting (OCV) Committees.

**II: Committees Established Pursuant to Decrees by the Chairman of the HEC:**

Judiciary Database Committee, Administrative Staff Database Committee, Polling Venues Committee, Electoral Symbols Committee, Appeals and Complaints Committee, CSOs Committee, Website Committee, Grievances Committee, Manual Development Committee, Training Committee, Work Progress in Governorates Committee, Operations Room Committee, OCV Monitoring Committee, Archiving Committee.



## **Chapter 3: Preparation for Polling**

The 2015 HoR elections were held over two phases according to the schedule announced by the HEC. The HoR electoral process commenced on 01/09/2015 with joint procedures for the submission of candidacy applications. The deadline for submission was initially 12/09/2015, but it was extended for three additional days till 15/09/2015 so that candidates can submit their medical reports. Three days later, the list of accepted applicants was announced and applicants were given a chance to file their appeals until 18/09/2015. Following that, a period of 5 days starting from 19/09/2015 until 27/09/2015, including Eid al-Adha Holiday, was dedicated to deciding on the filed appeals.

Upon the conclusion of the joint procedures, each electoral round was assigned its own schedule. The first phase began on 28/09/2015 and ended on 30/10/2015 in Giza, Fayoum, Beni Suef, Minya, Assuit, New Valley, Souhag, Qena, Luxor, Aswan, Red Sea, Alexandria, Beheira and Marsa Matrouh governorates for the individual system, and in the North, Center and South of Upper Egypt and the West Delta constituencies for the list system. The second phase of elections started on 02/11/2015 and ended on 04/12/2015 in Cairo, Qalyubia, Dakahlia, Menoufia, Gharbia, Kafr el-Sheikh, Sharqia, Damietta, Port Said, Ismailia, Suez, North Sinai and South Sinai governorates for the individual system, and the Cairo sector, South and the Center of Delta as well as the East Delta constituencies for the list system.

In the four constituencies of Damanhour, Al-Raml, Beni Suef and Al-Wasta, the procedures of the first round of elections were annulled and thus run-off elections were held from 04/12/2015 until 18/12/2015.

The electoral process includes numerous steps preceding Election Day, the first of which is preparing the voter database. These steps come to an end on the day election silence begins. There are other steps which take place in between the abovementioned ones, the most significant of which will be explored accordingly.

### **1- Voter Database**

The Ministry of State for Administrative Development (MSAD) implements a work cycle which begins with receiving information on the National ID Database from the Civil Affairs Organization; information on acquired citizenship from the Passports and Nationality Administration; information on citizens granted an exemption from voting from the Ministries of Interior and Defense (MoI and MoD); and information from the General Prosecutor regarding persons having received a sentence resulting in their deprivation of the right to participate in the political life or information from the Ministry of Health regarding those who suffer from an illness preventing them from exercising their political life. Electoral rolls were then prepared in light of the abovementioned data as illustrated in the figure below.

**By 30/08/2015, i.e. the deadline for voter registration for HoR elections, the voter database nation-wide was as follows:**



### A) Age Groups:

Age	18-20	21-25	26-30	31-35	36-40	41-45	46-50	Above 50	Total
<b>Total</b>	3,789,028	7,300,035	8,368,593	7,143,492	5,892,199	4,615,039	4,341,913	14,156,279	55,606,578

### B) Gender-based Distribution of Voters:

Round	Governorate	Males	Females	Total
1	Giza	2,507,999	2,348,579	4,856,578
1	Alexandria	1,837,764	1,776,885	3,614,649
1	Beheira	1,779,411	1,749,073	3,528,484
1	Minya	1,535,734	1,438,915	2,974,649
1	Souhag	1,385,210	1,270,072	2,655,282
1	Assuit	1,238,217	1,129,120	2,367,337
1	Qena	887,607	881,342	1,768,949
1	Fayoum	916,813	796,519	1,713,332
1	Beni Suef	837,565	761,050	1,598,615
1	Aswan	461,634	461,507	923,141
1	Luxor	375,473	364,296	739,769
1	Red Sea	161,346	103,401	264,747
1	Marsa Matrouh	138,612	101,755	240,367
1	New Valley	81,461	74,993	156,454
<b>Total (Phase 1)</b>		<b>14,144,846</b>	<b>13,257,507</b>	<b>27,402,353</b>
2	Cairo	3,592,393	3,450,348	7,042,741
2	Dakahlia	1,992,635	1,959,729	3,952,364
2	Sharqia	1,977,887	1,913,275	3,891,162
2	Gharbia	1,550,188	1,578,946	3,129,134
2	Qalyubia	1,420,582	1,428,083	2,848,665
2	Menoufia	1,195,877	1,207,264	2,403,141
2	Kafr el-Sheikh	1,014,073	1,014,360	2,028,433
2	Damietta	476,089	454,880	930,969
2	Ismailia	396,355	385,172	781,527
2	Port Said	233,604	236,604	470,208
2	Suez	207,087	206,506	413,593
2	North Sinai	122,518	112,117	234,635
2	South Sinai	46,957	30,696	77,653
<b>Total (Phase 2)</b>		<b>14,226,245</b>	<b>13,977,980</b>	<b>28,204,225</b>
<b>Overall Total</b>		<b>28,371,091</b>	<b>27,235,487</b>	<b>55,606,578</b>

### C) Number of Voters Belonging to Certain Age Groups:

Age	18 Years	19 Years	75 Years	> 75	Total (Governorate)
<b>Total</b>	<b>904,468</b>	<b>1,470,032</b>	<b>215,896</b>	<b>1,565,560</b>	<b>4,155,956</b>



### Statistics of voting in Suez:

Governorate	Constituency	Round	18-20 y/o	21-30 y/o	31-40 y/o	41-50 y/o	51-60 y/o	61-70 y/o	Above 70 y/o	Total
Suez	Suez	Round 1	2,578	14,270	16,153	13,544	14,645	9,496	3,657	74,342
		Run- off	1,769	10,934	11,140	8,404	8,627	5,271	2,300	48,444

### The following observations should be noted:

1. Table (A) shows the number of voters by 5-year age groups. In other sections, another table uses 10-year age groups.
2. The number of female voters in Gharbia, Qalyubia, Menoufia, Kafr el-Sheikh, and Port Said governorates is larger than that of male voters.
3. The number of male voters is larger than that of female voters in all the governorates of Phase 1.
4. The percentage of male voters in Phase 1 is 51.6% and 48.4% for female voters.
5. The percentage of male voters in Phase 2 is 50.4% and 49.6% for female voters.
6. Table (C) shows the number of voters of ages 18 and 19 as well as 75 and above, which are the lowest percentage of voter turnout in light of Out-Of-Country Voting (OCV) statistics and voting statistics in certain governorates including Suez. This can be attributed to the fact that people within the said age groups are not interested in voting or are unable to do so. The percentage of these groups in the voter database is approximately 7.5% (4,155,956 voters out of 55,606,578 voters).

### 1- Polling Centers, General Committees and Polling Stations:

Polling centers are locations which contain a number of polling stations, and they were selected based on field visits. Field visits were implemented- at the police station level- to determine how suitable polling centers were in terms of their security and construction. This was conducted in cooperation with the General Department for Elections as well as Security Directorates. The number of polling centers reached 11,081 nationwide.

#### General Committees:

There is a general committee for each electoral constituency with a total of 205 general committees. Each general committee is responsible for supervising the polling stations within its electoral constituency. The general committee consists of members of judicial bodies and authorities. Members of a general committee usually range from 11 to 15, depending on the specific circumstances of each electoral constituency.

#### Polling Stations:

Polling stations are the stations in which voters are allocated. Often, polling stations are located in schools, clubs and other public establishments. Each polling station is



headed by a member of a judicial body or authority. A single member may head more than one polling station provided that all of them are in the same place without any separations.

Each general committee or polling station has one or more primary secretaries and a sufficient number of substitutes from among civil servants provided that they include at least one woman as a member.

### **3- Voter Allocation:**

The HEC instructed that all those who are entitled to vote should be assigned to the nearest polling center to their place of residence to the extent possible. The HEC instructed that the number of polling stations be increased to prevent overcrowding. Based on that, electoral rolls were printed out with a total number of 5,572,446 pages.

### **4- Distribution of Judges over General Committees and Polling Stations:**

Under Article (210) of the Constitution, members of judicial bodies and authorities are mandated to fully supervise elections in the 10 years following the date on which the Constitution comes into effect. In line with this, Article (40) of Law No. 45/2014 on the Regulation of the Exercise of Political Rights, stated that general committees and polling stations must be headed by members of judicial bodies and authorities.

**An automated system was created to be used for the automatic, (and manual when needed), distribution of judges. The system includes the following:**

- Distribution over general committees.
- Distribution over polling stations.
- Distribution over governorate committees.
- Distribution over operations rooms.
- Distribution of substitutes.

The distribution is made depending on the place of residence or work, or through approximation, in accordance with the rules laid down by the HEC and followed by the relevant judicial body or authority.

Members of judicial bodies/authorities are informed of the general committees and polling stations they were assigned to, giving them adequate time prior to the start of polling. Suitable accommodation is provided to the members where possible and they were transported to their assigned governorates using Armed Forces airplanes, trains and buses. Upon their arrival, they are handed the envelopes pertaining to the general committees and polling stations and then continue to their accommodation venue.

### **5- Printing Documents of the Electoral Process and Providing Field Materials:**

The HEC considered printing the documents and materials of the electoral process and received more than one offer from entities specialized in secure printing. The HEC selected the offer submitted by the police print house for its high quality services, usage of a variety of methods to secure papers, and its past experience. The most important factor, however, is that by selecting the police print house, only one



entity is responsible for printing, transporting and securing. This allows for accountability in cases of incidents that require questioning of those in charge.

It was agreed with the police print house that various security methods would be used within the printing house to secure the printing process and protect it from tampering. The HEC verified the presence of various surveillance cameras distributed throughout the printing house. Rooms selected for the printing of election documents were freed of any other works.

Regarding the ballot paper, several security methods were used to secure its template which makes it difficult for the ballot paper to be copied. Changes were made to the ballot papers used in the run-off to be different from those used in the first round to prevent attempts of copying.

The HEC made sure that the electoral documents used for the individual system were distinct from those used for the list system, with the former being in white and the latter in green. The same was applied to the ballot papers in order to facilitate identification.

Designing the ballot paper for the East Delta Constituency (list system) required some extra effort since only one list was running in this constituency and it was necessary to make the ballot paper reflective of the voting options. Therefore, it was decided that the ballot paper would include two boxes instead of one, with one box displaying the phrase "I vote" and the other "I do not vote," instead of "I agree" and "I do not agree," thus preventing any controversy about whether there are attempts to turn the elections into a referendum.

The General Secretariat reviewed the names, designations and symbols of candidates before printing the ballot papers to ensure the accuracy of the data.

## **6- Training Judges and Administrative Staff:**

### **Training Judges:**

Within the framework of increasing the efficiency of electoral officials and training them on electoral procedures, the HEC instructed that a team comprising General Secretariat members be formed to be responsible for training judges in charge of archiving committees, the number of which is 232 judges. Such judges received four consecutive training sessions on the law regulating elections, as well as the HEC decrees regulating the archiving process.

In February 2015, the team of trainers conducted a workshop with the participation of 102 presidents of courts of first instance, and general committee heads and members. The aim of the workshop was to discuss electoral procedures, logistics and challenges.

In October 2015, 1,051 new members of judicial bodies/authorities were trained over 15 sessions in Cairo on electoral procedures for Phase 1. The training introduced participants to electoral stakeholders, pre-polling procedures, first and second days of elections, and counting and archiving procedures.



Furthermore, 464 new members of judicial bodies/authorities were trained on elections over eight sessions in Alexandria. In Ismailia, 108 participants attended four sessions, while in Luxor 76 participants attended four sessions.

Moreover, 472 participants were trained in November, 2015 in Cairo, taking into consideration that the assistance of those who were previously trained was sought as well.

The HEC developed a manual to help judges with regard to electoral procedures and another manual on OCV to assist missions abroad. Both manuals were distributed with the electoral process papers.

## **7- Candidacy Applications and Appeals:**

Submission of candidacy applications for both phases was scheduled from 01/09/2015 until 12/09/2015. This original period was extended for three more days until 15/09/2015, only to allow applicants to submit their medical reports. Upon the issuance of the ruling of the Administrative Court concerning lawsuit No. 67959 for the Judicial Year 69 on the Cabinet's "remedial corrections," the HEC issued Decree No. 86/2015 on continuing the candidacy application period in Markaz and city of Qena constituency and Qous constituency for three days until 15/09/2015. This gave the chance for candidates to submit their candidacy applications and medical reports only.

To facilitate the application procedures for candidates, the HEC issued decrees No. 67, 69, 70 and 71 for the year 2015. The decrees stipulate that documents submitted by accepted candidates, prior to the issuance of the ruling of the Administrative Court on revoking HEC Decree No. 1/2015 concerning calling on voters to vote for electing members of the HoR, are valid so long as these documents were still at the Courts of First Instance. Then, the Administrative Court decided on Appeal No. 75027 for the Judicial Year 69 by issuing a ruling suspending the implementation of HEC Decree No.70/2015 insofar as Article (4) thereof is concerned. Prior to this ruling, Article (4) of said decree stipulated that the medical reports submitted by candidates whose candidacy papers were already accepted are sufficient, however, the HEC instructed that applicants within the country and abroad, as well as persons with disabilities should provide updated medical reports, in accordance with the court ruling.

During the abovementioned period, 5,958 candidates applied for running under the individual system while 15 parties and coalitions applied for running under the list system. Upon examining and deciding on the filed appeals by the judiciary, the number of candidates who ran in the elections reached 5,436 for the individual system, and 13 parties and coalitions for the list system. It is worth noting that the "For the Love of Egypt" (Fi Hob Misr) Coalition was running in all sectors of the list system while the rest of the parties and coalitions ran in specific sectors only.

Each candidate, whether running under the individual or list system, submits their candidacy application and other documents to the relevant Governorate Election Committee. The candidate is then transferred to the Candidacy Application Examination Committee which decides on the applications, whether by approving or rejecting them, in light of the submitted documents mentioned in Articles 2, 5, 8 and



10 of Decree-Law No. 46/2014 on the HoR amended by Decree-Law No. 92/2015. The judiciary of the State Council added a requirement that candidates should be medically examined to ensure that they are free from mental and psychological illnesses and adequately able to perform their duties as HoR members - as well as to ensure that they are not abusing drugs or alcohol.

Concerned parties, in implementation of Article 17 of Decree-Law 46/2014, may file an appeal against the decision of the Candidacy Application Examination Committee before the Administrative Court, whether the reason for their appeal is the acceptance or rejection of a candidate. The appeal must be within three days following the announcement of the list of accepted candidates after the candidate registration period closes. The court shall decide on the filed appeals within five days at the latest.

The deadline set for deciding on appeals filed before the Administrative Courts was 27/09/2015. As for the appeals filed before the Supreme Administrative Court, a deadline for deciding on them was not legally set. An example of a decision on an appeal was the one issued on 17/10/2015, coinciding with the commencement of OCV in phase 1. At the time, there was not enough time to reprint the ballot papers and distribute them in certain electoral constituencies. This was resolved by placing notices regarding the court rulings outside polling stations and headquarters of missions abroad. This was in line with the last paragraph of Article 20 of Decree-Law No. 46/2014 on the HoR with regards to the waiver of candidacy which provides that a waiver of candidacy should be displayed at the door of the polling station. However, a run-off election was held in the four constituencies of Damanhour, Al-Raml, Beni Suef and Al-Wasta which are all part of phase 1 constituencies.

Furthermore, a ruling was issued by the Supreme Administrative Court concerning the Mansoura city constituency at the dawn of the election day of phase 2. The ruling was in favor of the HEC, which caused no repercussions.

The number of appeals presented before the Administrative Court in both election phases filed against the HEC decrees and decisions by the Candidacy Application Examination Committee was 1,096 appeals. 945 appeals were rejected (86.2%) and 151 appeals were upheld (13.8%).

Regarding the appeals presented before the Supreme Administrative Court, the total number was 525 appeals: decisions on 512 (97.5%) were in favor of the HEC, while decisions on the remaining 13 appeals (2.5%) were not.

The total number of appeals was 1,621 appeals; decisions on 1,457 (89.9%) of them were in favor of the HEC, while decisions on 164 appeals (10.1%) were not. The percentages are considered unprecedented in terms of rulings issued in favor of and against the HEC during the pre-polling day period.

Appeals presented before the Court of Cassation regarding the polling and sorting processes were 254 appeals, none of which have been decided on at the time of writing this report, taking into account that an electoral constituency has more than one filed appeal.



## **Chapter 4: Polling and Results**

### **Polling:**

Provisions of Articles 39-51 of Decree Law 45/2014 on the Regulation of the Exercise of Political Rights, regulate elections. Such articles relate to the election schedule, the composition of general committees and polling stations, determining the polling assembly; procedures of sealing and opening ballot boxes, voting process, personal identification documents, cases of invalid votes, sorting process in polling stations, aggregation of votes in the general committee, out-of-country voting, and finally, announcing results.

Hence, members of the Judicial Authorities and Bodies arrived to polling stations which opened at 09:00 AM in all phase 1 governorates. Some polling stations (403 stations- 3% of polling stations) opened late, due to delays in notifying Presiding Officers of the polling stations they are assigned to, sudden medical conditions, death of family members, traffic, or bad weather. Most of these polling stations were in Giza and Minya. Incidents of delays in other rounds of both phases did not reach this percentage. Overall, to overcome these incidents, other members of the Judicial Authorities and Bodies were assigned and a number of polling stations were combined. The election process was not negatively affected and all voters wishing to cast their vote were able to do so, as polling stations do not close so long as there are voters within the polling assembly.

Polling hours passed, witnessing some quarrels and ineffective violations which did not affect the electoral scene/process that were settled by applying legal procedures. Elections have not witnessed a single killing incident, which is why the election is described as being non-violent due to the tight security measures by the army and police. At the time set for the one-hour break, polling stations were closed and re-opened. Being recently introduced, the one-hour break was announced by the HEC on radio and TV, and through posters at the entrance of polling assembly and polling stations to inform voters about it.

It is also worth noting that the HEC introduced the position of a judicial observer in a number of polling stations in constituencies that witnessed cases of bribery and illegal campaigning. The aim was to control infringements within polling centers, allowing Presiding Officers to effectively perform their job in order not to hamper the electoral process. Some judicial observers actually verified some infringements – in Abu-El-Ela constituency, for example, and necessary legal measures were applied. In each governorate, there was a committee to monitor campaigning infringements. These committees received a small number of complaints, possibly because it was difficult to identify, or that infringements were not reported for cultural and social considerations, where media coverage and social communication pages were considered sufficient.

The HEC distributed tablets to some of the queue coordinators to search for the voters' polling station as per their national identification card. The tablets also helped facilitate voters' access to polling stations, avoiding overcrowdings-saving time and effort.



On the first day, polling stations closed at the set time and per the legal procedures. On the second day, polling stations also opened at the set time, without any complaints concerning procedures of storing ballot boxes.

At the end of the second day, Presiding Officers closed polling stations, and started the process of sorting and counting in the presence of candidates, or representatives or agents, as well as authorized observers. Copies of the number of votes obtained by each candidate in the polling station were provided by Presiding Officers to whoever asked for them. Presiding Officers then headed to the general committees with all electoral documents.

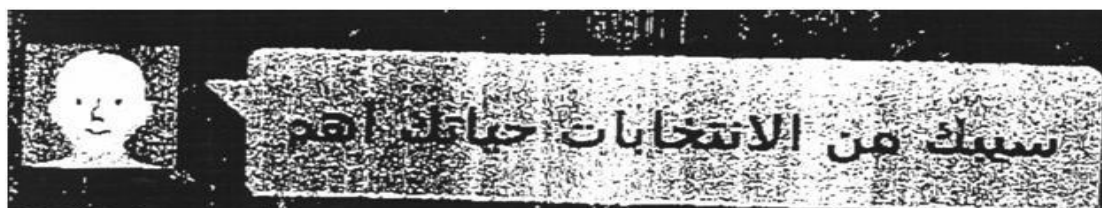
Work started at the general committee by submitting all materials to the in-take and archiving committee against a receipt provided to the Presiding Officer, who then submitted the records to the general committee for review and for decisions on any filed objections. During the first phase, there was a complaint concerning the small number of members of the in-take and archiving committee. The number of members was increased and the reasons for the complaint were resolved.

The general committee aggregated votes received from polling stations for each candidate, publicly announced the aggregation in front of candidate representatives and agents. The general committee provided a copy of the aggregated votes to whoever was interested and then transmitted such aggregations to the HEC through computers, as well as hard copies. The HEC would then announce the results after adding OCV and adjudicating the grievances.

Same procedures were followed in the second phase of the election and also when elections were held in the four constituencies of: Damanhour, Al-Raml, Beni Suef, and Al-Wasta.

The HEC established an operations room, comprising (6) judges from the General Secretariat, a representative of the MOI, a representative of the armed forces, representatives of MSAD and MCIT and (18) Administrative Officers. The hotline 16923 was dedicated to receiving citizens' complaints. Most complaints were related to delays in opening polling stations, inability to locate names on the voters' database, disputes that impeded the flow of the electoral process in polling stations, Presiding Officers refraining to help voters without disabilities, violation of electoral silence, and campaigning in front of polling stations.

We should note that members of the judiciary bodies and authorities stood firm and did not pay attention to the threatening messages received by a few prior to the first phase. The threatening message was: "Don't sacrifice your life for elections".



Screenshot of the threatening message



## **Announcing Results:**

The HEC was keen on announcing the results through the Chairman's speech in a press conference held two days after announcing the aggregated votes received by each candidate in the general committee. During these two days, out-of-country votes are reviewed and added to in-country votes.

During these two days, the HEC reviewed grievances concerning polling and sorting, per the provisions of Article (54) of the Law on the Regulation of the Exercise of Political Rights. The provisions mandated that submitted grievances should be accompanied by supporting documents within a maximum of 24 hours after announcing the aggregated results by the general committee in the constituency.

In all constituencies, the total number of grievances adjudicated by the HEC was (418). Most of the complainants were not aware of the provisions of Article (54) mentioned above, which had an impact on not accepting most of the grievances.

It is worth mentioning that an issue arose in constituency number (2), Zagazig district, Sharkia Governorate. After announcing the results of the first round, on 25/11/2015, Candidate/ Mohamed Ezzat Mohamed Mohamed El-Sayed Badawy participated in the run-off scheduled to be held on 30/11/2015, with other candidates. The HEC was then informed of the candidate's death on Sunday, 29/11/2015. Hence, the HEC issued decree #128/2015 on the same date stipulating that Candidate/ Abdel Hamid Abdel Galil Ali Abdel Qawy replaces the deceased candidate in the run-off, which was held according to the mentioned schedule.

### **Results of the first phase of the elections were as follows:**

- Number of registered voters: 27,402,353
- Number of votes cast: 7,278,594 (turnout 26.56%)
- Number of valid votes: 6,584,128 (90.46%)
- Number of invalid votes: 694,466 (9.54%)

The HEC issued decree #103/2015 announcing the results of the first round of the first phase, including the names of the elected representatives, either in the individual system, or in list of "For the Love of Egypt".

Run-off elections were held in 99 constituencies; including (418) candidates in the individual system for (209) seats. The HEC issued decree #107/2015 announcing the results of the run-off including the names of elected representatives.

### **Results of the second phase of the elections were as follows:**

- Number of registered voters: 28,204,225
- Number of votes cast: 8,412,011 (turnout 29.83%)
- Number of valid votes: 7,839,611 (93.20%)
- Number of invalid votes: 572,400 (6.8%)

The HEC issued decree #126/2015 announcing the results of the first round of the second phase, including the names of the elected representatives, either in the individual system, or in list of "For the Love of Egypt".



Run-off elections were held in (99) constituencies out of (102) in the individual system; (213) seats were contested by (426) candidates.

The HEC issued decree #129/2015 announcing the results of the run-off of the second phase, including the names of the elected representatives.

**As for the four constituencies, no candidates won in the first round**

- Number of registered voters: 1,819,835
- Number of votes cast: 353,606 (turnout 19.4%)
- Number of valid votes: 333,672 (94.4%)
- Number of invalid votes: 19,934 (5.6%)
- In the run-off, (13) seats were contested by (26) candidates

The HEC issued decree #134/2015 announcing the results of the run-off conducted in the four constituencies, including the names of the elected representatives.

Elections ended in all constituencies and final results were announced on 18/12/2015. The quorum of HoR members (568) was reached and the President of the Republic issued decree #560/2015 appointing 28 members, making the total number of HoR members 596.

**After conducting elections in all constituencies, the following statistics should be mentioned:**

1. 28.2% is the average turnout in both phases (excluding the 4 constituencies).
2. 19.4% is the turnout in the 4 postponed constituencies.
3. The percentage of invalid votes in first phase was 9.5%, 6.8% in the second phase, and 5.6% in the 4 constituencies, with the average of 7.3%.
4. 418 grievances were reviewed and adjudicated by the HEC prior to announcing results in all constituencies.
5. 1,152 complaints were received by phone through the operations room.
6. 16,702 campaigning infringements were eliminated.
7. Election infringements transferred to the Public Prosecutor were as follows; 337 infringements in campaigning, 34 incidents of distributing money, 102 incidents of impeding the flow of the election process and quarrels, and 12 irregularities in bank accounts. Such figures do not reflect the real violations committed, particularly, as related to the financial ceiling set for campaigning.
8. The Expert Committee on monitoring media coverage of elections observed some infringements in a number of programs on satellite channels. Concerning such infringements, the HEC imposed (23) administrative sanctions; (6) were in the first phase against (6) satellite channels, and the other (17) were in the second phase against (9) satellite channels.

"Al-Faraeen" and CBC had the most penalties, each receiving (5) sanctions; while "Dream" and "Sada El-Balad" had (3) sanctions each. "Ten" and "Al-Haya" had (2) sanctions each. "Al-Asema", "TV ON", "Al-Qahera Wal Nas" had only one sanction each.

Sanctions ranged from warnings, to prohibiting the media outlet from election coverage for a certain period. The HEC then decided not to pursue further the full prohibiting, after the sanctions have achieved the required objectives and violations have noticeably decreased.



## **Chapter 5: Local and International Observation Reports and polls**

Elections were observed by various entities; local and international CSOs, official international missions from different circles, in addition to a visit by representatives of a number of foreign election commissions. Other entities were also keen on conducting election polls. All these entities have participated in evaluating the Egyptian legislative elections. We present such evaluations without additions or omissions, but we have aggregated the positive and negative aspects. We very much appreciate these evaluations which, without a doubt, enrich the legislative elections.

The elections were observed by (67) foreign embassies that were issued (186) permits. This is in addition to (81) local CSOs, (6) foreign NGOs, (5) foreign government organizations, and several local and international media and foreign correspondents, with a total number of 22,485 permits.

### **- Reports by local and international CSOs:**

- Article 38 of decree law #45/2014 issuing the law on the Regulation of the Exercise of Political Rights, stipulates that "civil society organizations authorized by the HEC shall provide the General Secretariat, within fifteen days of the day of the announcement of the final results of the referendum or election, with a documented report on their observations and proposed views and recommendations".
- The HEC – as we mentioned above – authorized local and international CSOs, as well as the League of Arab States (LAS), the European Union (EU), the Arab Parliament, African Union (AU) to observe the HoR election. Authorized organizations have registered the data of observers on the official website of the HEC.
- The HEC received the final reports of LAS, Arab Parliament Delegation, and COMESA, as well as the reports of the International Mission of the Representatives of Electoral Commissions, the preliminary statement of the AU mission, the recommendations of the EU mission, the final report of Maat for Peace, Development and Human Rights, the final report of Al-Sadat Association For Development & Social Care, the report of the operations room of the National Council for Disability Affairs (NCDA) concerning the first phase of elections, the second and third statements of the Egyptian Association for Supporting Democracy concerning the first phase of elections, the first and second reports of Ibn-Al-Nil Foundation for Development (Ibn-Al-Nil Observatory for Integrity and Transparency) concerning the first phase of elections and the first and second reports of the Egyptian Organization for Human Rights concerning the run-off of the first phase of elections.
- The HEC noted that the statement of the Egyptian Association for Supporting Democracy, the report of Ibn-Al-Nil Foundation for Development (Ibn-Al-Nil Observatory for Integrity and Transparency) and the report of the Egyptian Organization for Human Rights focused only on highlighting the negative aspects, without referring to the positive ones or offering recommendations.
- The HEC noted that the EU expert mission offered recommendations only.



Negative and positive aspects in the aforementioned reports could be summarized as follows:

Most prominent positive observations:

1. Impartiality, professionalism and seriousness of the HEC in ensuring free and fair elections, without administrative intervention by the state: (LAS, Arab Parliament, Maat for Peace, Development and Human Rights, and Al-Sadat Association for Development & Social Care).
2. Clarity and adherence of the HEC decrees to the law and judicial rulings, allowing independence of the judicial authority to ensure the integrity of the electoral process (Maat for Peace, Development and Human Rights, and Al-Sadat Association for Development & Social Care).
3. Provision of services by the HEC that inform voters of the electoral domicile and polling stations via the HEC's official website and hotline (Al-Sadat Association for Development & Social Care).
4. Full judicial supervision of the electoral process, as well as the responsibility of each judge for monitoring a ballot box, neutrality and stringency in applying laws, regulations and decrees regarding the electoral process, handling any complaint and infringement regarding the electoral process: (Arab Parliament, Maat for Peace, Development and Human Rights, and Al-Sadat Association for Development & Social Care).
5. Securing the electoral process leading to a considerable decline in violent incidents, which allowed for a peaceful atmosphere: (LAS, Arab Parliament, AU, Maat for Peace, Development and Human Rights, Al-Sadat Association For Development & Social Care, Ibn-Al-Nil Foundation for Development and the National Council for Disability Affairs)
6. Assistance of security forces to voters, especially persons with disabilities, to access polling stations by providing wheelchairs: (LAS, Arab Parliament, AU, Ibn-Al-Nil Foundation for Development and the National Council for Disability Affairs)
7. Efficiency and professionalism of polling station staff in applying electoral procedures: (LAS, Arab Parliament, AU, Maat for Peace, Development and Human Rights, and Al-Sadat Association for Development & Social Care).
8. Women participation in polling Stations: (LAS, and Arab Parliament)
9. Well-distributed polling stations, sufficient number of ground-floor stations for easier access by voters, especially the elderly and physically disabled persons: (LAS, Arab Parliament, AU, Ibn-Al-Nil Foundation for Development and the National Council for Disability Affairs).
10. Representation of representatives of parties and candidates in most polling stations: (LAS, Arab Parliament, and AU).
11. Availability of logistical materials and information posters inside polling stations: (LAS, Arab Parliament, AU, Maat for Peace, Development and Human Rights, Al-Sadat Association For Development & Social Care, Ibn-Al-Nil Foundation for Development and the National Council for Disability Affairs).
12. Unlimited access of local and international observers to polling stations: (LAS, Arab Parliament, AU, Maat for Peace, Development and Human Rights, and Al-Sadat Association for Development & Social Care).
13. Introducing the system of a judicial observer to detect electoral infringements within the parameter of polling centers: (LAS, and Arab Parliament).



14. Displaying the voter's lists outside polling stations for identifying the polling station and number in the voter's roll in order to facilitate the flow of voters: (LAS, Arab Parliament, AU, and the National Council for Disability Affairs).
15. Punctuality of polling stations' staff, except for a few number of stations, where the HEC combined stations together or deployed substitutes without affecting the overall electoral process: (LAS, and Arab Parliament).
16. Using e-readers in some polling stations has facilitated the electoral process: (LAS, and Arab Parliament).
17. Removing posters and campaigning materials displayed at polling centers during election days: (LAS).
18. Security forces rapidly handling quarrels among candidate supporters: (LAS, Maat for Peace, Development and Human Rights, and Al-Sadat Association for Development & Social Care).
19. Enforcing sanctions of not allowing three satellite channels to cover the electoral process as a result of committing violations, based on the report of the media performance observation committee (Al-Sadat Association for Development & Social Care).
20. The process of elections and polling was conducted per the law, recognized procedures, and in line to a great extent with electoral criteria. Observed violations were not systematic, do not pose a threat, and do not negatively impact the integrity and credibility of the elections and its results: (LAS, Arab Parliament, AU, Maat for Peace, Development and Human Rights, and Al-Sadat Association for Development & Social Care).

#### Most Prominent Negative Observations:

- 1- The difference in the number of seats in all constituencies of the individual system may be a reason for the increase in the number of invalid votes for the first round of both electoral phases: (LAS).
- 2- Differences in the size of list constituencies may cause discrimination between voters in terms of selection: (LAS).
- 3- The big difference between the number of seats under the individual and list systems may affect the strong presence of parties in the HoR: (LAS).
- 4- Difference in the cost of medical reports may negatively affect equality among applicants: (LAS).
- 5- The difficulty of completing the legal requirements of forming a list led to a fewer number of lists applying for candidacy: (LAS).
- 6- The large number and similarity of electoral symbols determined by the HEC led to confusion among voters in some cases: (LAS).
- 7- Some candidates violating the timeline set for electoral campaigning before the official commencement of the campaigning period: (LAS).
- 8- Violations of some TV channels to the regulations and criteria set by the HEC through hosting some candidates before the official commencement of the campaigning period: (LAS - Al-Sadat Association for Development and Social Care).
- 9- Violations of some candidates to the electoral spending limit and the emergence of the phenomenon of political finance and electoral bribes: (LAS - Maat for Peace, Development and Human Rights – The Egyptian Association for Supporting Democracy – Egyptian Organization for Human Rights).
- 10- Lack of expanded electoral awareness, explanation of the new electoral system and voting steps: (LAS – Ibn Al-Nil Foundation for Development).



- 11- The late opening of some polling stations due to non-arrival of members or electoral materials: (LAS – Arab Parliament - Maat for Peace, Development and Human Rights - Al-Sadat Association for Development and Social Care - The Egyptian Association for Supporting Democracy – Egyptian Organization for Human Rights - Ibn Al-Nil Foundation for Development).
- 12- Some poll workers did not wear vests or identification badges: (LAS).
- 13- Violating electoral campaigning by some candidate supporters during voting days, while violating electoral silence in some polling centers and instructing voters: (LAS – Arab Parliament - Maat for Peace, Development and Human Rights - Al-Sadat Association for Development and Social Care - The Egyptian Association for Supporting Democracy – Egyptian Organization for Human Rights - Ibn Al-Nil Foundation for Development).
- 14- The Committee (HEC) did not adopt strict procedures against violations of electoral campaigning: (Al-Sadat Association for Development and Social Care).
- 15- Some polling stations were located in upper floors: (LAS – The National Council for Disability Affairs).
- 16- Banning entry and dismissing some candidates' representatives and agents, as well as observers in some polling stations: (The Egyptian Association for Supporting Democracy – Egyptian Organization for Human Rights).
- 17- Quarrels and clashes taking place between candidates' supporters in some polling centers: (Maat for Peace, Development and Human Rights - Al-Sadat Association for Development and Social Care - The Egyptian Association for Supporting Democracy – Egyptian Organization for Human Rights).
- 18- Not introducing candidates to voters which led to poor participation: (LAS - Maat for Peace, Development and Human Rights - Al-Sadat Association for Development and Social Care - Ibn Al-Nil Foundation for Development - The National Council for Disability Affairs).
- 19- Lack of posters that would help the deaf vote using sign language: (The National Council for Disability Affairs).
- 20- Not placing polling booths regularly in some polling stations to maintain secrecy of the vote: (Arab Parliament).
- 21- Poor participation in general: (LAS – Arab Parliament – African Union - Maat for Peace, Development and Human Rights - Al-Sadat Association for Development and Social Care - Egyptian Organization for Human Rights - The National Council for Disability Affairs).

#### **Recommendations in Received Reports:**

- 1- The rapid establishment of the National Electoral Authority: (LAS – African Union - Maat for Peace, Development and Human Rights - Al-Sadat Association for Development and Social Care).
- 2- Ensuring the enrollment of citizens reaching 18 years of age in the voters' database: (EU).
- 3- Continuous update of the voters' database: (LAS).
- 4- Unifying the number of seats in all constituencies of the individual system and maintaining equality between lists and individual seats: (LAS – EU).
- 5- All stakeholders of the electoral process should exert more efforts to raise the awareness of voters, especially women: (LAS – African Union – EU - Maat for Peace, Development and Human Rights).



- 6- Regulating official and private media performance to ensure fairness and equality among candidates: (LAS – African Union – EU - Maat for Peace, Development and Human Rights - Al-Sadat Association for Development and Social Care).
- 7- Applying strict penalties against each candidate proven to have violated electoral campaigning or spending rules: (LAS - Maat for Peace, Development and Human Rights - Al-Sadat Association for Development and Social Care).
- 8- Distribution of polling materials among stations before the times set for voting: (LAS).
- 9- Communicating with CSOs and seeking a clear mechanism for cooperation with the election management body to resolve complaints and share information: (LAS – African Union - Maat for Peace, Development and Human Rights - Al-Sadat Association for Development and Social Care).
- 10- Considering the placement of polling stations at the ground floors for the sake of the elderly and voters with disabilities: (LAS - Maat for Peace, Development and Human Rights - Al-Sadat Association for Development and Social Care - The National Council for Disability Affairs).
- 11- Applying all necessary measures to support the deaf, the blind and those who are physically disabled: (LAS - Al-Sadat Association for Development and Social Care - The National Council for Disability Affairs).
- 12- Continuation of holding information sessions for poll workers to support capacity building: (LAS - Maat for Peace, Development and Human Rights).
- 13- Developing the electoral system and making use of the technical and technological developments in all phases of the electoral process: (LAS – Arab Parliament - Maat for Peace, Development and Human Rights).
- 14- Unifying the method used in sorting and counting of votes: (EU).
- 15- Holding elections over one day to ensure a smooth and a less costly electoral process: (Maat for Peace, Development and Human Rights).
- 16- Requiring candidates to provide a clear platform: (Maat for Peace, Development and Human Rights).
- 17- The Committee (HEC) should develop reports on the electoral process in order to avoid previous mistakes while conducting future electoral events: (Al-Sadat Association for Development and Social Care).
- 18- Increasing the number of out-of-country polling stations to facilitate the process for Egyptians living abroad: (Al-Sadat Association for Development and Social Care).
- 19- The House of Representatives should study electoral laws in order to eliminate negative aspects: (Al-Sadat Association for Development and Social Care).
- 20- Generalizing the presence of judicial observers to detect electoral violations that take place outside polling centers: (Arab Parliament).

### **The Report of the International Mission for Representatives of Election Commissions:**

The report of the Mission was received prior to preparing this general report. This is why the Mission's report was not mentioned in the section covering positive and negative aspects. We shall present the report in full after it is translated through the International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance (IDEA), as it has been



developed by specialists in the field of electoral administration. The report included the following:

### **First – Introduction:**

The main objective of the visit hosted by International IDEA was to witness and testify to the second phase of the parliamentary elections in Egypt, in order to contribute and provide recommendations designed for enhancing the management of the electoral processes in the future.

### **Second – Limitations of the Visit:**

The visit was conducted within the framework of some limitations that had implications on the delegation's ability to provide holistic recommendations for all aspects of the electoral process. Such limitations include:

The fact that the delegation focused on the procedures of the two election days only.

The delegation had the opportunity to meet and have discussions with the HEC only and not with any other actors in the electoral process (i.e. political parties, etc).

The delegation defined its visit as being for the purposes of sharing experiences and not as an observation mission.

### **Third – Aspects of Electoral Administration:**

Regardless of the electoral system defined in the national legal framework, the essence of electoral planning and administration is to ensure that citizens can freely and securely access ballot boxes and cast their votes in clear and transparent circumstances.

In order to achieve this objective, the work of the election management body should include several main components of the electoral administration. This includes—without limitation to—the following: a transparent registration process of voters and candidates, preparation and distribution of electoral materials, training of poll workers, holding dialogue campaigns with concerned stakeholders, providing civic and voter education (including a focus on the importance of polling and setting polling procedures) and managing the Election Day and electoral materials.

This way, the right to vote is regulated through professional and transparent management of the electoral process to ensure competition among citizens and their free participation in elections

Again, it is important to note that this report does not aim at providing input regarding any activities that took place before or after the elections, including the legal framework, the electoral system, candidate and voter registration, or campaign finance etc. The only objective of the visit was to present an opinion regarding the conduct of the two election days of the second phase.



## **Forth – Strengths during the two Election Days (Positive Aspects):**

In light of the information collected by the visiting delegation, it is useful to focus on the following:

- 1- Praising the role that the HEC played in organizing the electoral process in a short time within a tough political and social atmosphere. Despite this context, elections were held in a relatively peaceful environment.
- 2- The presence of police and army seemed to have been acceptable by voters, as it was a method to guarantee security and confidence in the electoral process.
- 3- Praising the interest of the HEC in receiving recommendations (evaluations) from peers around the world, and viewing this as an opportunity to exchange good practices.
- 4- The distribution of a manual in Arabic and English on the process of voting, sorting and announcing results among poll workers, local and international observers was a useful tool for the delegation. This has provided the delegation with the background of what to expect during the visit.
- 5- The Committee's operations room for observing the election: live coverage and video conferencing with different Egyptian embassies around the world was impressive.
- 6- The civic spirit demonstrated by Egyptian citizens while heading to polling stations to exercise their voting right must be praised. Egyptians acted in a peaceful and organized manner, showing a high level of tolerance, political maturity, and knowledge of electoral procedures. Voters also showed their support to democracy and their determination to maintain a politically stable society, which brings hope that this would promote democracy in the country.
- 7- The HEC demonstrated its capacity to organize and manage the electoral process in a way where its consolidated efforts must be praised.
- 8- The delegation praised the availability of necessary facilities for the elderly and the voters with disabilities (including providing wheelchairs when necessary) in order to allow them to vote in a quick and transparent manner.
- 9- The delegation would like to praise the exceptional commitment of security officials securing polling centers during the voting process and counting of votes. Polling officials (men and women) were well trained, committed and keen on exercising their duties. In addition, security officials managed the process in a calm and professional manner without intervention.
- 10- The wide media coverage of polling centers during the Election Day demonstrated the pivotal role of media in a country that enjoys a democratic system. Media also enhances the transparency of the whole process.
- 11- Polling Stations:
  - The design of the ballot papers takes into consideration illiterate voters through including symbols not only names.
  - There were enough quantities of electoral materials in all polling centers that were visited.
  - There were no campaigning materials inside polling centers.
  - Electronic devices were used to read ID cards in order to help voters identify their polling station.
  - The HEC demonstrated good control over the voting process abroad.
  - The judges responsible for polling centers as well as electoral management were always dressed formally, and in general were friendly and cooperative.



## **Fifth – Opportunities to improve procedures (Negative Aspects):**

In parallel to the positive aspects of the procedures followed on Election Day, mentioned above, there are some aspects of the electoral process that could be enhanced as follows:

The elections proceeded in an organized manner, yet there are some aspects that should be considered in the future. It is worth mentioning that some of the following remarks should be considered more than others as they relate to their impact on the integrity of the electoral process. In fact, while some remarks related to the Election Day need to be highly considered, there are other remarks that can be easily addressed through adequate instructions and training of poll workers.

- 1- Opening of polling stations: In general, polling stations were open at the scheduled time. Although some stations opened late, the visiting delegation did not consider that as negatively affecting the process.
- 2- In this regard, it is recommended that Presiding Officers are informed about the importance of abiding by the legally set time for opening and closing polling stations.
- 3- Posters and information related to polling procedures: The HEC's posters that explain the voting process seemed to be of help to voters; however, they could have been placed in more visible spots in polling stations. Also, other methods of communication could have played a complimentary role to these posters, including social media and SMS messages. Thus, posters could be used to just remind voters of information they have previously received.
- 4- Arrangement of tables inside polling stations: the delegation noticed that some polling stations did not allow for easy observation of election procedures (receiving ID cards, signing in voter's roll, receiving ballot papers and inking fingers). In order to avoid any disturbance such as confusion and chaos or crowding that cause unjustified delay in the electoral process, as well as complicating the work of judges and other poll workers in the polling stations, these stations should be arranged in a way that is in line with the agreed upon procedures and steps.
- 5- Supervising electoral campaigns on Election Day: It is important to supervise electoral campaigns on Election Day, as some candidates have arranged marches and other similar works throughout those days in a way that contradicts what is allowed by the election law. In addition, there were campaigning materials placed outside polling centers, which was supposed to be removed two days before the elections started.
- 6- Boxes of election materials: the delegation noticed that the containers of electoral materials were carton boxes sealed with adhesive seals from the top, bottom and sides which is not as safe. These boxes could have been damaged because of rain or any other reason. It is recommended to use strong water proof reusable boxes that cannot be damaged if they fall on the ground.
- 7- Inking fingers: It was noticed that some instructions were not followed properly (for example: putting enough indelible ink on the correct finger). It might be possible that any of the poll workers can be assigned the role of inking fingers, instead of leaving voters to do that themselves.
- 8- Regarding work related tasks: In general, poll workers were efficient in carrying out their duties. In some cases though, poll workers did not seem to



- be aware of what is expected from them. Thus, it is recommended to train all poll workers extensively on their roles and responsibilities on Election Day.
- 9- Dealing with blank and invalid ballot papers: regarding those papers, it is recommended to consider separating blank ballot papers from invalid ones due to their nature and different meanings.
  - 10- Counting votes and results: it is important that party agents are able to effectively monitor the work performed by electoral officials when closing polling centers. In this regard, it is necessary to set better preparations for the counting process, in a manner which allows for a more transparent process by electoral officials.
  - 11- Reports: it is recommended to fill out one closure report and have copies of it that could be circulated among different relevant entities. The current practice could allow for mistakes and discrepancies that would cause unnecessary delays.
  - 12- Presence of armed personnel: Based on good international practices in this context, the delegation was interested to see armed police and military inside polling centers. It is recommended to consider if it is possible to restrict the entry of armed personnel from the police and military during the electoral process and counting of votes.
  - 13- Publishing information about the percentage of participation in elections: it is recommended that the HEC publishes the statistics related to participation in elections in conjunction with voting and during election days.

## **Sixth: Special Considerations:**

### **1- Secrecy of the vote:**

It is important that all voters know the procedures of secrecy that can be expected in order to prevent any violations to the secrecy of the vote. Although some tolerance in this area might be acceptable as a result of a certain electoral culture, the secrecy of the ballot is a pivotal factor in the success and transparency of the electoral process. Furthermore, the secrecy becomes especially important in elections where results are close, or when there are previous complaints of voter manipulation.

It is worth-noting that voters seemed reassured about the voting process, despite the absence of the secrecy of the vote that was observed in some polling centers. This can be attributed to the indifference of citizens to the concept of secrecy; yet, the secrecy of the vote should still be encouraged and ensured.

The HEC shall ensure that all parties in the electoral process are aware of the importance of maintaining the secrecy of their political decision, and the importance of preventing any other party from manipulating the ballot papers or voting documents.

For this reason, voters shall be educated regarding the right to a secret vote; where there shall be no one (voter, judge or other poll worker in the polling station) near the polling booth when the voter ticks their ballot paper. In this regard, the following recommendations are provided:



- 1- Folding the ballot paper. The voter shall be informed to fold his ballot paper twice before inserting it in the ballot box. In some countries, voters are required to seal the ballot paper with a small tape to ensure their right of the secret ballot.
- 2- Polling booth: the polling booths seemed to be designed well and in a suitable way. However, in some cases the location of these booths endangered the secrecy, which is something that could be easily improved by changing the location of the booth. The open side of the booth faced the public or the window. Due to this location, it was possible in some cases to easily observe how the ballot papers were marked from inside the rooms or from outside the windows. This eliminates the secrecy of the vote. In other cases, particularly in small rooms, the poll workers or candidates' agents were sitting closer than necessary to the polling booths; thus, they were able to see the ballot papers being inserted in the ballot box.
- 3- Entering the polling booth. Only voters should be allowed to enter the polling booth. For voters with disabilities, a judge should ensure that the voter is able to express his will, and ensure that the role of the person accompanying the voter is restricted to only helping the voter express his will.

#### **B) Awareness about democracy:**

- 1- Voter turnout. During the delegation's visit, the low turnout has been noted, particularly for voters aged between 18 and 30. In some cases, there were separate polling stations for men and women. Therefore, the delegation inquired about why this procedure was adopted in certain polling stations and not in others.

The delegation recommends mandating the HEC to implement the necessary procedures and make the necessary amendments to stimulate and encourage a culture of exercising electoral rights by citizens. The HEC and NGOs are also encouraged to work together to conduct broader civic and voter awareness programs. Voter education transcends beyond publishing electoral materials and providing information through both electronic and print methods; it should include a long-term civic awareness plan through engaging civil society.

- 2- Democratic values education. Encouragement of the democratic values shall be planned based on the target group. This plan includes identifying age groups, and methods for providing this education (seminars, workshops, brochures, and simulation), proposed goals and timeline for achieving the goal. This aims to increase the number of voters who participate in the elections.

#### **C) Arrangements of Polling Stations:**

- 1- Accessibility. This involves a wide-scale engagement process that would allow voters to access polling stations easily regardless of their circumstances or capabilities. While it was noted that several polling stations were on the ground floor, good practices indicate that several conditions should be provided in order to ensure equal access for all voters. These conditions are as follows:



- A) Ramps for wheel chairs
  - B) Placing ballot boxes near doors
  - C) Ballot papers printed in Braille for blind voters
  - D) Providing magnifying glasses
  - E) Thicker pens to ensure tighter grip on them.
  - F) Larger boxes on the ballot papers to tick the vote.
- 2- Space. Alternatives that provide a bigger space in polling stations should be sought. This would allow having more chairs for poll workers, and will increase their ability to pay attention to voters.
  - 3- Smoking. Smoking was permitted inside most polling stations causing problems, especially in crowded school rooms.

#### **D) Identifying staff and volunteers of polling stations:**

- 1- Improving voter capacities to identify poll workers (judges, poll workers, party agents and volunteers) through providing badges, identifying insignia, or short-sleeved shirts) (T-shirts) or vests.
- 2- In addition to the information currently available, with respect to permits given to observers and visitors, efforts should be made to add a picture of the concerned person and his passport number or ID card in order to smoothly enter the polling stations. This recommendation is made because despite presenting visitors' badges in polling stations, some of these stations requested additional information such as passports of visitors.

#### **E) Presence of police and military personnel:**

Presence of police and military personnel to ensure the security of polling stations seemed generally accepted by voters (particularly due to the current security conditions in the country). However, people can be concerned when such personnel are present inside polling stations; therefore it is important to comply with the rules or laws that restrict their presence.

Moreover, members of the delegation feared the presence of armed personnel because allowing the military and police inside polling stations is considered a violation of the law. In fact, in certain cases, firearms were noticed or snipers stationed on roof tops (such as the polling center in the Shubra).

#### **Acknowledgement:**

Members of the delegation felt privileged to be part of this important national process in Egypt. The delegation would like to express its deep appreciation to all its interlocutors, particularly the Chairman and members of the HEC, as well as officials, support staff and security forces.

#### **Report on the Opinion Poll:**

Article (33) of Decree-Law No. 45/2014 issuing the Law on the Exercise of Political Rights stipulates that "All media outlets licensed to operate in Egypt are hereby committed to not broadcast or publish an opinion poll about the elections or the



subject put to referendum except in compliance with established professional norms and in a manner respectful of the citizens' right to knowledge.

**In particular, a media outlet must provide the following information about the opinion polls they publish:**

- 1- Complete information on the body which conducted the poll.
- 2- The entity which funded the poll.
- 3- The size of the sample covered by the poll, and its location whether in an urban or rural area.
- 4- The way the poll was conducted, in terms of the established methodologies in this regard.
- 5- The questions contained in the poll.
- 6- Data collection method.
- 7- The date the poll was conducted.
- 8- The margin of error in results.

In all cases, media outlets are prohibited from publishing or broadcasting any opinion polls during the three days immediately preceding the election or referendum day and until the conclusion of the polling process.

And the HEC shall establish the regulations and procedures in this regard.”

- The Egyptian center for public opinion research (BASEERA) submitted a request to conduct an opinion poll on the elections, while committing to the regulations set forth in this regard. This Center is the only entity that submitted a request to the HEC to conduct an opinion poll.
- BASEERA was authorized by the HEC to conduct an opinion poll of voters over the two phases. BASEERA submitted a report to the HEC including the methodology, voter characteristics, lists results, situation of women in the elections, and election procedures.

**Main points included in the poll in the first phase of elections:**

- 1- Data was collected on 18 and 19 October from voters in front of the polling stations after they voted.
- 2- The sample size was (4,086) voters distributed over (68) polling centers in the governorates of the constituencies of West Delta and Upper Egypt. Border governorates were excluded.
- 3- The sample focused on constituencies in which there were women candidates running on individual seats. Luxor was excluded due to the lack of women candidates.
- 4- A team of 100 researchers, field auditors and supervisors, in addition to 50 others supporting staff for office work were involved in the data collection.
- 5- The poll included voters for the age groups from 18 to 30 by 21%, from 31 to 50 years by 51%, and more than 51 years by 28%.
- 6- The poll included voters with a low intermediate education level by 47%, above intermediate education level by 37% and with higher education level by 16%.
- 7- The poll included a question on whether or not the voter elected a woman. 27% of respondents answered “Yes”, while 73% answered “No”. Results were disaggregated by gender and educational levels.



- 8- The poll included detailed reasons for why a woman candidate was chosen in the election. The highest percentage of 35% confirmed that they elected a woman because she understands women's problems.
- 9- The poll included detailed reasons for why a woman candidate was not chosen in the election. The highest percentage of 38% confirmed that they did not elect a woman candidate because of her inability to work as a man.
- 10- The poll showed that 98% of voters easily accessed the polling station, while 2% encountered difficulties accessing the polling station.
- 11- The poll included the wait time in line, 73% of voters said that they waited less than 5 minutes, 23% waited between 5-14 minutes, and 4% waited more than 15 minutes.
- 12- The poll included voter confidence in the integrity of the election since the beginning till the announcement of the results. 85% of respondents agreed, 11% somewhat agree, 3% said "I don't know" and 1% disagreed.

**Main points included in the poll in the second phase of elections:**

- 1- Data was collected on 22 and 23 October from voters in front of the polling stations after voting.
- 2- The sample size was (7,200) voters distributed over 94 polling centers in the governorates of Cairo constituency, South and Central Delta constituency, and East Delta constituency. Border governorates were excluded.
- 3- The sample focused on constituencies in which women candidates ran on individual seats.
- 4- A team of 120 researchers, field auditors and supervisors, in addition to 60 others supporting staff for office work participated in data collection.
- 5- The poll included voters for the age groups from 18 to 30 by 18%, from 31 to 50 years by 46%, and more than 51 years by 36%.
- 6- The poll included voters with a low intermediate education level by 38%, above intermediate education level by 37% and with higher education level by 25%.
- 7- The poll included a question on whether or not the voter elected a woman candidate. 21% of respondents answered "Yes" while 79% answered "No". Results were disaggregated by gender and educational levels.
- 8- The poll included detailed reasons for why a woman candidate was chosen in the election. The highest percentage of 37% said to have a balance in parliament between males and females.
- 9- The poll included detailed reasons for why a woman candidate was not chosen in the election. The highest percentage of 45% confirmed that they didn't elect a woman candidate because of her inability to work as a man.
- 10- The poll showed that 99% of voters easily accessed the polling station, while 1% of voters encountered difficulties accessing the polling station.
- 11- The poll included the wait time in line. 53% of voters said that they didn't wait, 20% waited between 1-5 minutes, 17% waited between 5-14 minutes, and 10% waited more than 15 minutes.
- 12- The poll included voter confidence in the integrity of the election since the beginning till the announcement of the results. 87% of respondents agreed, 9% somewhat agreed, 2% said "I don't know" and 2% disagreed.



## **Chapter 6: Information Technology and Statistics in the Election**

The use of automated technology leads to improved performance, speed, accuracy of the work, and enhances confidence in the output. Accordingly, the HEC was keen to introduce technology in all procedures to the extent that such use was possible. Technology is already used in the voter's database and inquiring about registration. Technology was also used for out-of-country registration, and attendance of voters, sending the aggregated vote count to the HEC, whether inside the country or abroad, as well as data registration of both election observers and candidates. The HEC also observed out-of-country Egyptian voting in missions abroad with the highest turnout through screens that instantly transmitted the voting process.

### **1- The official website of the High Elections Committee**

The HEC established a website for the 2015 HoR election in order to provide information for those who are involved in the electoral process, including voters inside or outside the country, candidates, civil society organizations, and others.

The site is deemed as a powerful and effective tool to educate voters, and to provide information necessary for the seamless and compliant exercise of political rights. Moreover, the website is used as a tool for communicating with the HEC to file complaints and questions, especially complaints related to the voter database. This is notwithstanding the HEC's social media website which publishes news about the committee, displays polling steps on schedule, and provides general updates.

Information about the HEC itself, the House of Representatives, the regulations governing the election, the candidacy and the observation process, or the media coverage, and a simplified election timeline, were among the more prominent contents published on the website. This is in addition to the publication of all official documents, such as the decrees of the committee, press releases, the Constitution, and relevant laws, some of which were translated into English.

Also, key information before or throughout every electoral phase was published on the website, whether this information would be of interest to citizens concerning the election or more general information, for the sake of freedom of data and transparency, such as:

- The candidates' names, electoral symbols, and party affiliations before every phase during the two rounds of the election. The committee (HEC) would have published the final list of names in due time before voting, however, this was not possible because of continuous appeals and changes to the final candidates.
- The HEC also intended to publish the curriculum vitae of candidates, however, it reconsidered its decision out of fear of making inaccurate or sometimes incorrect information available to citizens. Some viewers could have considered this information accurate just because it was published on the HEC's official website, or it could have been used by others to lend the inaccurate information false credibility.



- The final result of each phase, including two rounds inside the country and abroad, in addition to the by-elections.
- Statistics about voters registered in the voter's database.
- Statistics about in-country or out-of-country voting.

The feature of requesting information about the right to vote and about one's polling station remains the most important and popular feature on the website. This feature is available before the announcement of the election timeline which provides an opportunity to voters to complain in case of errors related to registration or the address on one's National Identity Card. This could have an impact on the constituency of enrollment or the polling station, and allows the HEC to rectify such errors immediately.

### **Statistics about the website:**

The website had more than five million visits between October - December 2015, with an average of 45.37% being new visitors. Daily visits to the website peaked on the first day of the second phase of the election on November 22, 2015 with 703,000 visits; on that day, the website registered more than 6,000 users at the same time. The website has been developed to be compatible with mobile phone browsers; the average website visits on these devices reached approximately 46.65%.

## **2- Requesting information about the right to vote and the polling station using National Identity Card numbers:**

According to the law regulating the Exercise of Political Rights, voter registration has become an automated process based on the national identification number database, which was established in 1990 and covers 100% of the population. This number has become the only identifier for each and every voter, with the voter's constituency being determined based on the address stated in the National Identity Card.

Using the National Identification Card Number, the HEC made available- the service of requesting information about the right to vote and one's polling station through several channels, including; mainly, the official website, by SMS messaging the number "5151," and by calling the number "140." Between September and December 2015 (the last voting day), the system had registered more than 31.9 million queries distributed over the different channels as shown in figure 5.6.

Upon reviewing the queries using the National Identification Number, it was concluded that the average age of users was 41; men were the most forthcoming in making queries; and most users were born in Cairo, Dakahlia, Sharqia, Beheira, and Alexandria.

In a noteworthy development, citizens complained on the first day of voting during the first round of the second phase because they reportedly received data errors upon using the telephone query service (140) to inquire about the location of their polling stations. The error was limited only to the telephonic query channel because Telecom Egypt, the service provider, played outdated voice messages on one of the company's phone servers. This error was rectified within a few hours as soon as the technical support team of the company was notified.



### 3- CSOs and Media:

Local and international organizations that wish to observe the election, or media outlets that wish to cover the election, apply in writing to the HEC – according to the regulations set by the committee’s decrees – and should attach to the request the number of observers, translators, or media personnel.

After the HEC reviews and approves the requests, the HEC provides each organization or media entity with a certain number of codes – each code is not repeated – for each observer, translator, or media member seeking registration. Each requesting entity is able to enter the data of each person affiliated to it through the internet and through the committee’s official website by using the code; whereas the following data is requested for each applicant: name, contact information, an electronic copy of the ID or passport, and proof of affiliation to the entity approved for observation or media coverage.

Members of the General Secretariat, trained in using this system, electronically check the requests on the internet, reply with acceptance or rejection, and state reasons for rejection. Each entity has a special account in order to follow-up on the requests, as no other entity is able to check on another’s registered data and status.

The HEC considered the permits, issued previously for organizations and media as valid. These permits were issued before the boundary delimitation law was declared unconstitutional. When the elections were re-scheduled, these permits were considered valid mainly to facilitate processes for these entities.

#### Statistics of Registering Civil Society and Media Representatives:

More than 22,000 media personnel and observers (local and international) were registered through aforementioned system for the 2015 HoR election. The following table shows the percentage of commitment of all entities to use all the codes provided to them upon their requests. CSOs used 20.3% of the permits that the HEC granted. Media entities used 53.4% of the allowed permits. This is an indicator that urges all entities to review their plans of observing and covering the elections. The table also shows the percentage of approved individual requests (observers, translators or media personnel) by the HEC. On average, 93% of CSOs requests were approved, and 92.26% of media requests were also approved. The main reason for rejecting some requests was that applicants did not complete all required data, or that they did not include a clear photograph of the applicant.

Entity’s type		No. of requested permits (for individuals)	Actual No. of individual applicants	% of entities’ commitment to submit permit applications	No. of accredited individuals	% of the HEC’s acceptance of applications for accreditation
Observation	International organization	1267	857	67.6%	827	96.5%
	Local	105316	20153	19.1%	18037	89.5%



	organization					
Media	<b>Egyptian Radio and Television Union (ERTU)</b>	2441	715	29.3%	641	89.7%
	<b>Egyptian Satellite Channels</b>	1258	794	63.1%	783	98.6%
	<b>Egyptian Press</b>	2276	1400	61.5%	1351	96.5%
	<b>International Media</b>	732	625	85.4%	610	97.6%
	<b>Egyptian News Websites</b>	477	299	62.7%	236	78.9%

#### 4- Candidates Information Management System:

Due to the large number of constituencies and those interested in candidacy, and in light of the conventional method of paper-based candidacy systems, and the lack of direct and electronic connection between places of candidacy in governorates committees at the Courts of First Instance and the HEC, the following problems and challenges were identified by the HEC:

- Difficulties in finding out whether or not a candidate has applied in more than one constituency.
- Mistakes in distributing candidates' symbols and numbers that made candidates submit appeals that may cause re-runs.
- Difficulties in collecting and presenting comprehensive information on candidates on the official website.

There was no automated system for registering the request to run for the election in any of the former elections similar in scale to the 2015 HoR election; in the context of the number of constituencies and candidates, and varying number of seats in each constituency and weight difference according to the capacity in which each candidate on a list is running. For the first time in the 2015 HoR election, a system for entering candidates' requests to apply to run for the election was proposed and adopted. A technical solution was put in place with the aim of resolving the aforementioned problems through developing a system for managing candidate information.

#### Implemented Solution:

- A central system, hosted by the HEC, and connected with candidate application stations in all governorates. Candidate data is entered after being registered in governorates and then transmitted electronically to the HEC in order to avoid duplicating names of candidates through comparing identification numbers.
- Allocating the electoral symbol to each candidate according to the regulations and rules set by the relevant committee.
- Approval or rejection of one's candidacy is updated on the system after the HEC reviews it and automatically assigns electoral symbols to each candidate. Names and symbols are then published on the official website of the HEC.



One hundred and fifty-eight (158) employees were trained on using this system, including administrators from the Court of First Instance. The HEC provided a computer for each employee that is securely connected to a central system in order to register candidacy applications.

- The system also accurately provides the names of candidates and basic data on the ballot papers (name, nickname, serial number, and symbol) that can be published through the official website of the HEC. Candidates can also check their registered and published data and request corrections at the right time.
- Complete, organized and accurate data is available on the system to facilitate printing ballot papers directly.

#### System Advantages:

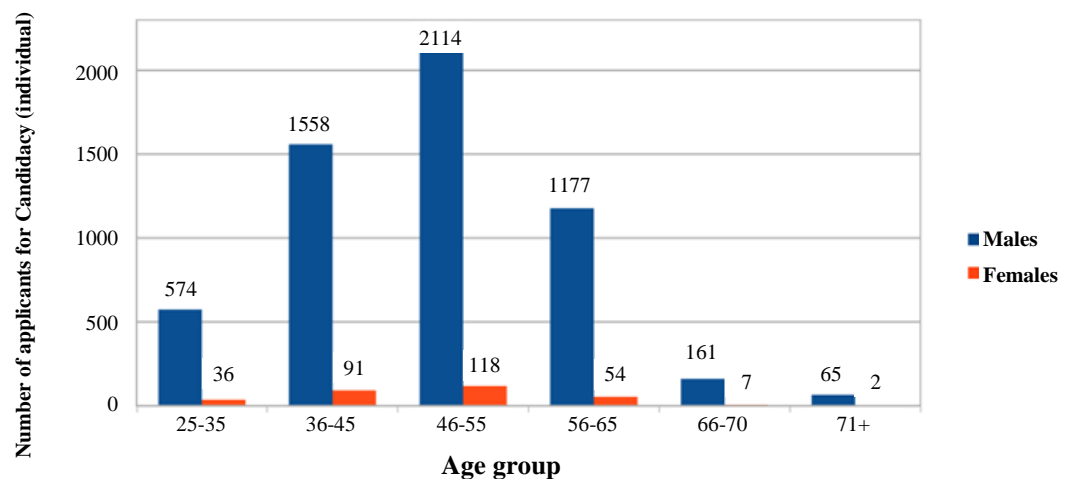
- Providing accurate, automated statistics on candidates to the HEC during application period.
- The possibility of presenting information accurately and rapidly either to the HEC or to citizens through the official website.

#### Proposed Solutions to Improve the Process:

- Despite the presence of committed system administrators, it is recommended to develop the work cycle to include a greater number of devices and/or have a review stage by the end of every day to mitigate human error.
- Adding work sessions assigned to receive appeals and update the current phase directly.

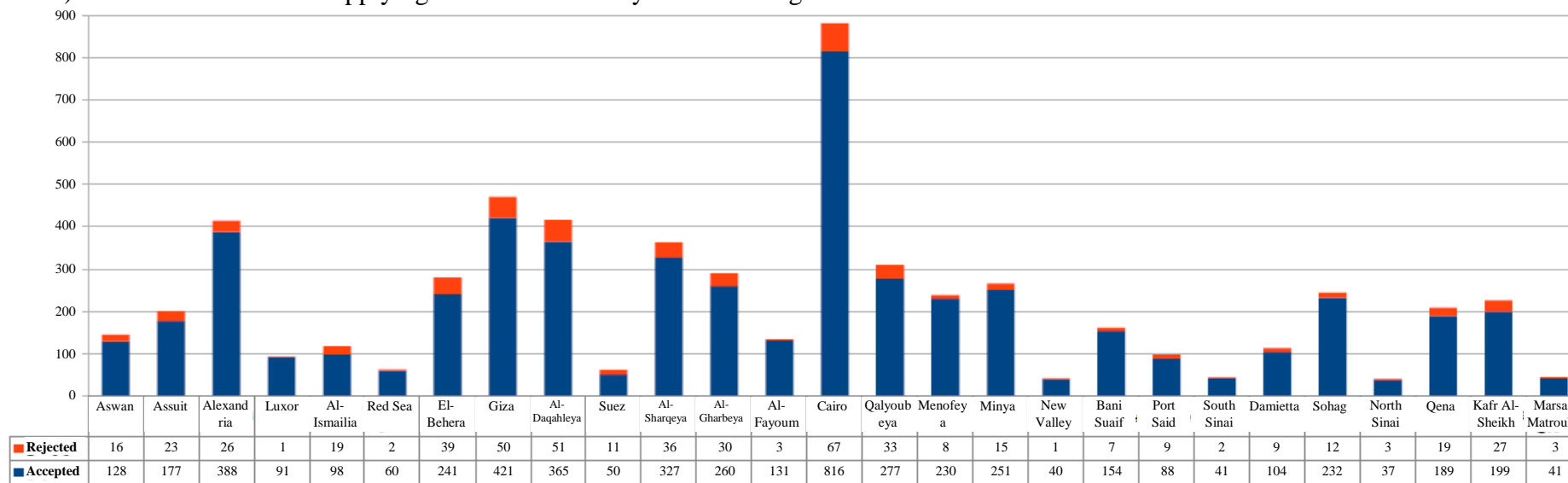
#### Statistics on Candidacy and Candidates:

a) Demographic statistics on candidates of the individual system.



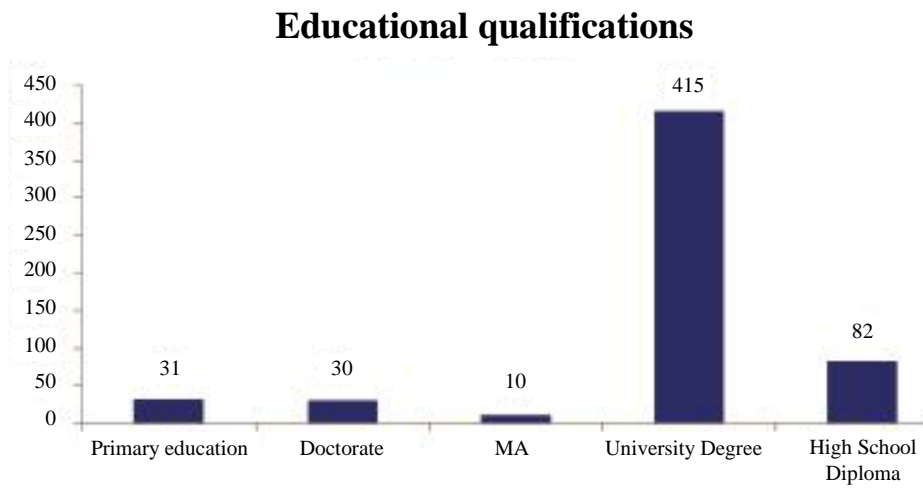


b) Number of candidates applying to the individual system in each governorate.

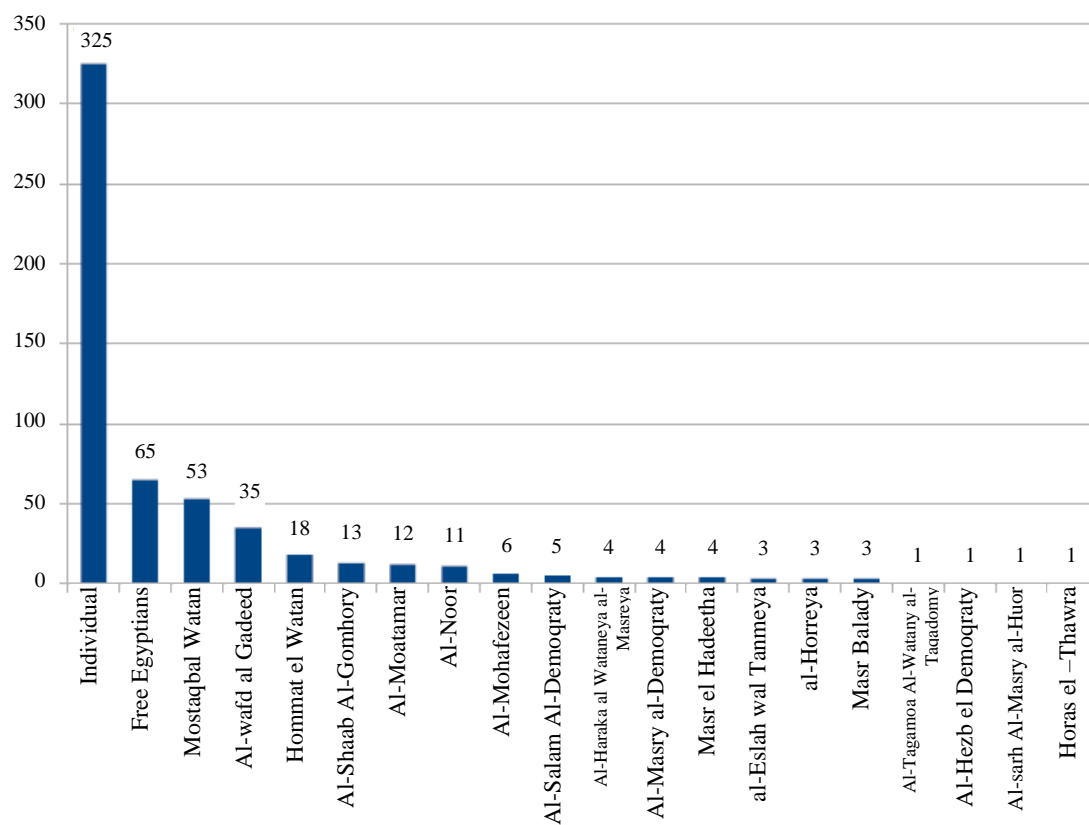




c) Demographic statistics of winners







Classification of members: Party/Individual



## **5- Electoral Irregularities Registration System:**

The law has set regulations for electoral campaigning periods, and the ceiling for funds to be spent while campaigning. Governorate-level committees were established for investigating irregularities and submitting their reports to the HEC in order for the committee to make an evidence-based decision on them on a case-by-case basis. Electoral complaints here do not include appeals submitted by candidates on polling and counting during election days.

There was no automated system in place for registering those complaints in any of the previous elections. An electronic system was proposed and implemented for the first time during the 2015 HoR elections that allowed for the electronic entry and circulation of complaints, thereby leading to the formation of a database of various irregularities and the constituencies in which they took place. This shall be a core instrument that will support managing irregularities during future elections.

### **The Implemented Solution:**

- An electronic automated system was developed for receiving and tracking the status of complaints in all courts.
- The employees, including administrators of the Court of First Instance, were trained in managing the system, and were provided with laptops that the HEC connected to an automated, central network to directly register complaints.
- The data entry of a complaint takes place at the Court of First Instance; supporting documents are then scanned and attached with the complaint.
- The complaint is immediately submitted to the HEC with all its remarks and documents, then the committee responsible for reviewing irregularities at the general secretariat examines the complaint and submits it to the HEC for a decision. The HEC's decision is then stored on the system.

### **Challenges:**

- The relatively low number of submitted complaints compared to the number of candidates, while a large number of irregularities reported by the media without filing complaints.
- Non-commitment of employees of courts to immediately register complaints on a rolling basis.
- The difficulty of following up and ensuring that paper complaints are registered in the system.

### **Proposed solutions for improving the process:**

- Raising the awareness of citizens through media on electoral irregularities, how and where to submit complaints, and making filing complaints electronically available.
- Issuing clear administrative instructions by the HEC for courts to not accept paper complaints before being registered on the computer, and to rely only on the registered number of the complaint when circulating it.

### **Statistics:**

- Only 41 complaints were registered in courts; the courts of Alexandria, Giza and South Cairo had the biggest share.



## 6. Out-of-Country Voting (OCV):

Following the January 25<sup>th</sup>, 2011 revolution, Egyptians living abroad were given the right to participate by voting in all Egyptian electoral events.

As a result, Egyptians living abroad became eligible to cast their votes at the nearest Egyptian diplomatic mission. Since the beginning, technological solutions were adopted as a method for the pre-registration of the voter in order to recognize them during polling.

Egypt's out-of-country voting (OCV) system then changed from a system requiring voter preregistration as a prerequisite for voting in an election, to a system that does not require any pre-registration at all. The latter system was adopted since the 2014 Constitutional Referendum and remained in use until the 2015 HoR elections.

One of the challenges taken into consideration while developing the electronic system for the 2015 HoR elections was the large number of constituencies. For example, in countries with huge numbers of Egyptians, such as Saudi Arabia and Kuwait, turnout was across 102 constituencies. This would require, for example, providing 102 separate ballot boxes and developing 102 separate reports for both the individual system (Bloc Vote) and the List System (Party Bloc Vote).

Another challenge taken into consideration while developing the electronic system, and which previous election management bodies had also faced, was the short time interval between the OCV and the in-country voting. The short interval rendered it impossible to remove the names of Egyptians who already voted abroad from the voter list used for in-country voting. In the 2015 HoR elections, there was overlap between polling for OCV and polling for in-country voting, making it impossible to remove the names of Egyptians who already voted abroad from the voter lists used for in-country voting. However, this overlap minimized the possibility of multiple voting.

### The Adopted Solution:

- A centralized program, which is linked to a central database, has been developed to inquire about the eligibility of an Egyptian citizen wishing to vote at a certain diplomatic mission. The system can determine whether a voter has the right to vote (in general, and specific to the current phase) according to the governorate to which they belong. The system can also determine whether or not a voter has already cast a ballot in any of the other polling places designated for OCV by the HEC.
- The system was placed in all polling places selected by the HEC (i.e. 139 polling places in 123 countries), in coordination with the MoFA. To facilitate this process, all diplomatic missions received written and visual content describing the installation process for computers. Further, all missions were directly contacted to ensure that the system was successfully installed. In addition, six groups of MoFA personnel were trained and traveled to countries with large numbers of Egyptian voters, to assist with the electoral process.
- The system is also connected to tablets, which were sent to countries with the largest numbers of Egyptian voters to facilitate the electoral process and



reduce voters' waiting time at missions. Moreover, a number of MCIT engineers traveled to select countries to follow up on the operation of tablets.

- Voters head to the Egyptian diplomatic mission and register their national ID number, whether through the tablet or directly via available computers.
- The software shows whether or not a voter has the right to vote in this phase; has already cast their vote; or has the right to exercise their political rights.
- A voter is automatically registered in the system upon attendance, in order to prevent multiple voting.
- The HoR elections witnessed a number of new developments. Most importantly was the development of a system that, once given the numerical count of votes, automatically produces the vote count report. The system also displays the numerical count of votes to the HEC in real time, as they are inputted into a diplomatic mission's system.

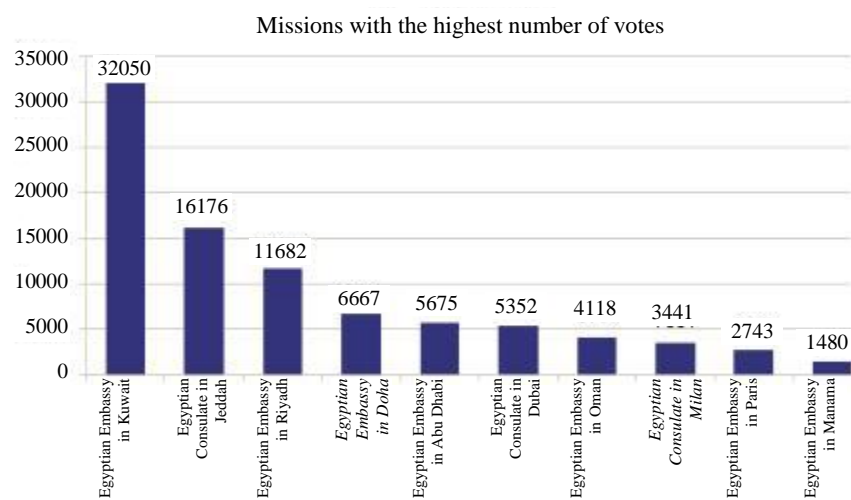
#### [Suggested Solutions to improve the process:](#)

The overlap between the OCV period and the in-country voting period during the 2015 HoR made it impossible to remove the names of Egyptians who already voted abroad from the voter lists used for in-country voting. Nonetheless, the overlap also greatly minimized, if not prevented, the possibility of Egyptians returning from abroad to cast another vote in Egypt.

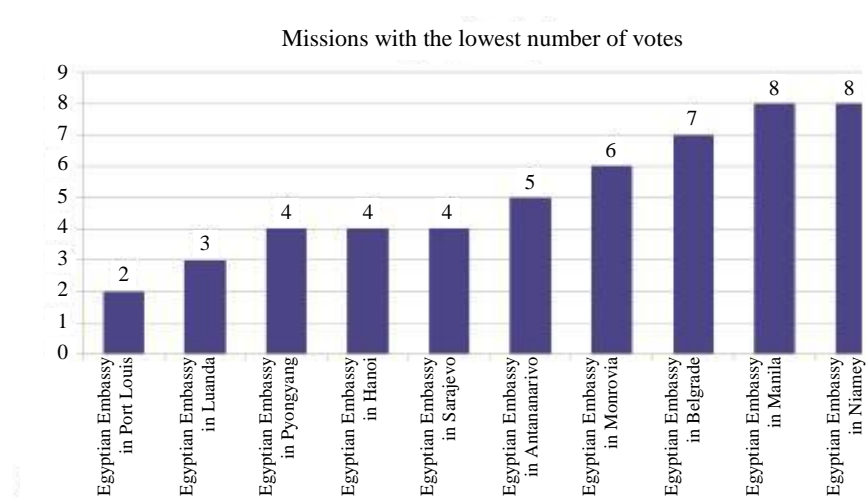
Considering the adoption of a system that fully conducts polling and counting processes electronically as an alternative solution may be especially beneficial for elections with large numbers of constituencies or candidates, or which use multiple electoral systems.

Missions with the highest and lowest number of votes



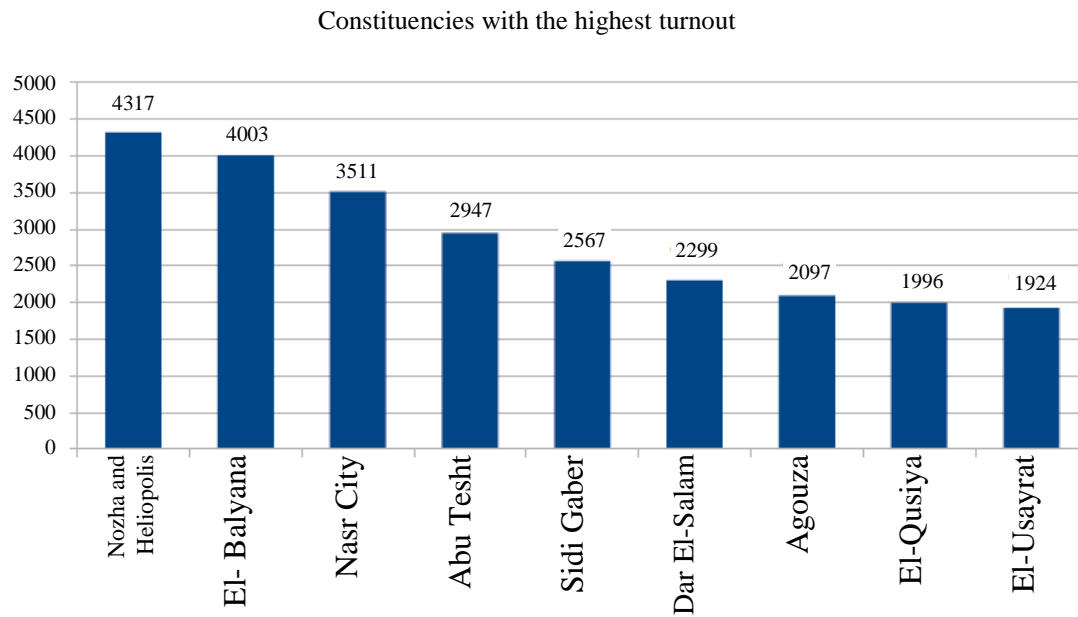






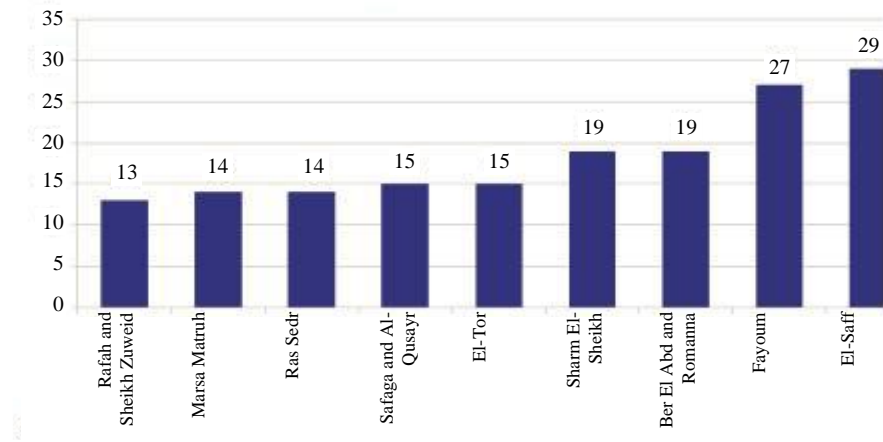


Constituencies with the highest and lowest turnout (based on figures from the first round in both phases)



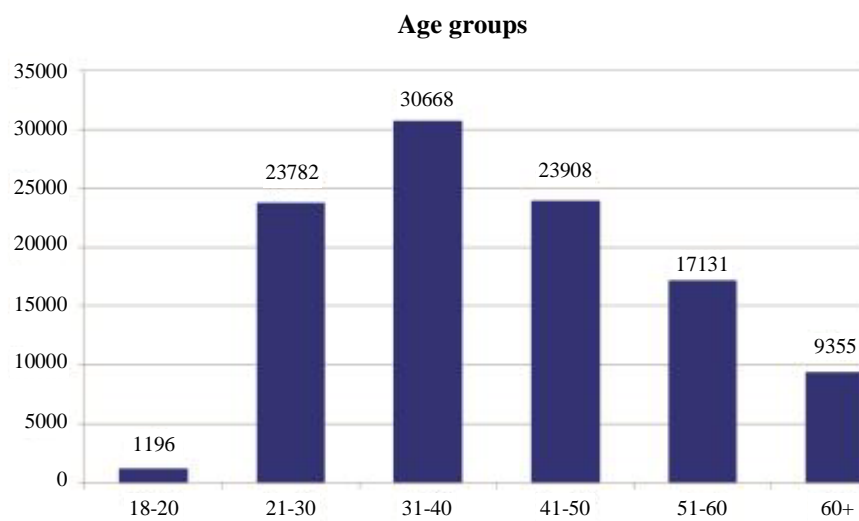
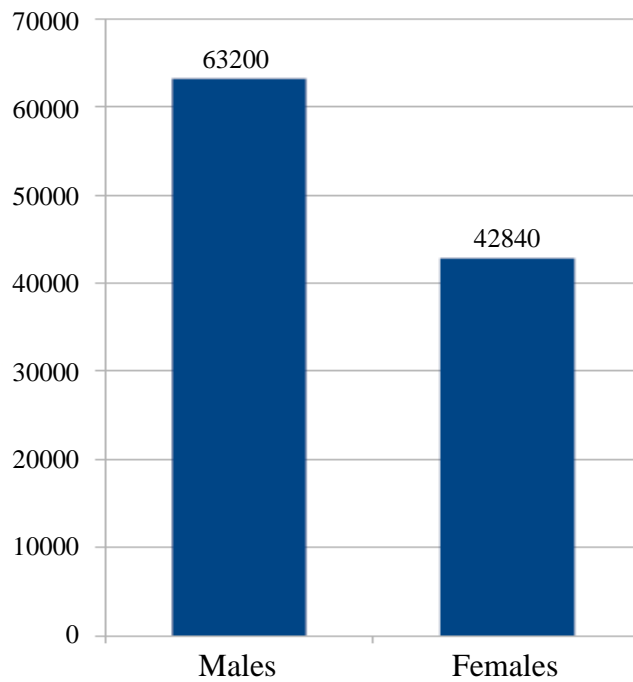


Constituencies with the lowest turnout





Demographic statistics on voters who cast their ballots (based on figures from the first round in both phases)





## 7. Results Transfer System

A new system was developed to tabulate results from polling stations at the general-committees level. The results were stored and sent to the HEC by laptops via a secure network. This system, put in place for the first time, enabled an accurate, prompt, and full transfer of data. It also allowed the tabulation of votes at general committees without errors.

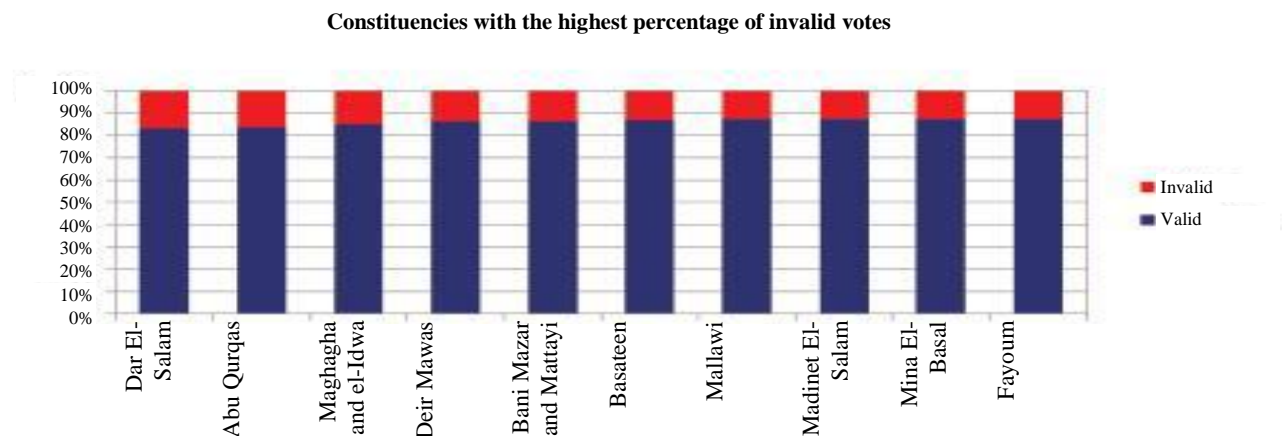
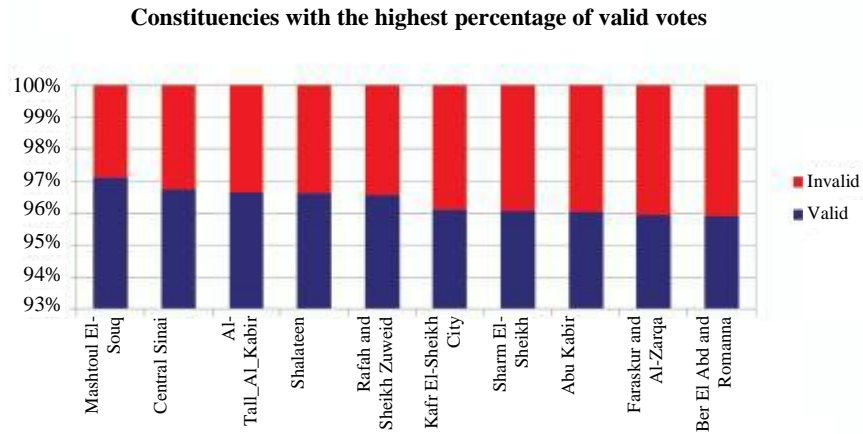
The use of the electronic system brought about many advantages, most importantly:

- Ensuring the accurate aggregation of votes that were individually-inserted at each polling station;
- Issuing a direct and final report detailing the total number of votes won by each candidate at the general committee as soon as all data of polling stations are inserted;
- Providing updated data to the HEC in real time, facilitating sorting and counting processes;
- Issuing various accurate statistical reports on the polling-station level (as opposed to simply the general-committee and constituency-levels) making such reports available to citizens, thus enhancing the transparency and integrity of the electoral process;
- Enabling the identification of candidates running for run-off elections as soon as possible, facilitating the preparation of printing the run-off election ballot papers in light of a challenging timeline;
- Allowing quick delivery of detailed results for each round, enabling the prompt announcement of results via the website and reducing the number of errors occurring through manual data entry at the central level; and
- Helping heads of general committees in calculating the results accurately and quickly, and facilitating the early detection of errors upon the receipt of reports made by polling stations through comparing their calculations against the system's calculations. This method saved effort and time, making it easier for the HEC to revise results at the head office and directly contributing to the accurate and speedy announcement of results.



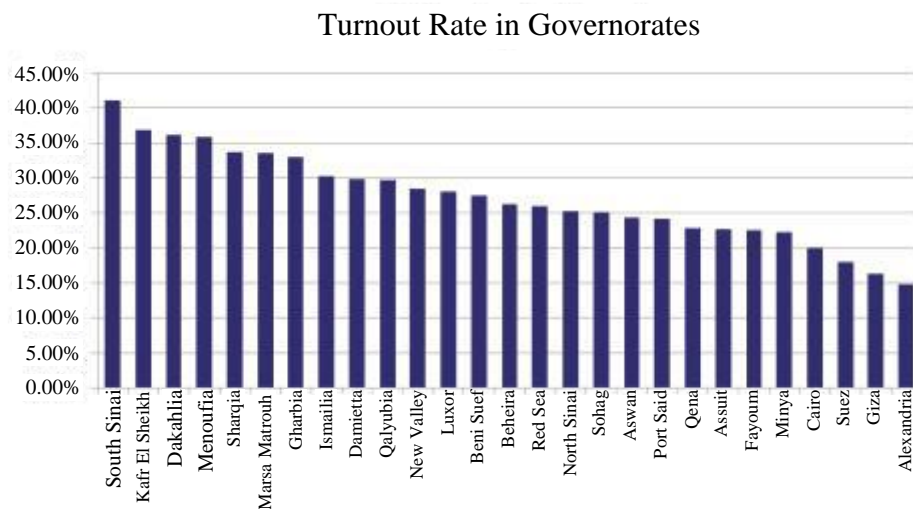
Below are some statistical reports generated based on the actual data compiled by the Results Transfer System:

- (a) The percentage of valid and invalid votes at the level of governorates, general committees, and polling stations.



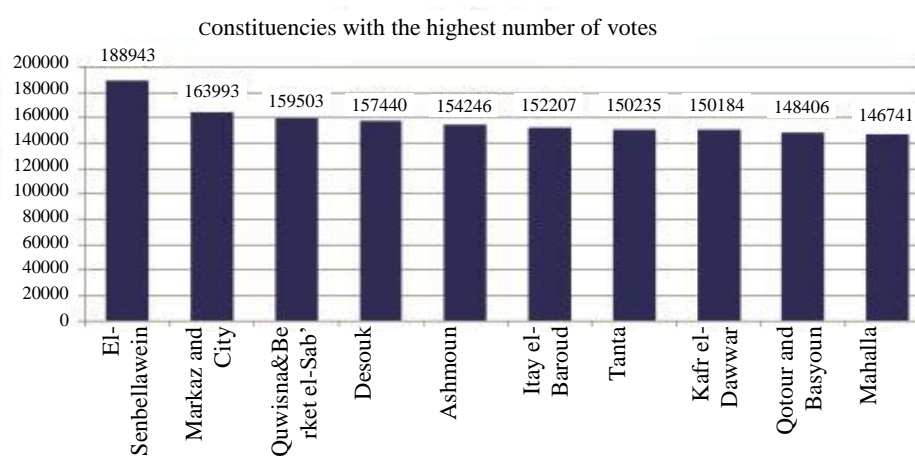


(b) Ranking governorates by turnout



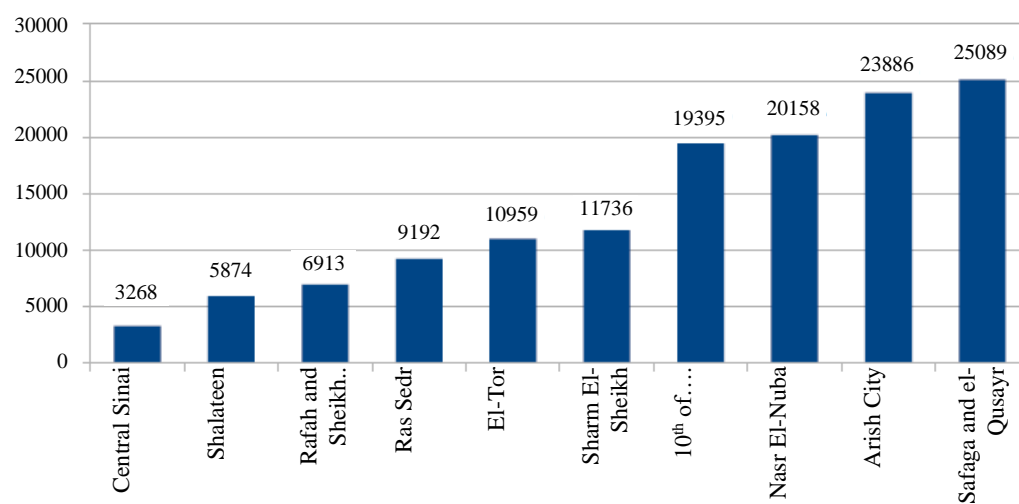


(c) Constituencies with the highest and lowest number of votes



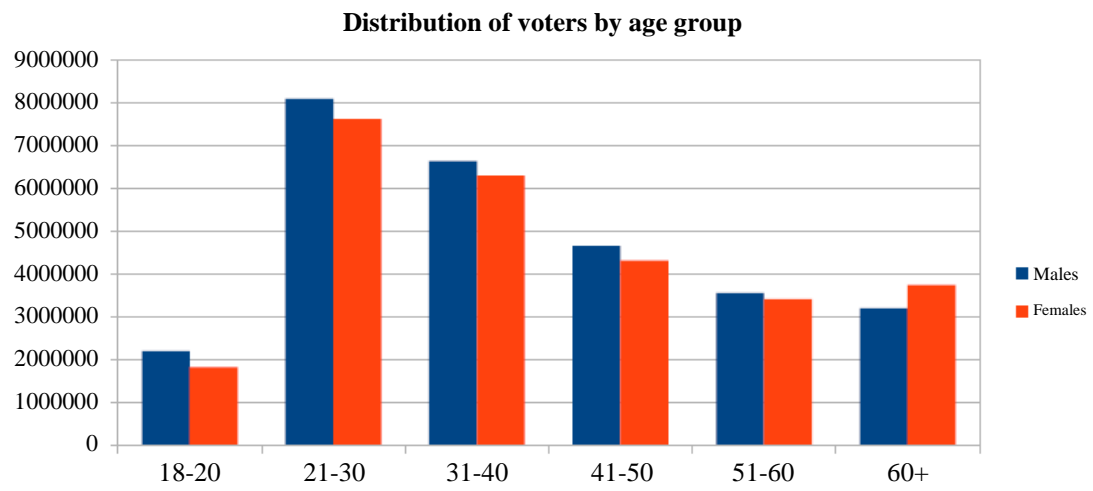


**Constituencies with the lowest number of votes**





(d) Demographic statistics about registered voters nationwide





## **Chapter 7: Intake and Archiving**

The process of archiving electoral documents refers to storing such documents upon their receipt from polling stations. This includes passing them through the general committees, arranging them, placing them in envelopes, and storing them in a permanent place. In the past, the storing process was executed differently according to the procedures followed by each individual judge serving as the head of a general committee and/or a polling station; this led to inconsistency in the archiving process and the lack of adequate organization and attentiveness. This was due to the fact that judges believed that storing electoral documents was insignificant; as a result, the process was generally treated with carelessness. Judges viewed the delivery of electoral documents as the job of the administrative staff, and thus were unsatisfactorily engaged in the process.

Furthermore, archiving also comprises all papers and documents pertaining to the HEC such as minutes of meeting, decrees, correspondences, and other documents.

The HEC examined previous experiences in the field of archiving and storing electoral documents, and attempted to come up with solutions to problems arising in the past in order to prevent their reoccurrence in the future.

Preparations for archiving electoral documents started long before polling occurred. The HEC provided the requirements for archiving and determined the methods to be used to store each item depending on its nature and taking into consideration the quantity of papers and their weight. The HEC designated plastic zip-lock bags for storing voter's lists at the polling station level and tamper-evident bags for storing the records of proceedings for general committees and polling stations. Moreover, carton boxes were designated for storing these records. Additionally, tamper-evident plastic bags and cartons were provided to store used ballot papers, secured safety seals with unique serial numbers, and plastic seals with unique serial numbers. Moreover, sacks were provided to store unused ballot papers and large sacks were provided to store all the papers and documents of each polling station in one container, which is then placed in the permanent storing place based on specific procedures.

The General Secretariat of the HEC developed a manual in which an entire chapter was designated to the topic of storing and archiving electoral materials. This chapter elaborated on the different roles of the heads of polling stations and general committees, presidents of Courts of First Instance and the General Elections Department.

The HEC presented an idea during the 2015 parliamentary elections that was implemented for the first time in any electoral event in Egypt. The idea was to establish "Electoral Documents Archiving Committees", comprised of judges who are assisted by administrative staff members. Members of this committee are responsible for receiving all electoral documents (except for the polling station's records) from the Presiding Officers. Each of the required documents must be placed in its respective designated folder, in accordance with the aforementioned archiving instructions.



The HEC also adopted an unprecedented procedure in the process of delivering electoral documents; it prepared three copies of receipts, which indicated that the items were delivered and served as proof that the delivery process was fully executed among the relevant parties. This process also allows for the identification of the person responsible for any potential error. These receipts were handed to Electoral Documents Archiving Committees.

The HEC, for the very first time, developed specialized training courses targeting Presiding Officers, judicial members of the Archiving Committees, and members of the administrative staff. The training sessions aimed to raise the participants' awareness on the importance of storing and archiving electoral documents, and how to follow the archiving instructions released by the HEC. There were also specialized training courses which explained to various electoral workers (heads and members of Archiving Committees and administrative staff) the importance of the role they play.

Furthermore, the entire process was monitored and evaluated during both rounds of the first phase of elections. Feedback was solicited from all the relevant parties involved in the process - including remarks and setbacks that occurred throughout the process - in order to avoid having the same issues during the second phase. In the follow-up training, which took place between the two phases, members of the Archiving Committees were asked to provide their feedback on their first experience as committee members and the challenges they faced in this regard. These challenges were addressed during the second phase in an effort to further achieve the desired goals. One of the challenges that emerged from the feedback was a shortage in Archiving Committees members; as a result, the number of committee members was increased during the second phase.

The proper storage and maintenance of electoral documents is important because it facilitates the accurate delivery of documents required by State Council courts, or the Court of Cassation, in response to their requests pertaining to appeals under review. The impact of accurately delivering stored documents was very evident in the rulings issued by courts regarding these appeals.

Taking into account the size and quantity of electoral documents, the HEC followed certain procedures to organize the work of Archiving Committees in order to make their work entirely separate from that of the general committees. This was done, for example, by assigning Archiving Committees a separate role within the same premises of general committees. Moreover, the HEC provided the Archiving Committees with the necessary logistical tools and supplies to enable them to perform their assigned roles.

Upon the commencement of polling, the HEC removed obstacles that could hinder the ability of the Archiving Committees to perform their assigned duties. Such obstacles became evident in the first round of the first phase of polling, when the HEC realized that a small number of Presiding Officers did not comply with the archiving instructions for storing electoral documents. This lack of compliance was due to the fact that Presiding Officers had not carefully read the HEC's archiving manual. To address this issue, the HEC amended its rules for the receipt of polling stations' records, instructing that heads of general committees should not receive these records unless they ensure that the remaining electoral documents are also delivered to the



Archiving Committees, accompanied by the relevant receipt. This rule further stipulated that a copy of the relevant receipt should be delivered to the head of the general committee to ensure the delivery of these documents.

This method helped ensure that all Presiding Officers maintained the electoral documents, and that they were delivered in full to the Archiving Committees in order to obtain the required receipt which proves delivery to the heads of general committees.

One-hundred and thirty-four judges were appointed in Archiving Committees for the first phase. It was noted that the number of judges was not sufficient to allow them to perform their duties in a satisfactory manner and without hardship; as a result, the number of judges was increased to 232 in the second phase.

Judges of Archiving Committees followed the instructions given to them with regards to the delivery process; this ensured that electoral documents were properly maintained. This is considered an unprecedented occurrence in Egyptian electoral events. The judges supervised the transfer of electoral documents to their temporary storage place in the Courts of First Instance, before the documents were transferred to the permanent storing place affiliated to the HEC.

Upon the conclusion of polling, and the announcement of results by the HEC, a small-scale committee was formed at the General Secretariat to review the archiving process. The committee reviewed the processes of permanently storing and archiving electoral documents. The committee also followed-up on the appeals filed before the Court of Cassation, and responded to the court's requests to provide the electoral documents that were being appealed.

The aforementioned committee received electoral documents from the different Courts of First Instance in order to archive them electronically and physically.

The committee scanned all polling stations and general committee records, which amounted to about 570,000 various documents.

Furthermore, the committee scanned the voter's lists (form "6 n") in the following governorates: New Valley, South Sinai, North Sinai and Suez. The committee's initial goal was to cover all governorates, however, a lack of resources prevented the provision of an adequate number of advanced scanners suitable for this type of work. We hope that in the future, we will be given a chance to complete this important step which contributes to revealing the percentages of voters who participated in elections along with their demographic data, in order to identify the specific features of each governorate and to develop a comprehensive strategy for elections accordingly.

### Statistics on the abovementioned four governorates show the following:

1. Voter turnout among voters who are 21-40 years old is the highest compared to all other age groups. Its highest percentage reached 58.48% in Sharm El Sheikh Constituency, while the lowest percentage reached 40.56% in El Kharga constituency with an average of 49.52%.



2. Voter turnout among voters who are 18-20 years old and those above 70 years old is the lowest in all four constituencies.
3. The highest percentage of women's turnout reached 51% in Arish constituency, and the lowest percentage was in South Sinai constituencies reaching 38% with an average of 44.5%.



### Statistics on the four governorates after scanning the voter lists:

Governorate	Constituency	Round	Total voters	Total turnout	Total number of registered voters who did not vote	Total number of voters who				Voted in first round and runoff	
						Voted		Did not vote			
						Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
New Valley	Kharga	First	67,125	29,593	37,532	17,410	12,183	18,553	18,979	12,899	9,811
		Runoff		20,588	46,537	11,822	8,766	21,890	24,647		
	Dakhla	First	89,329	29,343	59,986	18,010	11,333	28,572	31,414	13,546	8,690
		Runoff		23,927	65,402	14,268	9,659	32,650	32,752		

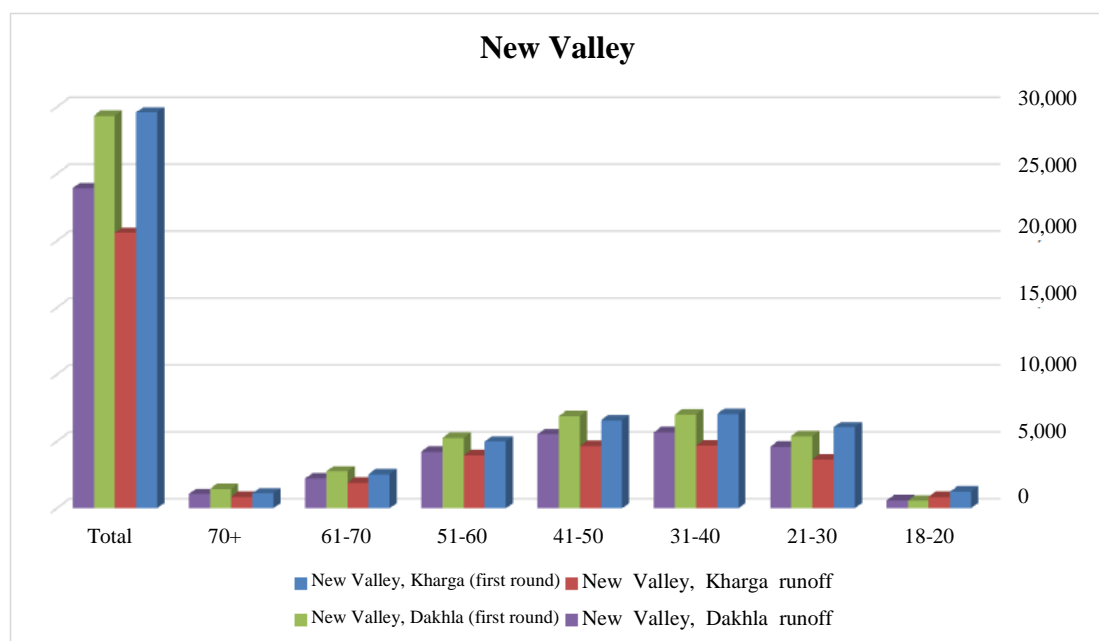
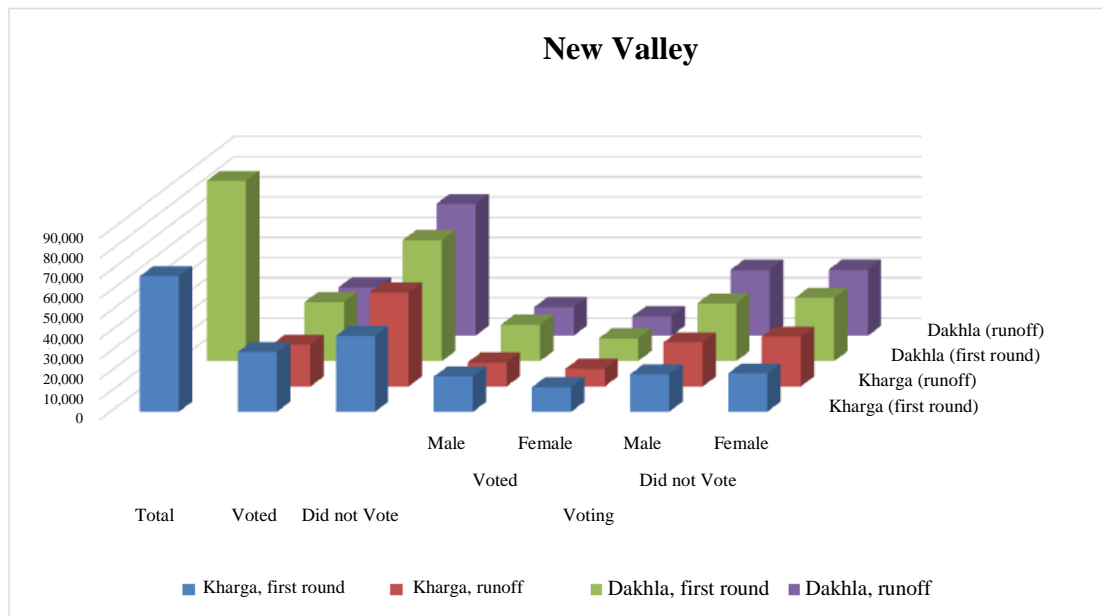
Governorate	Constituency	Round	18-20	21-30	31-40	41-50	51-60	61-70	Above 70	Total
New Valley	Kharga	First	1,245	6,048	7,059	6,582	4,991	2,546	1,122	29,593
		Runoff	856	3,655	4,695	4,653	3,949	1,912	867	20,588
	Dakhla	First	563	5,402	7,020	6,890	5,263	2,753	1,453	29,343
		Runoff	581	4,599	5,681	5,541	4,234	2,228	1,063	23,927

Total	Kharga	First round
		Runoff
	Dakhla	First round
		Runoff

Total turnout	Rate
From 21 to 40 years	
13,107	44.29%
8,351	40.56%
12,422	42.33%
10,280	42.96%

Turnout rate	
Male	Female
58.83%	41.17%
57.42%	42.58%
61.38%	38.62%
59.63%	40.37%



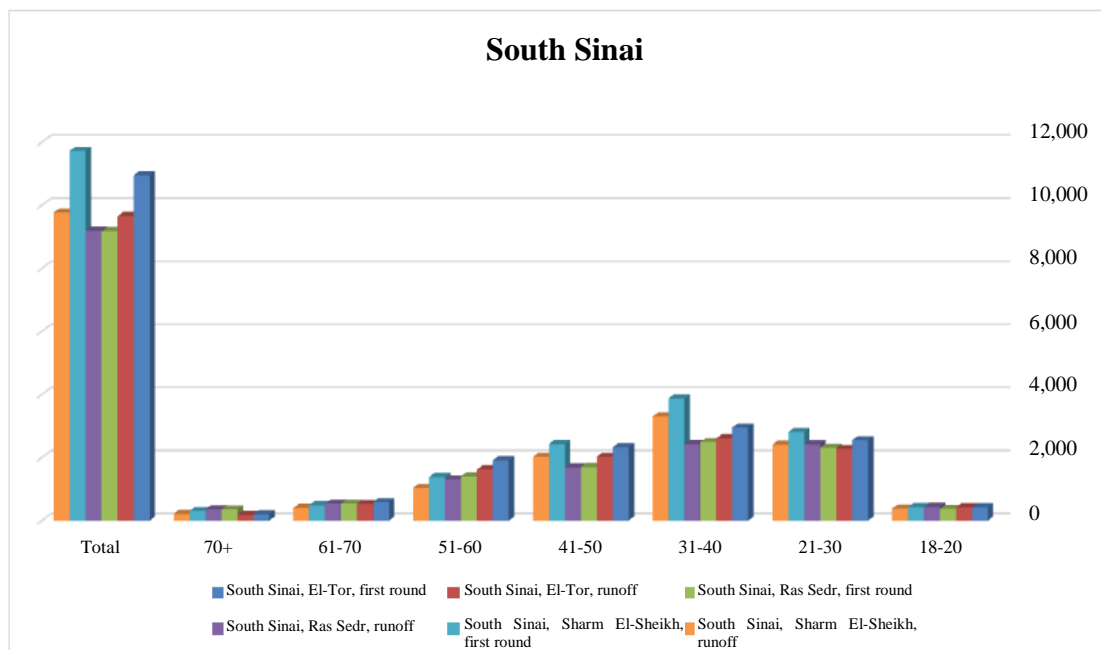
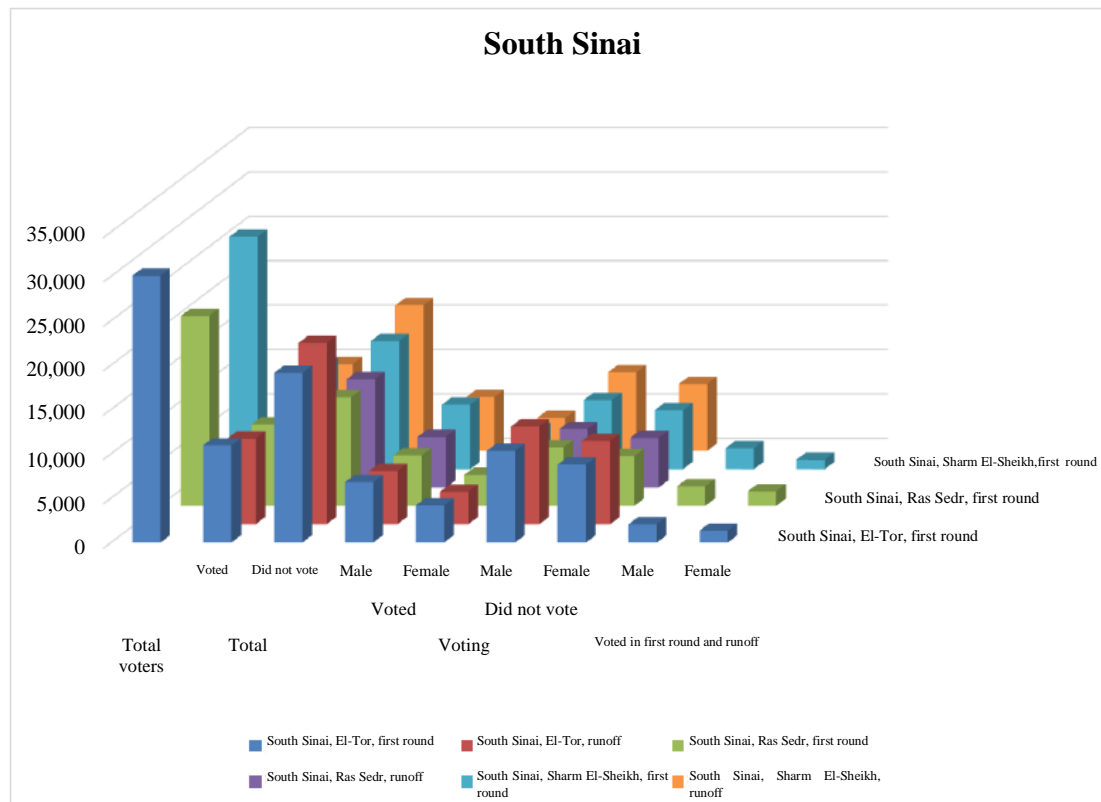




Governorate	Constituency	Round	Total number of voters	Total # of voters who		Voting				Voted in first round and runoff	
						Voted		Did not Vote			
				Voted	Did not Vote	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
South Sinai	El-Tor	First	30,070	10,951	19,119	6,790	4,161	10,324	8,795	2,061	1,340
		Runoff		9,661	20,409	5,990	3,671	11,021	9,388		
	Ras Sedr	First	21,407	9,182	12,225	5,693	3,489	6,602	5,624	2,205	1,654
		Runoff		9,194	12,213	5,700	3,494	6,595	5,618		
	Sharm El-Sheikh	First	26,176	11,722	14,454	7,268	4,454	7,805	6,649	2,364	1,075
		Runoff		9,769	16,407	6,057	3,712	8,860	7,547		

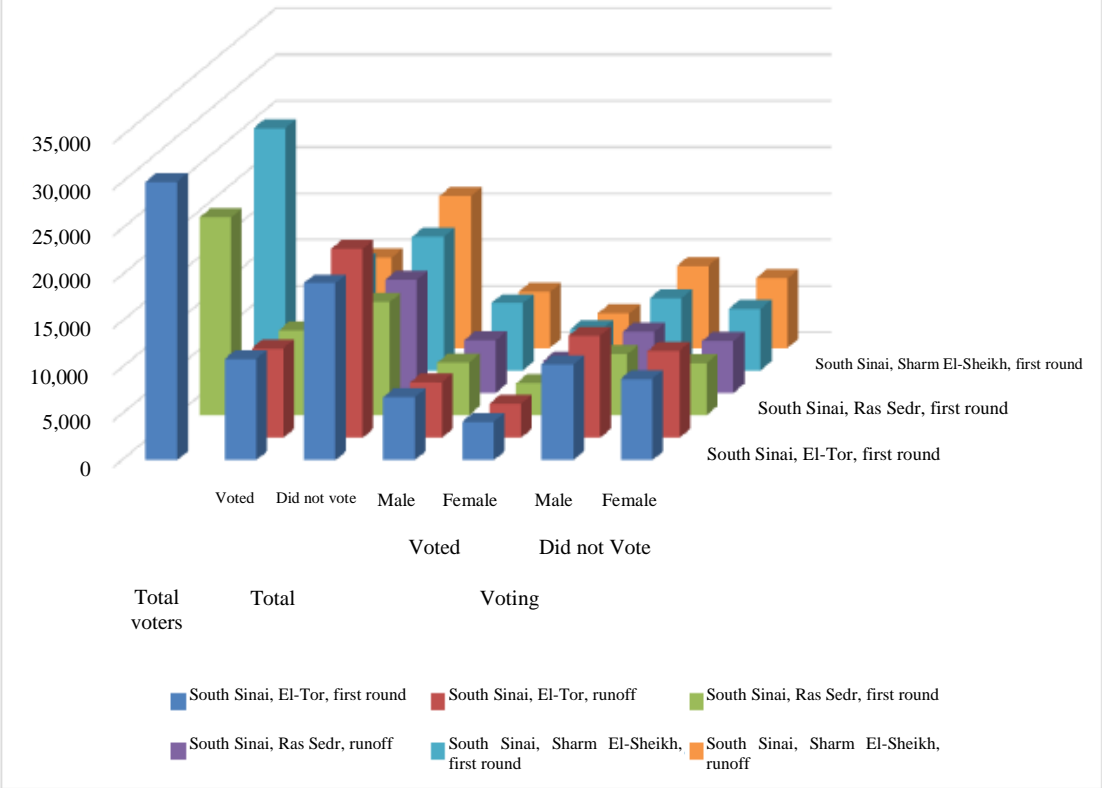
Governorate	constituency	Round	18-20	21-30	31-40	41-50	51-60	61-70	Above 70	Total
South Sinai	El-Tor	First	424	2,550	2,948	2,326	1,915	590	198	10,951
		Runoff	420	2,276	2,616	2,024	1,625	527	173	9,661
	Ras Sedr	First	379	2,314	2,493	1,700	1,397	540	359	9,182
		Runoff	437	2,424	2,427	1,689	1,313	536	368	9,194
	Sharm El-Sheikh	First	427	2,813	3,877	2,431	1,379	493	302	11,722
		Runoff	383	2,408	3,305	2,022	1,036	405	210	9,769
				Total turnout		Percentage			Turnout Rate	
				From 21 to 40 years					Men	Women
Total	El-Tor	First			5,498	50.20%			62.00%	38.00%
		Runoff			4,892	50.63%			62.00%	38.00%
	Ras Sedr	First			4,808	52.36%			62.00%	38.00%
		Runoff			4,851	52.76%			62.00%	38.00%
	Sharm El-Sheikh	First			6,690	57.07%			62.00%	38.00%
		Runoff			5,713	58.48%			62.00%	38.00%







South Sinai

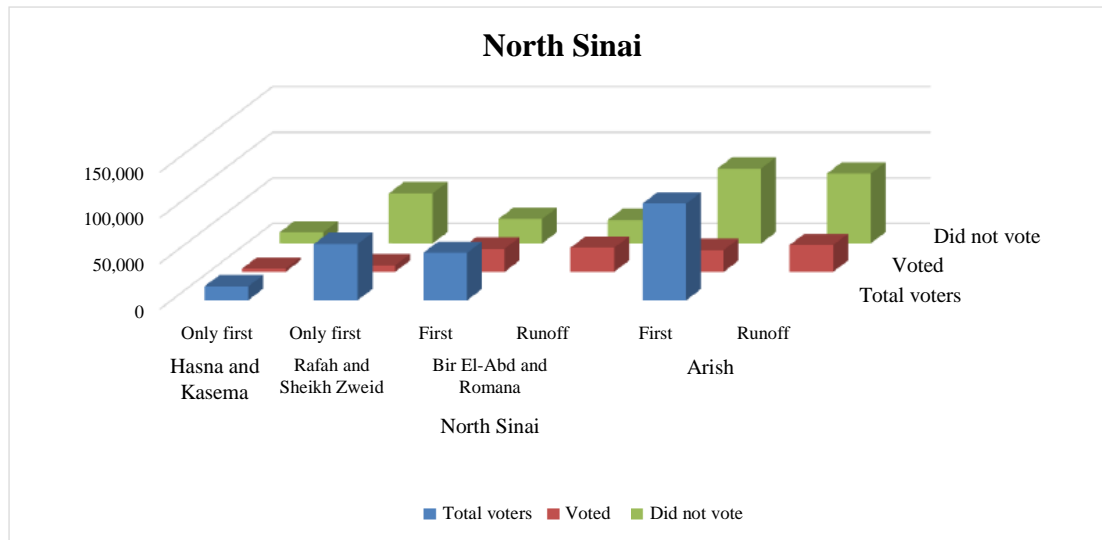




Governorate	Constituency	Round	Total number of voters	Turnout	Registered voters who did not vote	Number of voters who				Voted in first round and runoff	
						Voted		Did not vote			
						Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
North Sinai	Hasna and Kasema	First round only	15,096	3,268	11,828	2,222	752	6,032	5,796	0	0
	Rafah and Sheikh Zweid	First round only	61,673	6,900	54,773	3,726	3,174	28,482	26,291	0	0
	Bir El-Abd and Romana	First	51,947	25,275	26,672	14,407	10,868	12,269	14,403	12,627	11,080
		Runoff		26,262	25,685	14,707	11,555	13,099	12,586		
	Arish	First	105,919	23,827	82,092	11,675	12,152	36,120	45,972	7,450	7,983
		Runoff		29,390	76,529	14,628	14,695	35,203	41,326		

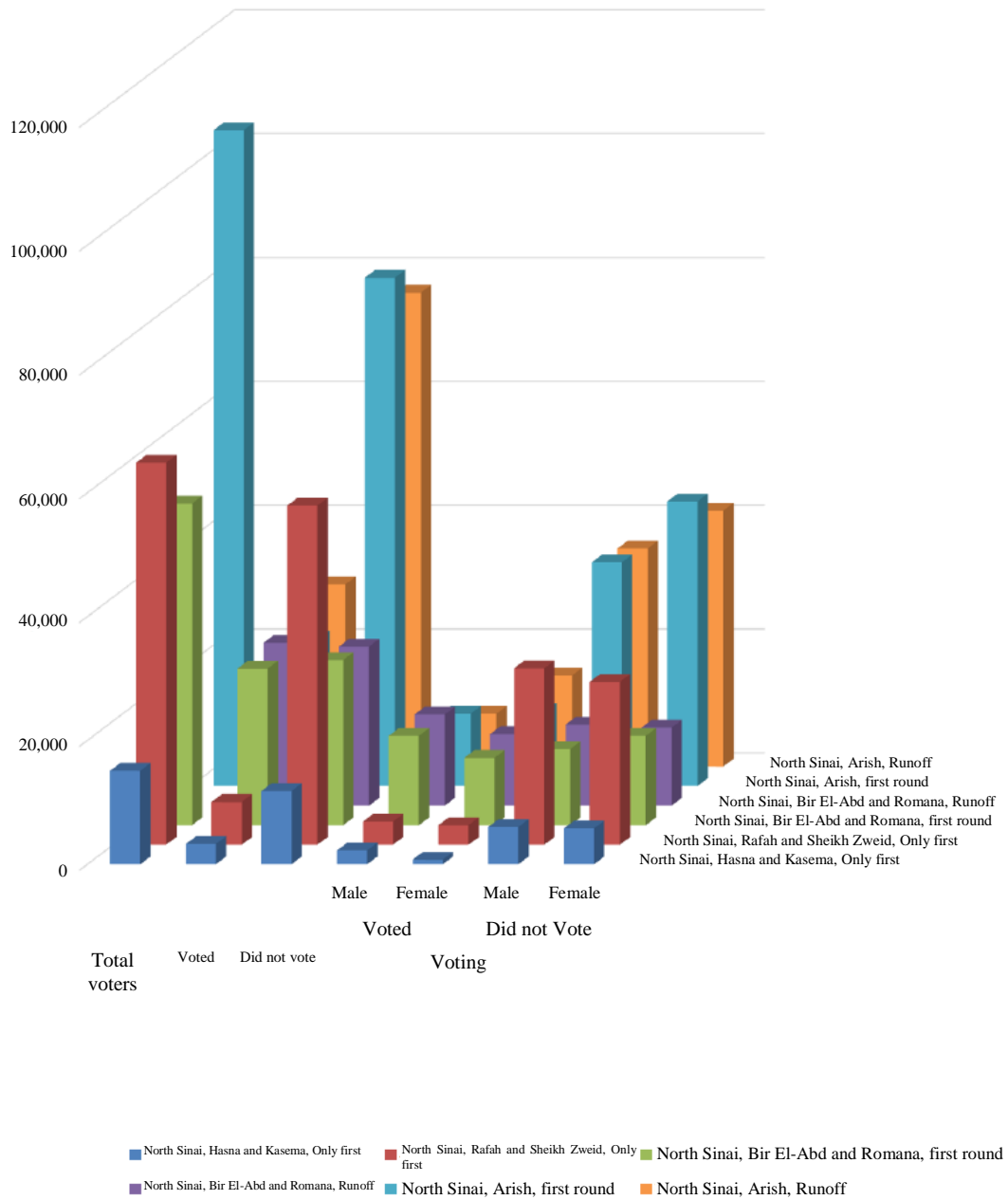
Governorate	Constituen cy	Round	18- 20	21- 30	31- 40	41-50	51- 60	61- 70	Above 70	Total
North Sinai	Arish	First	1,065	6,573	5,406	4,625	3,416	1,783	959	23,827
		Runoff	1,260	7,800	6,667	5,709	4,526	2,258	1,169	29,390
	Bir El-Abd and Romana	First	1,206	7,216	6,366	4,917	3,116	1,408	1,046	25,275
		Runoff	2,126	7,871	6,404	4,637	2,592	1,423	1,209	26,262
	Rafah and Sheikh Zweid	First	318	2,205	1,616	1,189	819	412	340	6,900
	Hasna and Kasema	First	157	822	873	630	285	278	223	3,268
				Total turnout		Rate			Turnout rate	
				From 21 to 40 years					Men	Women
Total	Arish	First	11,979		50.27 %			49.00 %	51.00%	
		Runoff	14,467		49.22 %			49.77 %	50.22%	
	Bir El-Abd and Romana	First	13,582		53.73 %			57.00 %	43.00%	
		Runoff	14,276		54.35 %			56.00 %	44.00%	
	Rafah and Sheikh Zweid	First	3,821		55.37 %			54.00 %	46.00%	
	Hasna and Kasema	First	1,696		51.89 %			67.99 %	23.01%	



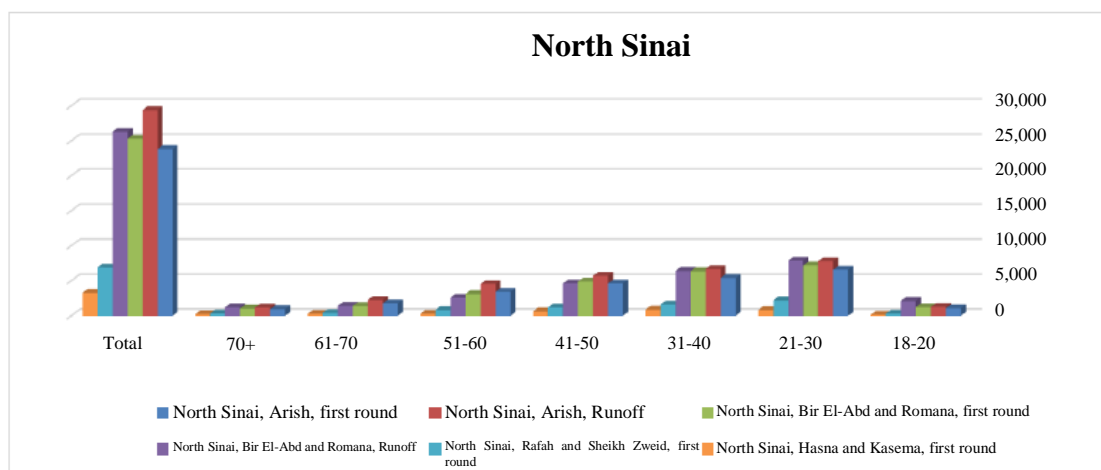
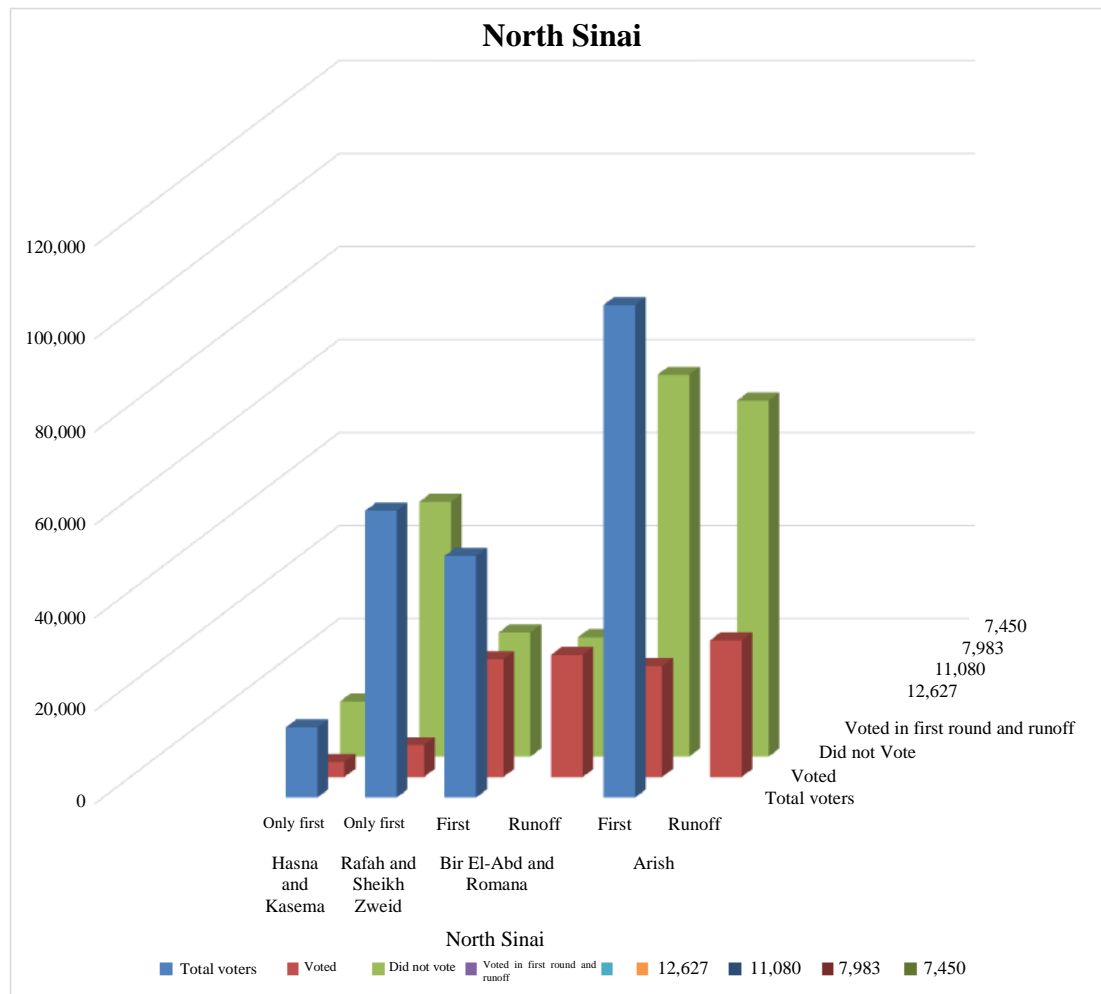




## North Sinai





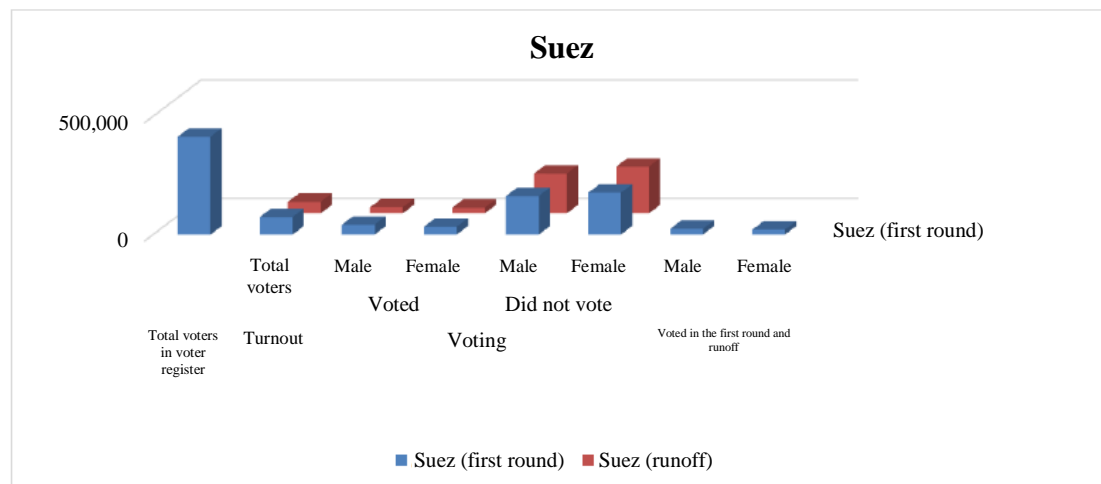
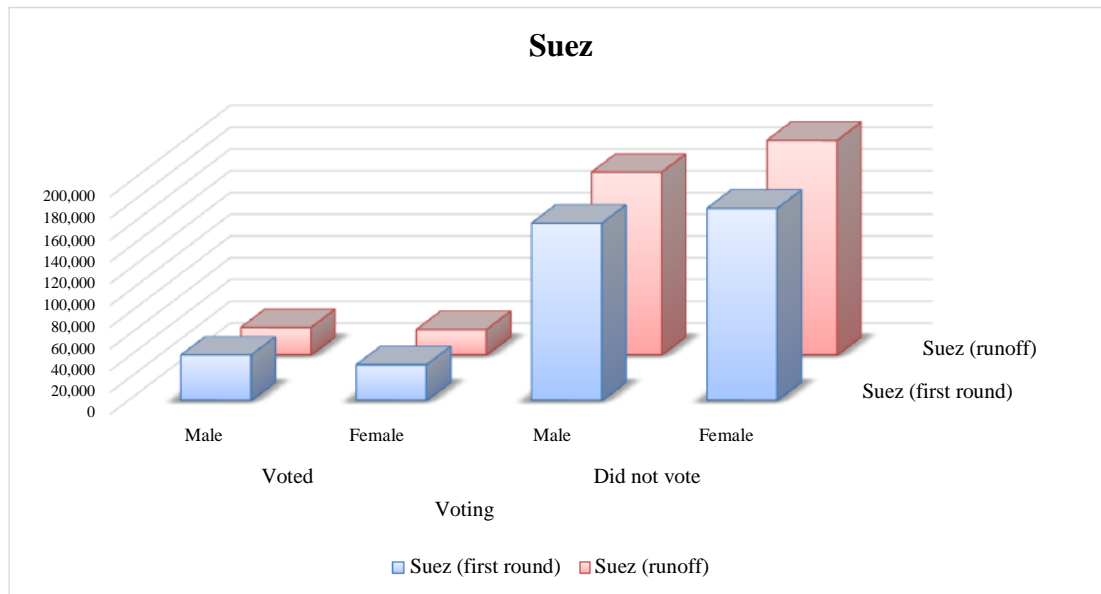




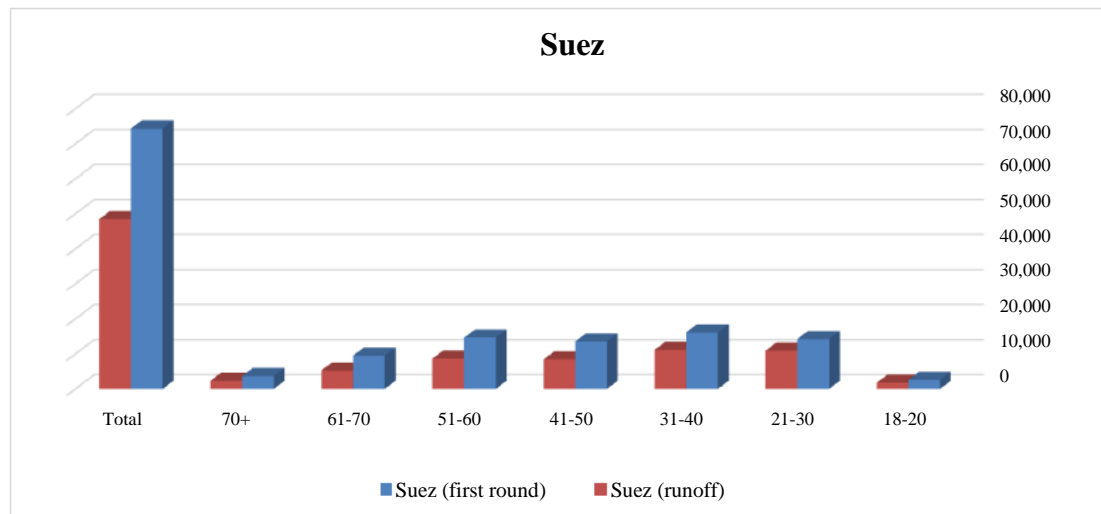
Governorate	Constituency	Round	Total voters in voter register	Turnout	Number of Voters who				Voted in the first round and runoff	
					Voted		Did not vote			
					Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
Suez	Suez	First	413,593	74,342	41,632	32,710	162,840	176,411	23,789	20,072
		Runoff		48,444	25,191	23,253	167,969	197,180		

Governorate	Constituency	Round	18-20	21-30	31-40	41-50	51-60	61-70	Above 70	Total	
Suez	Suez	First	2,578	14,270	16,153	13,544	14,645	9,496	3,657	74,342	
		Runoff	1,769	10,934	11,140	8,404	8,627	5,271	2,300	48,444	
				Total turnout						Turnout rate	
				From 21 to 40 years						Men	Women
Total	First round			30423		40.92%				56.00%	44.00%
	Runoff			22074		45.56%				52.00%	48.00%











## **Chapter 8: Positive Discrimination (affirmative action) for Women and Other Groups**

Constitutional legislators have expressed concern about the status of women and other groups in political life, especially in regards to their participation in elections. Article 11 of the 2014 Constitution stipulates that the State shall ensure the suitable representation of women in parliament as determined by law. Articles 243 and 244 of the constitution also stipulate that the State shall act on representing workers, farmers, youth, Christians, persons with disabilities, and Egyptians living abroad appropriately in the first House of Representatives to be elected after the promulgation of the Constitution, as determined by law.

To enforce such Constitutional provisions, Article 5 of Decree-Law No. 46/2014 on the House of Representatives stipulated that a list that comprises 15 seats must include three Christian candidates, two workers and/or farmers, two youths, one person with disability, and one Egyptian living abroad, provided that at least seven of whom must be women. For a list that comprises 45 seats, the composition must include three times the number of women (and the other aforementioned groups) specified above.

It is well known that positive discrimination (affirmative action) for said groups has been exhausted after the 2015 parliamentary elections results were announced, except in the case of women where positive discrimination (affirmative action) will continue in future parliamentary elections by virtue of Article 11 of the Constitution. It is possible, however, that positive discrimination for women in parliamentary elections may be applied differently in the future.

The Constitution also provides for the positive discrimination (affirmative action) of some groups under Article 180, regarding the election of local councils. According to the article, local council seats are allocated in the following manner: one quarter is allocated for youths below the age of thirty-five and one quarter is allocated for women, provided that at least fifty percent of the total number of seats are allocated to workers and/or farmers, and that these percentages include a suitable representation of Christians and persons with disabilities.

Reviewing the previous constitutional provisions reveals that positive discrimination (affirmative action) for women will continue in future parliamentary and local councils, while representation of youth, Christians, persons with disabilities and workers and/or farmer will continue in local councils only. Moreover, constitutional positive discrimination (affirmative action) will exclude Egyptians living abroad in the future.

Given the continued positive discrimination (affirmative action) applied for women in parliament, an analysis of the progress of women's participation in elections (and their achievements in the 2015 parliamentary elections) would be a helpful step towards reaching a realistic understanding of women's representation in parliament today.



## Development of Women's Participation in Elections:

The Egyptian experience with women's participation in elections has witnessed several conventional and modern challenges. At times women have succeeded in overcoming these challenges, while in other times they failed to do so. The 2015 parliamentary elections can be seen as a breakthrough in this regard as follows:

Before the 1956 Constitution, women did not have the right to vote, and hence did not have the right to run as candidates in any election.

The 1956 Constitution allowed women to register as voters if they personally applied, whereas men were automatically registered without application (thereby combining automatic and optional voter registration methods). Accordingly, this constitution allowed women to vote and run for elections, if willing. To enforce this, Law 73/1956 on the Regulation of the Exercise of Political Rights was enacted, affirming this conditional right for women. Two women won under the individual majoritarian system, accounting for 0.5% of the seats.

The 1971 Constitution stipulated full equality between men and women in all political rights. However, voter registration methods remained the same; women had to proactively apply to become registered.

Later, Law No. 41/1979 was issued, establishing the right to register in voter lists for any citizen who has the right to exercise their political rights, men and women alike; women were no longer required to apply proactively in order to become registered. This law therefore applied the provision of the 1971 constitution, which ensured gender equality in political rights. Figures indicate low representation of women in successive parliamentary elections from 1956 to 1976, with a maximum of 8 women representatives. This accounted for 2.3% under the individual system, where despite competing equally with men, women continued to face unique obstacles to their participation in political life.

Positive discrimination (affirmative action) for women, thus, was established in order to ensure the suitable representation of women in Parliament by virtue of Law No. 21/1979, which amended the People's Assembly Law. Law No. 21/1979 allocated to women one seat per constituency in 30 constituencies under the individual system, in addition to the remaining seats for which they could compete with men. Following the law, women's representation in Parliament surged to 33 MPs (9.4%), an increase of more than four times the number of women MPs that were represented previously.

In 1983, Law No. 114/1983 amended the People's Assembly Law to add an extra constituency to those already allocating one seat for women; this brought the number of constituencies in which there is positive discrimination (affirmative action) to 31. Following the amendment, women's representation increased to 37 MPs but accounted to only 8.3% in the 1984 People's Assembly. The decrease in percentage was due to the increase in the total number of MPs from 350 to 448.

Following such changes, lawmakers believed that positive discrimination (affirmative action) for women has accomplished its desired results and thus abolished the practice by virtue of Law 188/1986, based on the fact that women had become a cornerstone



of Egyptian political life. Following this abolishment, however, women's representation in the 1987 parliamentary elections decreased to 3.1%. The percentage of women represented in parliament continued to decrease in subsequent elections, until it reached a percentage of 0.9% in the 2005 parliamentary elections.

Lawmakers once again adopted positive discrimination (affirmative action) for women through Law No. 149/2009. In the 2010 parliamentary elections women contested the 64 seats that were allocated to them, in addition to the rest of the seats where they could compete with men. Women won the seats that were allocated to women, but failed to win any of the other individual seats. The number of elected women MPs was 64 out of the total 508 MPs, accounting for 13.1%.

After the 25 January 2011 Revolution, Law No. 120/2011, amending Laws No. 38/1972 and Law No. 120/1980 regulating the People's Assembly and the Shoura Council elections, respectively, repealed the seats allocated for women in the individual system. As per the law, women were to be represented only through stipulating that each list of candidates shall include at least one woman. This decreased the representation of women in the People's Assembly to 9 elected MPs, accounting for 1.7%.

After the June, 30<sup>th</sup>, 2013 Revolution, positive discrimination (affirmative action) of women witnessed a constitutionally-immune and unprecedented breakthrough – to prevent hesitation regarding the continuation of positive discrimination. While positive discrimination was clearly defined for local elections (Article 180 of the 2014 Constitution stipulates that one quarter of the seats shall be allocated to women), this was not the case for parliamentary elections where the relevant reference (Article 11) states only that there shall be “a suitable representation” for women.

The idea behind this manner of positive discrimination (affirmative action) is to make the local councils hubs for discovering, training, and presenting local and political women leaders – and others – in order to have them trained for parliamentary work so that they compete, on both individual and list seats, on an equal footing with men.

A woman MP who represents this idea, for example, started as a local council member and is now an MP having won the position through competition with men for the single seat in her constituency, Mashtoul el-Souq.

Positive discrimination (affirmative action) for women was also mentioned in Decree-Law No. 46/2014 on the House of Representatives. Article 5 required candidate lists to have specific representation for different groups; women constituted 20% (3 women in a 15-seat list or 9 women in a 45-seat list). It is important to note, however, that this positive discrimination (affirmative action) applies only to the first parliamentary elections taking place following the enactment of the aforementioned Decree-Law, which occurred in 2015.

On a different note, the State established the National Council for Women (NCW) in the year 2000 to undertake women's affairs, to help women address challenges, and to adopt their causes at individual and collective levels. The NCW has extended support to all woman candidates in elections regardless of their partisan affiliations. One way the NCW supported these candidates was by organizing training courses for them



pertaining to electoral activities. The NCW has generally had a tangible impact on enhancing the status of Egyptian women and maximizing their gains.

#### Women in the 2015 House of Representative Elections:

In order to show the results related to the participation of women in the House of Representatives elections held in 2015, it is important to address women as voters, candidates, MPs and electoral administrators.

##### Women as voters:

The number of women registered as voters was 27,235,487, accounting for 48.98% of all registered voters. Registration occurs automatically for any citizen of 18 years of age, men and women alike.

Out-of-country women voters accounted for 40% of the total out-of-country voters, according to the statistics drawn from the computers-based out-of-country voting system. In the system, voters are automatically checked-in via IDs or passports that show their ID numbers; as a result, the system is able to determine whether a voter is male or female.

In-country voters, however, are not automatically checked-in; hence, there is no accurate counting of the number of woman voters. However, voter lists were scanned in four governorates, and figures indicated an average turnout of 44.5% for women in these four governorates.

##### Women as Candidates:

It is important to note that, thanks to the positive discrimination and the aforementioned activities of the NCW, women ran as candidates in all Egyptian governorates, even in traditional Upper Egyptian governorates, Bedouin border governorates, and rural Delta governorates.

For the individual system, 279 women ran as candidates, of whom 19 MPs won. As for the List seats, 207 women ran as candidates, of whom 56 MPs won.

##### Women as MPs:

The number of winning women MPs who contested the election was 75 out of a total number of 568 elected MPs, accounting for 13.2%. This percentage constitutes a record in comparison with previous percentages. The President appointed 14 women MPs, which increased the total number of women MPs to 89 out of a total of 596 MPs at the House of Representatives. This represents 14.93%, which is an unprecedented percentage for women's representation in the Egyptian parliament.

Governorates with the most number of women MPs are Giza (9 MPs), Cairo (7 MPs), Sharqeyya (6 MPs), Alexandria (5 MPs) and Gharbeyya (5 MPs).

One can observe that positive discrimination (affirmative action) has resulted in higher representation of women, whether by allocating individual seats for women



prior to the January 2011 Revolution, or by determining a minimum number of women that must be included in a list of candidates, as is the case in the 2015 elections following the June 30<sup>th</sup> 2013 Revolution.

#### Women as Electoral Administrators:

Article 210 of the 2014 Constitution stipulates that polling and counting in elections and referenda to be held during the ten years following its promulgation shall be fully supervised by members of the judiciary. Consequently, Article 40 of Decree-Law No. 45/2014 stipulates that General Committees and polling stations in Egypt shall be presided over by members of the judiciary, of whom 1,613 were woman judges. It also stipulates that each General Committee and polling station shall have a secretary or more from amongst civil servants, provided that at least one of them is a woman. A total of 25,981 women poll workers were appointed in polling stations and 205 in General Committees. Women judges and poll workers showed great performance during the election, which was held over two days from 9:00 am till 9:00 pm.

It is noteworthy to mention an incident that reflects the importance of women's participation in civic and political life, despite the barriers existing to their engagement. When a committee was formed to review candidacy applications in North Sinai, based in the Court of First Instance in North Sinai's capital city of Arish, women judges insisted on participating and going to Sinai. Two were selected and an apology was sent to those who were not. A three-judge committee tasked with reviewing candidacy applications, comprising one man and two women, traveled to Arish amidst danger under police and armed forces protection. The three judges stayed for 12 days in Arish and returned to Cairo after accomplishing their civic duty. Even when a terrorist blast hit the hotel where judges were staying - killing a judge and a prosecutor, and injuring other judiciary members – the committee was determined to complete their job and continued to North Sinai where the elections were successfully held.

Upon reviewing the aforementioned, it is clear that the efforts exerted by women and men led to the completion of the third milestone of Egypt's political roadmap.



## Chapter 9: Financial Report

- The Ministry of Finance (MoF) assigned financial allocations for the HEC amounting to EGP 730,000,000 to cover the needed expenses for the 2015 House of Representatives elections.
- Total expenditures by the HEC were EGP 645,000,000 as follows:

Item	Total allocation (in million EGP)	Total expenditures (in million EGP)	Savings (in million EGP)
<b>Section 1: workers' salaries and remunerations</b>	<b>360</b>	<b>308</b>	<b>52</b>
<b>Section 2: Procurement of goods and services</b>	<b>370</b>	<b>337</b>	<b>33</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>730</b>	<b>645</b>	<b>85 (11.6%)</b>

The principal reason why these savings were made is due to the HEC's policy of cost-efficiency; remuneration was made only to those workers who participated in both phases of elections, and the HEC reduced the number of poll workers to the minimum number possible, while maintaining the quality and conduct of the process. It is noteworthy to mention that these saving were made despite increases in the cost of logistic requirements needed for the electoral process, such as printing ballot papers, indelible inks, polling booths, ballot boxes, etc. Furthermore, the cost of accommodation for judiciary members on duty outside their governorates of residence was high.

The MoF was addressed to withdraw the aforementioned amounts (the budget surplus).

It is noteworthy that the cost of the previous parliamentary elections, held in fiscal year 2011/2012, was EGP 607,000,000 in total.



## **Chapter 10: Challenges and Recommendations**

Reviewing the electoral experience outlined in the previous chapters, the amount of work assigned to the HEC and the great responsibility it assumed becomes evident. Elections are always challenging in several ways, including the need to prove impartiality and professionalism, provide equal opportunities for candidates in order to reach a free and fair election that reflects the voters' will, and inspire confidence in the democratic path.

Experience reveals the pros and cons of the process, and understanding these pros and cons can help improve performance in future processes. As such, it is crucial to identify the challenges that the HEC faced in the past and the extent to which they were addressed, in order to then present recommendations for improving the process in the future.

The HEC faced a set of challenges in this election, most significantly:

### **1- Trust by Electoral Stakeholders:**

Trust by electoral stakeholders is the HEC's goal, which is key to orchestrating the best election possible and results that are deemed legitimate. The HEC was able to overcome this challenge, gaining the trust of all electoral stakeholders – variably, of course – through its working methodology. This was evident in the reports of organizations and delegations observing elections, and in the media coverage of the elections. This was also confirmed through the results of the opinion poll; these reports were addressed in earlier sections.

### **2- Using Electronic Technology in Procedures:**

This is a big challenge that comes under the HEC's authorities as per Paragraph 7 of Article 7 of the Law on Regulating the Exercise of Political Rights. The HEC is responsible for setting the regulations for a gradual shift to electronic voting.

The HEC introduced this technology in some of its procedures, as stated in earlier chapters. The remaining challenge is to complete this step and to shift to machine-voting or electronic voting as soon as possible, which means the automation of all procedures.

Automating procedures saves time and effort and enhances the perception of trust in the process. Automation also provides extremely helpful data and information to decision-makers, resulting in decision-making based on more facts and results.

### **3- Electoral Offences:**

If reality shows that no election is held without offences, logic would require them to be limited, while having the mechanisms necessary to address them. One of the most notable and common offences was exceeding the limit set for financing electoral campaigns and violating media coverage rules.



Tracking and proving the offense of exceeding the campaign finance ceiling or engaging in “electoral bribes” is a very challenging task. There is, then, a major role that citizens must play in uncovering and proving such offences; relying on media coverage only does not suffice. Such offences require the identification of the specifics of the offense (the times, places, amounts of money, people involved, etc.), all of which require direct communication with the information source. The mechanism used to combat this challenge – by monitoring bank accounts or forming an offence monitoring committee – failed to address it. In light of the lack of reporting on these offences, further efforts must be exercised to compel advertising agencies to report on campaign finance, to enable a system of prosecution for said offences, and to raise public awareness on the importance of reporting cash, in-kind gifts, and all other forms of electoral bribes.

Alternatively, there was a largely effective mechanism for determining media coverage offences through the formation of an expert committee that monitored various media outlets, identified offences, and imposed administrative penalties that helped reduce further offences.

#### 4- Training:

Training is used as one of the performance improvement methods, with regard to procedures or in dealing with electoral stakeholders. Its effect was significantly noticed during this election among both members of the judiciary and administrative staff, and was praised by several observation groups. The HEC was unable to conduct as many training sessions as hoped, especially targeting persons participating in the electoral process for the first time, due to a shortage of time, rescheduling of the electoral calendar several times, and the reluctance of some to attend.

#### 5- Identifying Responsibilities:

Many individuals avoid bearing the consequences of responsibility, and tend to shift the blame onto others. Though the HEC’s authorities are legally stipulated under Article 7 of Decree-Law 45/2014 on the Regulation of the Exercise of Political Rights, the HEC was blamed for failures which did not actually fall under its purview. This includes, for example, introducing candidates to voters, which should be primarily done by the candidate, relevant organizations, and activists.

The HEC was also wrongfully blamed for requiring applicants for candidacy to undergo a medical examination, then to undergo it again. This was done per the rulings of the administrative courts, as detailed previously in the report. The HEC was thus called on to make the medical examination and tests free of charge, however the requirement was decided through a Ministerial Decree from the Minister of Health, which the HEC had nothing to do with.

The HEC was blamed for rejecting some lists, though they were not complete as required by Article 5 of Decree-Law No. 46/2014 on the House of Representatives. The rejection decision was made by the competent application examination committee; however, when courts ordered their acceptance based on the reasons deemed justified by the courts, verdicts were put into effect immediately.



The HEC was blamed for inaction against electoral bribes, although the HEC stressed the importance of reporting such incidents.

The HEC clarified the truth of such matters in several occasions, and could – to a great extent – indicate each party's responsibilities and correct common misconceptions.

#### 6- Spreading electoral awareness:

New provisions were put into force for the first time in this election, such as the number of seats allocated for each constituency, which required communication to the public. Although awareness was not part of the HEC's authorities as per the law, it highly impacted its work. Raising electoral awareness on the importance of voting and how to vote helps increase the number of voters and gives momentum to the process, which leads to electing representatives that best express the voters. Despite the amount of campaigning material disseminated by the HEC, there was lack of electoral awareness, which to an extent affected the turnout as well as the percentage of invalid votes (7.3% in average). It was noticed that the percentage of invalid votes was less during the elections in the four postponed constituencies (5.6%), and was less in the second phase (6.8%) than in the first phase (9.5%) due to practical knowledge of correct voting.

Other stakeholders, such as civil society organizations working in elections as well as political parties, should play a major role in raising electoral awareness on issues such as how to select a trustworthy MP and how to vote correctly in the ballot paper.

To complete this work, the most important recommendations should be mentioned as follows:

#### 1- Issuing the Law on the National Electoral Authority (NEA)

The issuance of the NEA law is one of the priorities indicated in the Constitution and will help maintain the human resources, mandates, and information produced by the previous parliamentary and presidential elections. The National Electoral Authority will be in charge of all upcoming elections and referenda. However, the law must be issued after the end of any by-election the HEC is administering for the current House of Representatives so that procedures are not repeated.

#### 2- Finding effective mechanisms to control financial expenditure:

Such mechanisms must deal directly with campaigning sources, enabling those in charge to prosecute offences by giving them a judicial police authority. On the other hand, citizens must be encouraged to report offences via phone or internet while maintaining reporters' anonymity. Offenders must be strongly punished.

#### 3- Accurate figures for Persons with Disabilities:

Hard work is needed towards having accurate statistics on persons with disabilities, including the type of their disability, in order to make polling stations accessible



across each type of disability. It is important to have polling stations on the ground floors, so long that the relevant voter's list includes a person with a disability.

#### 4- Utilizing the voter database:

The voter database is the foundation of any electoral process. Voters and candidates must be registered in such a database that is regularly filtered to delete those who are deprived or exempted from it.

It is important to identify voters by age, sex, culture, to identify places with high or low voting trends and the reasons behind it, and to identify the characteristics of each age or geographical group. This allows for the creation of strategies to drive high turnout and to push the voting bloc to the maximum. For instance, 7.5% of voters in the database are not interested in or incapable of voting, which is not a negligible percentage. Solutions must be found to encourage those who are not interested and facilitate voting for the incapable.

#### 5- Women's suitable and fair representation:

The constitution ensured suitable representation of women in parliamentary councils, making women the only group granted constitutional positive discrimination (affirmative actions) in parliamentary councils, as opposed to other marginalized groups which enjoyed positive discrimination in the 2015 House of Representatives elections. However, the constitution does not specify a percentage or a method for women's representation in parliament, leaving it up to legislation. We therefore hope that women's representation will be suitable and fair so that it reflects their stance and the importance of their role in society.

#### 6- Completing electronic technology and automation:

Electronic advancement and automation requires providing necessary funds to automate all electoral procedures, such as electronic voting inside the country and for OCV, checking-in voters inside the country, and storing and archiving. The impact of technology and automation is higher on the short and long terms compared to manual work, as it will save large amounts of money spent on elections and enhance public trust in electoral procedures.

#### 7- Completing voter's lists scanning:

Scanning of voter's lists was done in the governorates of the New Valley, Suez, North Sinai, and South Sinai. Completing this process in the rest of the governorates will produce important data on voters that would lay the groundwork for electoral strategies based on sound and realistic information.

#### 8- Setting a deadline for procedures:

Setting specific deadlines for changing data in any voter database entry must be considered, as well as for filing appeals and challenges and deciding on them (in first-degree or second-degree courts) so that there is sufficient time to implement them



without compromising the timeline of elections. This is an important step towards stabilizing the electoral process.

#### 9- Maintaining technical staff:

There are trained technical staff across different electoral functions, and several with distinct relevant expertise, who must be utilized for establishing and supporting the National Electoral Authority, training others, and utilizing their expertise in an institutional framework.

#### 10- Training:

Training is one of the ways of improving the quality of work. Personnel working in elections must be trained, as this contributes to improving their performance. Some international observation missions noticed this and praised “Poll staff’s professionalism and good knowledge of electoral procedures”.

#### 11- Judicial observers:

The HEC introduced judicial observers in some poll stations to control offences around the vicinity of polling centers. Given its previous success, this system should be generalized. The system was, in fact, praised by several international observation missions who were interested in incorporating the experience into their own systems.

#### 12- Awareness-raising publications and programs:

There is no doubt that raising citizens’ awareness on elections will positively impact the voter turnout and the number of valid votes. This can be done by focusing on voter awareness through radio and television programs, issuing periodical publications, including elections in school curricula (especially in high schools), holding seminars, and encouraging discussions about elections and proper voting. Ideally, this mandate would fall under the purview of the National Electoral Authority.



## **Conclusion**

The 2015 House of Representatives elections were completed, setting a significant milestone in the history of Egyptian elections. Domestic and international observers described the process as transparent, impartial, and non-violent, and the results of which expressed the voters' will and were widely accepted.

This local and international assessment has added to the legitimacy of the electoral process, which resulted in the formation of the Egyptian House of Representatives. The House will undertake its mandate, as stated in the constitution, to fulfil citizens' expectations of building a modern state, the protection of its institutions, developing its economy, and upholding values of freedom, equality, rule of law, and social justice.

## **High Elections Committee**



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