



Egypt Democracy Compass

Coverage Period: October 2013

The Egypt Democracy Compass is designed to provide a snapshot of the country's trajectory, either toward or further away from a truly democratic system, over the preceding calendar month. Each of the eight topical categories receives a status designation—**Backsliding, Stalled, Progress, or Achieved**—based on recent developments regarding the listed goals for that category. The reasons for each designation are explained in a brief summary of major events or trends. It should be acknowledged that while some of the specified goals could be achieved almost overnight, others may take years to accomplish. The purpose of this tool is simply to determine whether Egypt is headed in the right direction. *See next page for a full listing of the goals for each category.*



BACKSLIDING



PROGRESS



STALLED



ACHIEVED

1. CONSTITUTION

Under a plan set out by the military-backed interim president, the draft constitution is currently being revised by a 50-member committee that is far from demographically or politically representative, with only five women, four Copts, and one Islamist member. The panel has undermined its transparency by conducting secret votes on a number of occasions. The head of the committee, Amr Moussa, has promised to have a final draft ready for the public's review by December 3. Critics have warned that the document could bolster the power of the military and judiciary while reversing Islamist-backed provisions of the previous charter.

2. ELECTIONS

There is currently no legislative body in place, and executive powers are shared by the unelected interim president and prime minister. The Supreme Electoral Commission, which will oversee the constitutional referendum and the parliamentary and presidential elections to follow, was created in September, and political parties have begun forming alliances and identifying candidates. However, given the ongoing political violence and repression, there is virtually no space for constructive public debate or other normal preelection activities, dimming the prospects for free and fair balloting.

3. POLITICAL PARTICIPATION

Though the government claims to be working toward reconciliation with the Muslim Brotherhood, spokesmen for the organization deny that any genuine reconciliation efforts are under way. The authorities' crackdown on supporters of deposed president Mohamed Morsi continued throughout the month. The September court ban on the Brotherhood and plans to seize its assets were confirmed in October. Most Brotherhood leaders remained in jail, and new detentions included that of Esam el-Erian, the vice chairman of the organization's Freedom and Justice Party.

4. RELIGIOUS FREEDOM

Sectarian violence and political divisions continued to undermine religious freedom in October. The Coptic Christian community suffered further attacks, most notably an armed assault on a wedding party on October 20, during which five people were killed and 18 injured. Meanwhile, as part of the government's crackdown on conservative

forms of Islam associated with the Muslim Brotherhood, all mosque boards of directors that were formed "under previous regimes" were officially dissolved on October 31.

5. MEDIA FREEDOM AND FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION

The authorities persisted in their restriction of media outlets that convey support for Morsi or criticism of the new government. Several journalists remained in prison, including two from Al-Jazeera, while others were arrested during the month for critical coverage of the government or the military. Recent arrests include those of Mostafa Diab, who was detained while filming a protest in Ismailia, and Mohamed Dayan, a Syrian photojournalist who was held for not having the "proper permits."

6. CIVILIAN CONTROL AND SECURITY-SECTOR REFORM

The military continued to dominate the political system, conduct trials of civilians, and operate with impunity. Security forces have not been held accountable for the shooting deaths of more than 1,000 protesters since the July coup. Though the draft constitution is not yet complete, the military has pushed hard for maximum protection of its autonomy in the final document. Growing discussion of a possible presidential run by General Abdel Fattah al-Sisi suggests that civilian control is unlikely to improve in the near future.

7. PEACEFUL ASSEMBLY AND CIVIC ACTIVISM

Rival protests between supporters of former president Morsi and the new government persisted in October. The number of fatalities remained below the peak in August, but security forces killed more than 50 antigovernment protesters on October 6. A ban on political activity at universities did not dampen the considerable pro-Morsi demonstrations that sprouted up after the beginning of the new term. At the end of the month, the interim president was considering a draft law that would empower police to prevent or disperse virtually all protests and even small public meetings. Meanwhile, arrests of Islamist and some non-Islamist activists continued.

8. JUDICIAL INDEPENDENCE AND RULE OF LAW

The judiciary continues to play a key role in political affairs, with Supreme Constitutional Court chairman Adli Mansour acting as interim president. The state of emergency declared in August suspends due process rights and has been extended twice, though the government has vowed to end it by mid-November. Related curfews will likely remain in place even after the state of emergency has been lifted.



Egypt Democracy Compass – Goals



1. CONSTITUTION

- a. The constitution and constitutional amendments are the products of a fair process that reflects consensus among all major political factions.
- b. The constitution protects civil liberties, including the rights of women and minorities, in keeping with international standards and Egypt's existing treaty commitments.
- c. The constitution is in effect.

2. ELECTIONS

- a. National elections are conducted under electoral laws and procedures that meet international standards.
- b. National elections are monitored and deemed credible by qualified international observers.
- c. A directly elected legislature has been seated, and a directly elected executive authority has taken office.

3. POLITICAL PARTICIPATION

- a. All major political factions participated in national elections.
- b. All political factions that won legislative seats participate in legislative activity.
- c. No public figures or activists are being detained for political reasons.

4. RELIGIOUS FREEDOM

- a. All religious groups are able to preach and practice their faith without state interference.
- b. Specific religious beliefs and practices are not imposed, enforced, or favored by the state, including with respect to the construction of houses of worship.
- c. Individuals and groups are free to peacefully exercise their beliefs without interference or coercion from nonstate actors, and any communal or religious violence is vigorously and fairly prosecuted by the state.

5. MEDIA FREEDOM AND FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION

- a. The media collectively convey the views of all major political factions, and state media are editorially independent and free of obvious political bias.
- b. Journalists are able to work without facing violence, arbitrary detention, or unjustified interference with news dissemination.
- c. Journalists and other Egyptians are not subject to criminal prosecution for blasphemy, defamation, or insulting state officials and entities.

6. CIVILIAN CONTROL AND SECURITY-SECTOR REFORM

- a. The military is subordinate to the constitution and elected civilian authorities, playing no role in politics or trials of civilians.
- b. The military budget is subject to review and approval by an elected legislature.
- c. The police and military have been reformed and retrained to meet international standards on crowd control, criminal investigation, treatment of suspects in custody, and accountability for abuses.

7. PEACEFUL ASSEMBLY AND CIVIC ACTIVISM

- a. All political parties and segments of civil society are free to assemble peacefully without encountering violence or arbitrary arrest by state actors.
- b. All political parties and segments of civil society are free to assemble peacefully without encountering violence from nonstate actors.
- c. Nongovernmental organizations promoting democratic reform and human rights are able to operate without interference from state or nonstate actors.

8. JUDICIAL INDEPENDENCE AND RULE OF LAW

- a. The judiciary is free of political influence or bias, and judges are appointed, promoted, and removed using apolitical procedures and criteria.
- b. The judiciary upholds and defends the constitution and the rights it guarantees.
- c. Criminal suspects and defendants are afforded full legal rights and due process, including access to counsel and transparent court proceedings.