



THE PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS

Prearrangements, Steps, and Processes

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The National Independent Elections Authority announced the *House of Representatives* elections to be held on October 4, 2025. *The Authority*, therefore, invited the Egyptian electorate to cast their ballots, set the elections timetable, and initiated necessary prearrangements for the elections.

This study addresses the position of the *House of Representatives* in the Egyptian political system. It also addresses the voters database for the forthcoming elections, the electoral system, elections management, candidacy, the electoral campaigns, and other prearrangements related to the elections.

First: The Position of the *House of Representatives* in the experience of Egypt

Some trace back the early parliamentary life in Egypt to the era of Muhammad Ali (1805–1848)¹, yet, many attribute its commencement to the reign of Khedive Ismail (1863–1879). Ismail, who was enamored with anything that is western, sought to copy the European states; and established **The Representatives Advisory (Shura) Council** in 1866, in to enhance the prestige of his rule².

Candidacy for membership in the council was restricted to men above age of 25 year, for a term of three years, — an age threshold that is five years below the minimum age required for membership in the Egyptian parliament prior to the events of January 2011. Literacy was not a requisite for council members – who enjoyed parliamentary immunity – until the election of the *seventh* council. Later, literacy became a requisite for the voters as well with the election of the *eleventh* council³. Such requisites highlight features that have been swept aside following the collapse of the nascent parliamentary experience after the British colonization of Egypt in May 1882, and the subsequent period that lasted for several decades until the end of colonization in 1954.

Most of the Egyptians agree, however, that the **quasi-liberal era (1923–1952)** was in practice the time of the visible emergence of parliamentary life, when the legislative authority has become, constitutionally, the source of all powers. Yet in reality, parliamentary life was negatively affected by the tensions of that time; namely between the national movement, the palace, and the British. It is well known that this era witnessed blatant vote rigging – orchestrated by the palace to oppose the overwhelming popularity of *Al-Wafd* Party – resulting in fake majorities in the *House of Representatives*.

¹ See, for example: El-Rafie, Abdel Rahman. *The Era of Mohamed Ali* – Cairo: Dar Al Maaref, 5th ed., 1989, P. 516 – 518, P. 521 – 525

² Some believe Ismail was forced into establishing the council, to counter the domestic pressures calling for participation in rule and governance. For more details, see: Awad, Louis. *History of Modern Egyptian Thought – From the Era of Ismail to the 1919 Revolution* – The General Egyptian Book Organization, Vol. 2, P. 23 – 26.

³ For more details on The Representatives Shura Council, see: El-Rafie, Abdel Rahman. *The Era of Ismail* – Cairo: Dar Al Maaref, Vol. 2, 4th ed., 1987, P. 89 – 92, P. 100 – 101

Against such backdrop, the partisan system failed to fulfil its functions: to represent and to pool-in the interests. The government dominance over the parliament is yet another added manifestation of how the Egyptian political system and the whole governance structure were incapacitated⁴; leading to cabinet and parliamentary instability: during that era, 38 cabinets were formed, with an average term of nine months each, and not a single parliament had completed its constitutional term except the parliament of 1945⁵. In conclusion: the parliamentary experience had failed.

That was succeeded by the **Nasserist era**, during which political parties were dissolved and a single organization dominated parliament (*The National (Umma) Assembly*). *The Assembly* entirely became a pliant arm in the hands of the political leadership and the single organization (the National Union, then the Socialist Union). The status continued, though less severely, with the beginning of the rule of President Sadat in October 1970 until the declaration of the third wave of party pluralism on November 11, 1976, ushering in a period of limited pluralism.

The Parliament (the People's Assembly) was composed of ruling parties and opposition parties – some of which were strong due to their disagreement to Sadat's economic and foreign policies. Sadat dissolved the assembly in 1979 to rid himself of the opponents of peace with Israel. With the beginning of President Mubarak's rule in October 1981, the legislative authority, namely The People's Assembly, witnessed the presence of religious and civil opposition, which was minor in size, yet strong. The Muslim Brotherhood, along with the Wafd, Labor, and Tagammu' parties, were represented in some of the assemblies under Mubarak.

The first of these assemblies under Mubarak was elected by proportional representation (1984 – 1987), the second assembly was elected by proportional representation with limited majority system (1987 – 1990), and all the following assemblies were elected by majority system until the collapse of Mubarak's rule in February 2011. In general, the opposition conduct was characterized by a degree of overall control—meaning it did not get to the brink in its rivalry with the regime—nonetheless, it had strong and provocative

⁴ Hilal, Ali El-Din. *The Evolution of the Political System in Egypt 1803-1999*, Cairo: Center for Political Research and Studies, Faculty of Economics and Political Sciences – Cairo University. 2nd ed., 1999, P. 103 – 105, P. 134.

⁵ El-Bishry, Tarek. *Democracy and July 23rd Regime 1952-1970*, Beirut: The Arab Research Foundation – 1st ed, P. 11, P. 14. (*Reference to Arabic Edition*)

presence both in parliament and in the street, through frequently questioning the government, excluding the period 1990–2005, when a large segment of the opposition boycotted elections.

Mubarak's refrainment from involving his regime into a thorny feud against civil and religious opposition, coupled with the dominance of businessmen in parliament during that period—many of whom defended their economic ambitions, often tainted with corruption and well protected by Mubarak's regime—were all among the most important triggers for his ouster, especially after the blatant rigging of the 2010 parliamentary elections.

In 2012, a new constitution had been enacted, only a few months after January 2011 events. The new constitution entrusted broad powers to *the House of Representatives* and lesser powers for the Shura Council, though greater than those enjoyed by the latter under Mubarak. Elections for both chambers were conducted by proportional representation for two-thirds of the seats, and majority – individual – system for the remaining third. That period lasted only a few months, and was marked by strong opposition within the *House of Representatives*, while deep discords in the street between the religious current, or the majority, and the civil current, or the minority, have found their way into the chamber, rendering its performance highly volatile.

After the events of June 30, 2013, and the subsequent decision to amend the 2012 constitution, new elections were held in 2016, void of the Muslim Brotherhood, which had been overthrown in 2013. *The Salafi Al-Nour Party* had limited representation. The elections for the *House of Representatives* were conducted entirely under the majority system, through the method of party blocs or what became known in the media as absolute lists, accounting for 21% of parliamentary seats, with the remainder being elected as individuals.

In 2020 elections, this system was amended, and elections have been conducted under the majority system equally divided between absolute lists and individual candidacy. The amended system affected the composition of the *House of Representatives*; with opposition being less represented. The limited representation of the opposition enabled governments to implement whatever they wished, thereby undermining the will of the MPs in advancing their initiatives and draft laws. Parliamentary oversight reached its lowest levels, relying on the weakest and least effective mechanisms, turning into being more local and tribal in nature, incapable of causing any inconvenience to the executive authority; unmatching with the stronger activity of the

opposition during the latter half of former President Mubarak's era, which at the time was described as lame performance of the opposition.

All the above have constituted the reality, despite the fact that the *House of Representatives*, under the current constitution, enjoyed greater constitutional powers if compared to what it had before January 25, 2011. According to the current constitution, the parliamentary session of the *House* was increased to nine months, and it does not adjourn until the state budget is approved. Motions and draft laws submitted by MPs enjoyed the same weight as government-proposed bills within the chamber, provided they were signed by at least 60 MPs. *The House* also gained the right to amend the state budget and to withdraw confidence from the President of the Republic upon request by a majority of MPs and approval by two-thirds of them. Yet, as mentioned above, none of these powers were fully exercised.

Second: The Voters Database

Voters are the backbone of the elections. Only the voters are entrusted with choosing among the candidates, thereby establishing one out of three pillars of elections; namely, the candidates, the voters, and the election administration. The four electoral laws with their amendments – *The Exercise of Political Rights Law No. 45 of 2014*, *The House of Representatives Law No. 46 of 2014*, *The Electoral Constituencies Law No. 202 of 2014*, and *The National Elections Authority Law No. 198 of 2017* – have extensively covered voters and all matters related to the exercising of their duties. Likewise, *the National Elections Authority* has made all necessary regulations to facilitate interaction between voters and candidates before and during the voting process.

Voters are those registered in the voter database, which includes lists of eligible voters, excluding those exempted from exercising their political rights, and those deprived of such rights – such as legally incapacitated individuals, or those convicted by court rulings under certain conditions. Voters lists are now compiled based on The National ID database; the gap, therefore, between database listed voters and voters who are de jure eligible to vote has been drastically narrowed, unlike how the situation was under Mubarak's rule.

Compiling the voters database is a core function of the *National Elections Authority*. As provided in Article 3 of *The National Elections Authority Law*, the *Authority* is responsible for the development of the database, as well as regular updating, modifying, refining, and reviewing this database. Although the practical preparation of the database is carried out by entities other than *the Authority*, *the Authority* enjoys full mandate over it, which goes beyond mere supervision up to the involvement in the full development of the database. It is noteworthy that the voters database is primarily prepared by *The Civil Status Department of the Ministry of Interior*, which is responsible for registering those who fulfil the “eligibility to vote criteria” and are free of any legal restriction to the exercise of their political rights. The Department conducts its work on the database throughout the year, assisted by several other entities, foremost of those are Ministries of Justice, Health, and Defense.

On the eve of every general ballot, *The Authority* releases a statement highlighting the data related to the number of voters. The most recent data were

released during the last Senate elections in August – September 2025. Both *The Authority* and the *House of Representatives* – following the amendment of *The Electoral Constituencies Law* – released a statistical statement elaborating the voters database in each of the 27 governorates. The statement indicated a total of 69,333,318 voters out of a total population of 107,271,261 Egyptian citizens. The exact number of voters invited to cast their ballot in the House of Representatives elections shall be provided with the announcement of the final election results, by the end of December 2025. It is expected to reach approximately 70 million voters. The statistics are indicator to ongoing and regular updates of the database until the start of the elections, which is a commendable effort by the *National Elections Authority* and its supporting bodies. However, it has been noted that during the current elections, the *Authority* did not release any statement on the total number of voters and their distribution across the governorates, let alone their distribution across constituencies. Nor did it follow the conduct of *The Higher Elections Committee*— which was the governing body for the elections prior to the formation of *The Authority*— which rather provided data on the electorate disaggregated by gender and age groups. Certainly, such data would have been more useful in analyzing the entirety of the 2025 elections process.

On October 4, 2025, *The Elections Authority* issued its Decision No. 37 calling voters to cast their vote in the *House of Representatives* elections. The decision stipulated that voting would be conducted in two phases: the first phase includes 14 governorates: Giza, Fayoum, Beni Suef, Minya, Assiut, Sohag, Qena, Luxor, Aswan, Red Sea, New Valley, Matrouh, Alexandria, and Beheira. The ballot in the first phase is scheduled to take place outside Egypt on Friday and Saturday, November 7-8, 2025, and inside Egypt on Monday and Tuesday, November 10-11, 2025. If a runoff is required after announcing the results, it will be held on Monday and Tuesday, December 1-2, 2025 outside Egypt, and on Wednesday and Thursday, December 3-4, 2025, inside Egypt.

The second phase includes 13 governorates: Cairo, Qalyubia, Monufia, Sharqia, Damietta, Gharbia, Dakahlia, Kafr El Sheikh, the three Canal governorates, and the two Sinai governorates. The second phase ballot is scheduled to take place outside Egypt on Friday and Saturday, November 21-22, 2025, and inside Egypt on Monday and Tuesday, November 24-25, 2025. If a runoff is required, it will be

held on Monday and Tuesday, December 15-16, 2025, outside Egypt, and on Wednesday and Thursday, December 17-18, 2025, inside Egypt.

That ballot schedule, in general, is different from the 2020 *House of Representatives* elections, where the ballot outside took place over three days and inside Egypt over two days.

The ballot is carried out in two systems: the ballot of Egyptian expatriates at the premises of diplomatic missions, and the ballot inside Egypt at polling stations.

Third: The Electoral System

The *House of Representatives* elections were conducted under a constitutional and legal framework that is relatively divergent from the Senate elections held three months earlier. This can be explained in light of the electoral system, constituencies, and the quota system, all of which are elaborated in the Constitution and the laws governing *The House of Representatives*, *The Exercise of Political Rights*, *The Electoral Constituencies*, and *The National Elections Authority*.

1. The Electoral System and Electoral Constituencies

The 2012 Constitution, amended in 2019, stipulates in Article 102, Paragraph 3, that the demarcation of electoral constituencies shall be made "with due consideration to fair representation of the population and governorates." *The House of Representatives Law* and *Law on The Electoral Constituencies* stipulate that Egypt is demarcated into four constituencies or electoral sectors under the absolute list system, also known as the party bloc system. Under the absolute list system, half of the *House* seats is elected for particular constituencies. The other half of the *House* seats is to be elected under the individual system, with a different constituencies demarcation. Both systems fall under *the majority* system – usually referred to as 50% + 1. While the latter is adopted in many countries worldwide, the former has become an outdated system and is used only in four countries globally; mainly because it pools all votes which count for less than 50% and adds them to the list that receives more than 50% of the votes, which is regarded a manipulation of voters' will. *The Supreme Constitutional Court* of Egypt has ruled – three times – this system unconstitutional more than three decades ago.

The constituencies under the absolute lists system are four, and there must be a re-election in case none of the lists acquires 50%+1. If only one list is running uncontested in a given constituency, re-election must be conducted if the list fails to obtain 5% of the votes. The legislator has designated particular governorates for two lists out of the four, and allocated 40 seats to each of the two lists. Other governorates have been designated for the other two lists, each has been granted 102 seats, as elaborated in the following table. The table also shows that the constituencies are too spacious to be attended to by a single candidate.

As for the individual system, which comprises 143 constituencies, a runoff must be held if no candidate wins 50%+1, or if a candidate runs uncontested and obtains less than 5% of the votes. Based on *The Constituencies Law*, 44 constituencies have been allocated one representative, 63 constituencies have been allocated two representatives, 30 constituencies have been allocated three representatives, and 6 constituencies have been allocated four representatives. The allocation is formulated based on the population size in each constituency, as well as the necessity to ensure governorates representation even if they do not meet the criteria of population size, which is relevant primarily to border governorates. This is basically due to the need to represent all regions of the country, and for national security reasons. It has become essential to ensure that population of all governorates shall maintain their identity and emotional connection to the homeland through parliamentary representation.

The following table provides details on the nature of the four sectors or constituencies under the lists system, as well as the constituencies under the individual system; number of their representatives according to governorates, and the relation to the 2020 *House of Representatives* elections. The table also shows that the amendment to *The Electoral Constituencies Law* introduced minor changes to the predetermined constituencies, after a careful review of their population components. Dissimilarities have been noted between the two elections, although in both elections the total number of constituencies under individual system remain unchanged of 143 constituencies, with 284 representatives, and the names of the four sectors or constituencies under the lists system remain unchanged, with a total of 284 representatives (see table). In the individual system, one constituency was added in Sharqia, the number of individual representatives increased by one in Beni Suef and decreased by one

in Alexandria. In the lists system, the number of representatives increased by one in Qalyubia, Monufia, Kafr El Sheikh, Minya, Assiut, Sohag, Damietta, and Ismailia, and decreased by one in Alexandria, Beheira, and Gharbia.

The House of Representatives Constituencies and their Representatives Comparison between 2025 elections and 2020 elections

Lists Constituencies	Governorates	2025 Elections				2020 Elections			
		Individual Constituencies	Number of Individual Seats	Number of Lists Seats	Total Representatives	Individual Constituencies	Number of Individual Seats	Number of Lists Seats	Total Representatives
First Constituency (Cairo, South and Central Delta Sector)	Cairo	19	31	31	62	19	31	31	62
	Qalyubia	6	16	15	31	6	16	14	30
	Dakahlia	10	21	17	38	10	21	17	38
	Monufia	6	11	14	25	6	11	13	24
	Gharbia	7	14	15	29	7	14	16	30
	Kafr El-Sheikh	4	10	10	20	4	10	9	19
	Total	52	103	102	205	52	103	100	203
Second Constituency (North, Central and South Upper Egypt Sector)	Giza	12	25	23	48	12	25	23	48
	Fayoum	4	10	9	19	4	10	9	19
	Beni Suef	4	9	8	17	4	8	8	16
	Minya	6	16	15	31	6	16	14	30
	Assiut	4	12	12	24	4	12	11	23
	New Valley	2	2	2	4	2	2	2	4
	Sohag	8	14	14	28	8	14	13	27
	Qena	4	9	9	18	4	9	9	18
	Luxor	3	3	4	7	3	3	4	7
	Aswan	4	5	4	9	4	5	4	9
	Red Sea	3	3	2	5	3	3	3	6
Total	54	108	102	210	54	107	100	207	
Third Constituency (East Delta Sector)	Sharqia	9	21	21	42	8	21	21	42
	Damietta	2	4	5	9	2	4	6	10
	Port Said	2	2	2	4	2	2	2	4
	Ismailia	3	5	3	8	3	5	4	9
	Suez	1	2	2	4	1	2	2	4

	North Sinai	2	2	5	7	2	2	5	7
	South Sinai	2	2	2	4	2	2	2	4
	Total	21	38	40	78	20	38	42	80
Fourth Constituency (West Delta Sector)	Alexandria	5	15	17	32	6	16	18	34
	Beheira	9	18	19	37	9	18	20	38
	Matrouh	2	2	4	6	2	2	4	6
	Total	16	35	40	75	17	36	42	78
Total		143	284	284	568	143	284	284	568

Source: Total and calculated from The Electoral Constituencies Laws no. 174 of 2020 and 85 of 2025 governing the demarcation of electoral constituencies.

2. Preparation of Absolute Lists and Determination of Quotas for Representatives

The 2012 Constitution, amended in 2014, stipulated in Article 11, Paragraph 3 that "the state shall take all necessary measures to ensure proper representation of women in the parliaments as regulated by law..." Thus, the Constitution placed the responsibility of women's representation in the hands of the law. The second amendment to the 2012 Constitution, enacted in 2019, explicitly guaranteed a quota for women in Parliament, while leaving Article 11 unchanged. In the closing lines of the first paragraph of Article 102, of the amended Constitution states, "No less than one-quarter of the total number of seats shall be allocated to women." The Constitution, therefore, has established a specific, yet open, quota for women, which has been enforced since the 2020 Parliament.

Moreover, the 2012 Constitution, amended in 2014, provided for five other quotas to enjoy parliamentary representation, which – together with the women's quota – constitute the largest number of quotas in any electoral system worldwide. In addition to a sustained "*proper*" representation of women, there has been mention of *appropriate representation* for farmers and workers, Christians, persons with disabilities, youths, and Egyptian expatriates, that to be applicable exclusively to the first elected parliament following the approval to the 2014 constitutional amendment, as provided in articles 243 and 244.

The 2019 constitutional amendment replaced articles 243 and 244 with two new ones, sustaining the representation of the five mentioned groups, and making it mandatory to all subsequent parliaments, rather than limiting it to the Parliament following the 2014 Constitution. Any parliament, accordingly, shall include six quotas: women, who enjoy an open quota with a set percentage, together with other quotas whose determination is entrusted by the Constitution to the law, allocated to the aforementioned groups.

To detail the numbers of quota holders, *The House of Representatives Law* and *Electoral Constituencies Law* both provide that political powers have the right to take part in preparing absolute lists of candidates in four geographical sectors or constituencies. Each list must include a number of candidates equal to the number of seats to be elected in the constituency, added to them an equal number of reserves.

Accordingly, and as mentioned above, in each of the two 40-seat lists there must be 40 candidates, the title of the list must be *East Delta Sector or Constituency List* and the *West Delta Sector or Constituency List*, and each list must include at least the following numbers and groups: three Christians, two workers and farmers, two youths, one person with disabilities, and Egyptian expat. Part of the mentioned groups or apart from them, there must be no less than 20 women. In each of the two 102-seat lists there must be 102 candidates, namely the lists of Cairo, Central and South Delta Constituency and the North, Central, and South Upper Egypt Constituency, and each list must include at least the following numbers and groups: nine Christians, six workers and farmers, six youths, three persons with disabilities, and three Egyptian expats. Part of the mentioned groups or apart from them, there must be no less than 51 women.

Thus, The *House* shall accommodate at least 142 women, as well as 24 Christians, 16 workers and farmers, 16 youths, 8 persons with disabilities, and 8 Egyptians expats. Naturally, the *House* shall accommodate them all as a minimum, as the lists may include more of the mentioned groups, although this has proven to be rare in practice. Moreover, members of these groups may also run as individual candidates if they so desire.

Fourth: Election Administration

An independent authority has been entrusted by the constitution with managing elections, namely *The National Independent Elections Authority*, which was established under Law No. 198 of 2017, with the purpose of managing general, local, presidential elections, and referenda with integrity and transparency. *The Authority's* governing board comprises 10 judges – in their judicial capacities – who are assigned to perform administrative rather than judicial functions. Because of their administrative nature, the law allows for appeals against the *Authority's* decisions. *The Authority* followed the provisions of the 2012 Constitution, amended in 2014, permitting it – for a grace period of 10 years – to assign judges from judicial authorities to take part in running the ballots. By 2024, *the Authority* relied – mainly – on judicial entities, such as *The State Council and The Administrative Judiciary*, as assignment of judicial authorities became unconstitutional after that date. Officially, it is prohibited to interfere in *The Authority's* work or competencies. By law, it is the function of *The Authority* to ensure that every voter can exercise their right to vote, and to maintain a level playing field for all voters and candidates.

In practice, and because of administrative measures taken by *The Authority*, it has come under harsh criticism for failing to adhere to standards of integrity, honesty, objectivity, transparency, and impartiality. Hence, the following remarks are worth noting:

- *The Authority* issued number of decisions to regulate the 2025 *House of Representatives* elections, primarily on the voting process, preparing the voter database, proposing the electoral constituencies, inviting the voters to cast their ballot, setting the schedule of the elections, announcing the procedures and time frame for submission of candidacy, publishing the final lists of candidates, regulating procedures for candidates' campaigns, resolving all appeals and complaints submitted by any of the stakeholders, and guiding candidates, voters, media personnel, as well as observers on all matters related to candidacy, campaigns, election monitoring, ballots sorting and count, and announcement of results. Some of the mentioned decisions have been copied from the processes of *The Higher Elections Committee and The Presidential Elections Committee*

carried out in previous elections. *The Authority*, thus, benefited from the legacy of prior administrative work.

- *The Authority* set a timetable for the electoral process, notably running the elections nationwide in two phases, of two rounds each, and granting the candidates chance to appeal *the Authority's* decisions in court. More importantly, the timetable shortened the election period to 82 days instead of 96 days, due to reducing the ballot days outside Egypt, and cutting the time for runoff campaigns, in comparison to 2020 elections.
- The Authority approved many regulations related to campaign rallies and promotional activities, enforcing Articles 31 and 32 of *the Law on the Exercise of Political Rights* governing campaigns limitations. Such regulations included reiterating prohibition of any violations of private life, prohibition of use of violence, prohibition of use of public facilities for promotional activities, ban of using state-owned entities for rallying purposes, prohibition of advertising in places of worship, prohibition of sticking campaign posters on street walls and in public squares, and ban of use of loudspeakers. The most significant decision was setting financial ceilings for campaign promotional activities for both individual candidates and absolute list candidates. The Authority set a ceiling of 500,000 Egyptian pounds for individual candidates in the first round and 200,000 pounds in the runoff. For lists of 40 candidates, the ceiling was 6.667 million pounds in the first round and 2.667 million in the runoff. For lists of 102 candidates, the ceiling was 17 million pounds in the first round and 6.8 million in the runoff. These figures were widely disrespected, as will be detailed.
- *The Authority*, while performing its functions, has been observed to focus heavily on routine and bureaucratic work; such as the mere collection and filling of candidates' forms, the receipt of candidacy documents from individuals, parties and political powers, and the establishment of candidacy, grievances, campaigns, and poll count committees. Thus, *the Authority* confined itself within the narrow scope of routine work, and within the walls of its own office.

For instance, a grave fault of *the Authority* was its failure to transparently investigate widespread rumors on social media about the political parties

running under *The Unified National List*, for allegedly selling parliamentary seats – namely seats of certain win because of uncontested candidacy – to businessmen and well-off persons at price of millions of pounds, allowing a parliament that may include, among many loyalists, a group of corrupt individuals whose role is to draft bills and enact laws.

For the second time in three months, and following a similar approach in the Senate elections, the *Authority* has run uncontested poll for half the seats of *the House of Representatives*, namely in poll of the absolute lists – a system that is unconstitutional by virtue of three rulings of *The Constitutional Court* date back to more than three decades ago, and is ethically flawed because it dumps 49% of the votes (that have been casted to a particular list or lists) into the box of the list that receives more than 51% of the votes, which is utter fraud of voters' will. *The Authority*, at the slightest pretexts—believed by many to be predetermined—disallowed a competitive poll on the absolute lists by qualifying only a single list to run uncontested nationwide for the four sectors, while disqualifying all its opponents for lame reasons taken less seriously by many. In the instance of the marginalized and incapable *Senate*, the political powers seemingly anticipated such behavior, and opted out of the contest, waiting for *the House of Representatives* elections. Disqualified lists' candidates filed their appeals to the court, all of which have been dismissed.

In the individual poll, *the Authority* sided with those wishing to exclude certain strong opponents from competition on grounds that appeared unrealistic, and disqualified the latter, despite previous participation in the election, and rather victories, under same political and civil status, *such as Haitham Hariri*. *The Authority* disqualified over 200 candidates who applied for individual seats. Most of these candidates appealed the *Authority's* decisions before the *Administrative Court*, which upheld most of the *Authority's* rulings. Some of the disqualified applicants further appealed to *the Supreme Administrative Court*, which upheld most of the lower court's decisions. *The Authority* justified disqualification decisions on the grounds of false documents, or candidates' health conditions, or rather legal and procedural reasons, and reasons related to military service.

Examining the ballot papers, which should be arranged to ensure equality, fairness, and impartiality, and ordered based on earlier submissions; it is observed that *the Authority* compromised impartiality – similar to its conduct in the *Senate* elections – by prioritizing the names of four parties close to the ruling

power—*Mostaqbal Watan, Humat Watan, Al-Shaab Al-Jumhuri, and the Democratic Front*—in the order of candidates' names and their placement on ballot cards. Some believe this to be a trivial or irrelevant matter, yet it remains significant because it makes it easier for uneducated voters to elect those names.

The Authority's conduct shall inflict severe consequences; it stirs frustration when indirectly signals to voters that the electoral process is prefabricated, rendering media campaigns—including campaigns broadcasted by *the Authority* via press and television to encourage participation—ineffectual, like treading water. This explains the decline in voter turnout, which is often limited to supporting a family, tribe, or clan candidate.

Because *The Authority* only focuses on routine work, it usually overlooks violations by candidates in electoral campaigning, in terms of timing, locations, or the huge spendings which, sometimes, exceeds spending ceilings set by the law and by *the Authority's* administrative decisions. Notably, *the Authority* has never disqualified a candidate for such evident violations – as if everyone is respectful to campaigns rules – although, a single billboard in a public space is certainly enough for exceeding spending limits, let alone widespread displays throughout the constituency involving irrational and wasteful expenditure.

The Authority's routine procedures also reveal technical weaknesses, as proven by plenty of observations noted by a fair visitor while navigating *the Authority's* website, which fails to adequately respond to the vast number of inquiries. Information on the website is outdated; instead of serving as a primary source for the press, it is the press that serves as source of information for the people, because the website is not up to date. Furthermore, the website needs to be supported with updates on recent electoral laws; namely *The House of Representatives Law, The Exercise of Political Rights Law, and The Electoral Constituencies Law*. The website also lacks statistical data, and classifications of candidates and voters by gender, age, and professional background. *The Higher Elections Committee* previously used to provide such information, yet the current Authority stands unable to feed such data in its website, forcing researchers and journalists to seek information from other websites and media outlets, which may disseminate inaccurate information.

Fifth: Participation in Candidacy

Participation in candidacy reflects the level of voters' confidence in the political system and their satisfaction with the electoral process and its outcomes. Candidacy, in general, hinges on certain bureaucratic details, namely candidate's citizenship, enrolment in voters database, age (no less than 25 years), military service status (completed or exempted), constituency, educational qualification (completion of basic education), relation to electoral quotas when running under lists system, affiliation with political powers (partisan or independent), and other details that are largely similar across electoral systems worldwide. Based on available data about candidates and constituencies, the following remarks stand out:

- On October 22, 2025, *the National Election Authority* announced the final lists of all candidates running *for the House of Representatives* elections. Three days later, the list was finalized after 22 individual candidates withdrew.

The elections seem to be strongly momentous due to its being linked to families, tribes, and clans. *The Authority*, therefore, followed the same approach as in the 2020 *House of Representatives* elections: poll is to be conducted for both systems – lists and individual seats – in two phases. The first phase covers Upper Egypt governorates, the Red Sea, and New Valley – and *The Upper Egypt Sector* – Alexandria, Beheira, and Matrouh – or *The West Delta Sector*. Individual candidates are to run in their respective sets of governorates, while the absolute list is to run uncontested in both corresponding sectors. The second phase covers Cairo and the South and Central Delta governorates – and *Cairo and South-Central Delta Sector*, as well as the Canal and Sinai governorates – and *East Delta Sector* – with individual candidates running in their respective governorates, and the absolute list running uncontested in both corresponding sectors.

In the first phase, elections will be held in half individual seats' constituencies, that is 70 constituencies, and the two corresponding sectors, with electorate of about 35 million voters. Approximately, same number will vote in the second phase, which includes 73 individual seats' constituencies and the two sectors for the absolute lists.

- When announcing the candidate lists, *the Authority* stated it had disqualified three lists and accepted only one. It disqualified the *Al-Geel "Generation" List*, led by the *Democratic Generation Party*, which aimed to compete in East and West Delta sectors, and *Sotak le Misr "Your Voice for Egypt" List* in West Delta, led by the *Egypt Arab Socialist Party*. *The Authority* accepted only one list: *The Unified National List for Egypt*, providing bureaucratic lame reasons for rejecting the two lists. Had the latter been accepted, elections would have been competitive, at least formally—a far better outcome than the current arrangement, which rendered half of the parliamentary seats uncontested, in a rather disguised appointment than elections. Such actions stripped the elections of its momentum and marked them—among other reasons—as lacking competitiveness, objectivity, and integrity.

In the same context, *The Authority* has also disqualified many individual candidates. Some were well-known opposition leaders, making *the Authority's* decisions appear unfair and biased, even though they were based on court rulings. The most notable disqualifications were decided against candidates of *the Popular Front for Social Justice Parties List* – or *Haq Annas "People's Right" List* – which sought to run only for individual seats, led by the *Socialist Popular Alliance Party*. *The Authority* cited reasons related to military service status or enrolment in the military reserve. As a result, all candidates of the *Front* (except *Al-Karama Party*) decided to withdraw in protest.

- A review of partisan candidacy shows that 34 parties participated, slightly fewer than the 36 parties participated in the 2020 elections. Twelve parties ran under lists system. The same parties ran also for individual seats, in addition to 22 other parties. Since Egypt has about 104 political parties, and because half of participating parties – from a practical point of view – cannot be considered as genuine contestants, since they have submitted only a handful of candidates. One may conclude, then, that only about 15% of parties effectively participated, which reflects an instance of the multipartisan system failure in Egypt, with political parties being reluctant to show up their presence in one of the most crucial opportunities for parties in any given political regime.

Further highlighting the incapacity and decline of partisan popularity, it is worth noting that among candidates on the *National List*—guaranteed to win half the seats effortlessly—are eight former ministers: two independents and six leaders from *Mustaqbal Watan* “*Future of Nation*”, *Humat Al-Watan* “*Homeland Defenders*”, and *the National Front*; including the heads of *the National Front* and *Humat Al-Watan*. Three ministers have run in *West Delta Sector* and *Cairo- South- Central Delta sector*, while two of them have run in *Upper Egypt Sector*. As been noted in the announced names, three ministers included three of their offspring to the reserve list.

- While *Mustaqbal Watan Party* was preparing the *Unified List for Egypt* and after designating certain seats to political powers that agreed to participate, some parties sold their designated seats to businesspeople. This sparked public outrage, particularly after a woman from *Humat Al-Watan Party* have spoken openly and audaciously about being asked to pay 25 million pounds for being listed on the uncontested-winning list. Surprisingly, the woman was interrogated by judiciary, but not the party leaders, who are mostly retired high-ranking army officers. Credible sources and many partisan figures have reported that seat-selling occurred commonly in at least four other parties alongside *Humat Al-Watan*, namely, *Mustaqbal Watan*, *the National Front*, *Al-Wafd*, and *Reform and Development*.
- The candidacy for both lists and individual seats in the 2025 *House of Representatives* elections have created to numerous conflicts within the political parties, mounting to accusing party leaders of authoritarianism and unilateral decision-making—whether for agreeing to join the unified list, in principle, such as *Al-Wafd Party*, or for participating and being unfairly deprived of stronger representation such as *At-Tagammu* “*The Assembly*” *Party*, or even having the party leader unilaterally deciding the party representation in the unified list, such as *Al-Wafd Party*, *At-Tagammu Party*, and *Egyptian Social Democratic Party*. Other disputes have erupted because party leaders sought to keep their leadership positions against parties bylaws, such as *Ad-Dostour* “*The Constitution*” *Party*, *The Building and Development Party*, and *At-Tagammu Party*; or because they decided to include in the candidacy figures who are not affiliated to their parties, while rejecting the candidacy of youths from the parties’ calibers, such as

Al-Wa'y "Awareness" Party, The Generation Will Party, The Democratic Generation Party, The Republican People Party, and Humant Al-Watan Party.

- Regarding the absolute list, 284 seats, it has been prepared primarily by *Mustaqbal Watan Party*, in open coordination with security entities, particularly naming the participating political actors with their numbers and relative weights. In the list around 13 political actors have taken part. In absence of any official source detailing the exact figures, this study relied on research by Abdel Nasser Kandil, prepared for the Egyptian Coalition for Human Rights and Development. Kandil mentioned in his study that the share of *Mustaqbal Watan Party* was 121 seats, down from 145 in 2020 elections, the share of *Humat Al-Watan* was 54 seats, up from 19 seats in 2020 elections, the share of the newly founded *National Front Party* was 43 seats, the share of *The Republican People Party* was 16 seats, down from 28 seats, the share of *The Egyptian Social Democratic Party* was 9 seats, up from 7 seats, the share of *Al-Wafd Party* was 7 seats, down from 22 seats, the share of *Al-Mo'tamar "The Conference" Party* was 3 seats, down from 7 seats, the share of *the Reform and Development Party* was 8 seats, down from 9 seats, the share of *Al-Adl "Justice" Party* was 8 seats, up from 2 seats, the share of *At-Tagammu Party* was 4 seats, down from 5 seats, the share of *The Freedom Party* was 2 seats, down from 5 seats, the share of *The Generation Will Party* was one seat, down from 2 seats, along with 8 seats for independent candidates, down from 22 seats. Data shows that the *Modern Egypt Party* was not represented in the 2025 elections, unlike the 2020 elections. The decline in some parties' representation is partly attributed to the participation of the *National Front Party*, which has been founded in February 2025, and acquired 43 seats. It is important to note that The Coordination Committee for Parts Youths also had its members represented in the national list, yet all have been counted with their parties in the figures above.
- In the National List, a preliminary analysis of candidates' names across the four lists reveals that dozens of relatives of party leaders have been placed in the reserve lists, which is equal in number to the 284 main seats—an evident intent to enter them into inheriting parliamentary seats in case an original membership is revoked or annulled, or death of any main member. Names in The National List also highlight one of the most

significant setbacks to the partisan system; as it manipulates the *House of Representatives Law* —Clause 2 of Article 8, which allows a candidate to register in the national ID database in any governorate. Thus, the list included candidates running for certain governorates while originally registered in other governorates as their place of birth or residence. Such manipulation undermined voters trust in the parties, as they find themselves invited to vote for a list that includes unfamiliar names from outside of their constituencies or sectors – a list that may even win uncontested. In Beheira governorate, for instance, 19 main candidates run under the absolute list, out of whom 11 are from outside the governorate, possibly even from outside the entire electoral sector. In a final note, while preparing their names and adhering to the six constitutional quotas, the National List has impudently assigned names that fall under multiple quota groups —for instance, one candidate who is Christian, youth, and farmer; or who is Christian, worker, and having a disability. Thus, the state’s keenness on maintaining these quotas in the constitution—which has confused the entire electoral scene—has been made purely theoretical and meaningless in practice. Kandil also noted that out of 163 quota holders on The List, 55 candidates fall under two quota groups, and 6 candidates fall under three quota groups. In case of the 28 Christian candidates; there are 23 women and 5 men. Moreover, all candidates with disabilities are women, and all have been chosen because they also fit under other quota groups.

- In any elections, a significant indicator to voters confidence is the poll turnout. Another indicator, as previously mentioned, is candidacy rates. In the 2025 *House of Representatives* elections, 2,598 candidates have run for the individual seats in both phases, in addition to 284 main candidates under the absolute lists; with 1,282 candidates participating in the first phase and 1,316 candidates participating in the second phase. Even after adding the list main candidates, to sum up a total of 2,882; this figure remains the lowest in 25 years: in the elections of 2000, 2005, 2010, 2011, 2015, and 2020, the numbers of candidates, after adding candidates of absolute lists, were 3,957, 5,177, 5,411, 10,251, 5,441, and 4,248 respectively. Number of seats also varied between 444 seats and 568 seats. The mentioned elections have also been conducted under different electoral systems: the first two elections followed the majority individual

system with the classical workers-and-farmers quota; the third elections followed same system and included a representation quota for women; in the fourth elections two-thirds of seats have been allocated to proportional representation system, and included a candidacy quota for women, while the remaining seats have been elected under majority system. The 2015 elections was conducted under the majority system with 21% of seats allocated for absolute lists, and included six representational quotas, and the remaining kept for individual candidates. Both the 2020 and 2025 elections have been conducted under the same system, while seats allocated to absolute lists have been increased to half the parliamentary seats. Thus, the decline in candidacy is partly attribute to the nature of the electoral system, which previously accommodated large numbers under the proportional system in 2011. It also shows public fatigue from repeated participation in candidacy without having positive outcomes. There have always been promises of economic improvement, coinciding with elections, and patience for months or years; all proved to be futile, with conditions worsening and all blames are directed to external factors, such as COVID-19 pandemic, Russia-Ukraine war, and the Israeli aggression on Gaza.

- Among the 2,598 individual candidates, *Mustaqbal Watan* had 125 candidates —44% of the 284 seats to be elected, a number nearly equals the total number of candidates running for the three other pro-state parties – aside from *Mustaqbal Watan* – namely *The National Front Party*, 46 candidates, *Humat Al-Watan Party*, 69 candidates, and *The Republican People Party*, 11 candidates— with total of 126 candidates, equal to roughly 16%, 24%, and 4% of seats to be elected, respectively. This means that *Mustaqbal Watan Party*, while leading the electoral scene, maintained its proximity to *Humat Al-Watan Party* and *The Republican People Party* as it was in 2020 elections – the *National Front Party* had not been yet founded back then – with individual candidates of the *Mustaqbal Watan*, *Humat Al Watan*, and *The Republican People Party* then numbered 280, 121, and 58 respectively.

As for the absolute lists, The Authority announced the main lists table, which specifically mentioned the quota group based on which every candidate has been selected, in addition to candidates not running under

any of the six constitutional quotas. In terms of gender, the table mentioned the word “woman” 83 times, although the law requires 142 women in the lists across the four sectors constituencies. The answer to that question comes clear with the realization that women run under other quota groups, such as youths or persons with disabilities. The real risk with such arrangement lies in jeopardizing the state’s discourse promoting and encouraging the quota system.

On another hand, 167 women have run for individual seats, representing 6.4% of all individual candidates— which falls lower than 8.4% in 2020 elections. The highest number of female candidates in the 2025 elections was 22 female candidates participating in Cairo, followed by 20 female candidates in Sharqia, 19 female candidates in Beheira, 18 female candidates in Dakahlia, 12 female candidates in Giza, 10 female candidates in Sohag, and 9 female candidates in Minya. Evidently, the classical perception that women in Upper Egypt rarely run for elections, or that only women in urban governorates can run for candidacy, is no longer valid. Statistics show that governorates with the most female candidates are those with the largest populations. Party-wise, 129 women ran as independent candidates, resembling 87% of female candidacy, while the remaining percentage was mostly from the *Al-Mo’tamar Party*, *Al-Adl Party*, *Al-Ghad “Tomorrow” Party*, and *Al-Dostour Party*, with 7, 6, 4, and 3 women candidates respectively. In parties closest to power—which often claim to prioritize women—*Mustaqbal Watan*, *Humat Al-Watan*, and *the National Front* each had only one woman candidate, in consistency with their approach in *the National List*, where women were included in the list under other quota groups, such as youths or Christians.

In terms of faith quota group, the main absolute lists included the quota group “Christian” for 20 candidates, although the legal requirement is 24 candidates. This means that four candidates run as youths, workers, or persons with disabilities and are also Christians—another indication of weak commitment to the quota system despite alleged adherence to it.

Furthermore, 73 Christians have run for individual seats, representing 2.8% of total individual candidates— dropping from 3.2% in the 2020 elections. Highest Christians candidacy rates in the 2025 elections were found in governorates known for dense Christian population, primarily 21

Christian candidates in Cairo, 18 Christian candidates in Minya, 10 Christian candidates in Assiut, and 9 Christian candidates in Sohag. Party-wise, independent Christian candidates were the majority of 74%, followed by 4 Christian candidates from the Egyptian Social Democratic Party, and 2 Christian candidates from *Al-Mo'tamar Party*. *Mustaqbal Watan* and *Humat Al-Watan* each had only one Christian candidate, similar to *Al-Wafd*, which was traditionally famous for strong Christian representation in elections.

Sixth: Electoral Campaigns

The electoral campaigns are all political activities that precede the poll, during which all political powers —parties, blocs, and individuals—plan and prepare for ballot day. They hold conferences, form alliances, run electoral advertisements, coordinate among themselves, receive donations and spend them for all such individual and mass activities through conventional media channels as well as electronic, digital, and social networks. The aim for the political powers is to present their platforms, ideas, and promises to the voters, in order to ensure their votes on ballot day. There may even be open blatant discouragement from voting to the opponents.

The electoral campaign for the 2025 *House of Representatives* elections began de facto, not de jure, a few weeks before the start of candidacy applications and the call for voters to cast their ballots on October 4, 2025, with alliances formation and deal-making. The campaigns continued with the commencement of the campaigns and publicity period, which lasted 56 days—28 days for the first phase: 15 days for the first round, and 13 days for the runoff round. The second phase with its two rounds has followed the same schedule. It is known, however, according to the electoral timeline, that the first rounds of both phases should be run consecutively, followed by the two runoff rounds in sequence, then the ballot concludes.

Before delving into the details of the candidates and political powers campaigns, it is necessary to highlight that one decisive factor in the electoral campaign is the Egyptian laws and the election management – usually controlled by the state controls through its arm—the National Election Authority. In terms of the laws, the Authority has set the ceiling for electoral publicity, as mentioned earlier. The Law on the Exercise of Political Rights, in Chapter Four, Articles 23–29 and 31–37,

has set out all details relevant to publicity; duration, election blackout, involvement of state-owned media in publicity, restrictions and regulations, and the monitoring committees for publicity violations. The Authority's decision No. 53 regulated some procedures concerning publicity and electoral campaigns.

The Authority was indirectly involved in the electoral campaigns by easing the burdens for the parties of *the Unified National List*, namely the four parties which are linked with the state; *Mustaqbal Watan*, *Humat Al-Watan*, *The National Front*, and *The Republican People Party* – quite significantly *Mustaqbal Watan Party*. Easing the burden has been done in several means and forms; such as arranging the names on the ballot paper on in a particular order – with favored names placed first – which directs voters to easily spot and choose certain candidates. With close analysis of names order in the candidates' lists – announced by *the Authority* – and then the order on ballot papers, it has been found that *Mustaqbal Watan* occupied the first place in order in 99 out of 100 constituencies. In all instances where *Mustaqbal Watan* candidates run in a single-seat constituency, they always take priority in names order, except for one constituency (Atsa). In other instances, *Mustaqbal Watan* candidates have occupied the first and second positions in two-seat constituencies: Senbellawin and Kafr El-Zayat. In one instance the Party's candidates occupied the first, second, and third positions in a three-seat constituency, which is Tahta. In the four-seat constituencies – five constituencies in total – *Mustaqbal Watan* had its largest representation, with three candidates placed in first, second, and third positions together, that took place in Qusiya in Assiut and Zagazig in Sharqia. Two major points to be concluded out of that:

First, the Party not only pushed further the other three state-linked parties in favor of its own candidates, but rather even excluded of loyal parties and tamed opposition parties co-running under the same absolute list, refusing to let any of them advance it in any contested constituency, except for the one mentioned earlier.

Second, the repetitive iterations by *the Authority* that it stands equidistant from all candidates and political powers in the elections, now seem open to debate, especially with many candidates from various political powers, as well as independent candidates, complaining that they were disallowed to be placed first in order on the ballot paper when submitting their candidacy applications.

In any case, the electoral campaigns were marked by negative criticism, whether in terms of alliances and deals or in terms publicity and electoral platforms.

1. Alliances and Deal-making

In this elections, alliances and deals varied in nature. In reality—at least those linked to the individual system—they were characterized primarily by the desire to achieve personal and immediate interests, then comes the interests of the party, then the interests of other parties similar in their relationship with the state.

On the ground, electoral campaigns were impacted by the state's engineering of many legal technicalities, particularly those related to the electoral system and the size of constituencies, all of which have compounded the challenges parties could face—let alone individuals. Even for individuals, the challenges an Egyptian woman may face as a candidate with limited resources, versus man candidate, made the situation more difficult. Alliances, therefore, have become inevitable, especially with some candidates have supporters in certain areas of a constituency, while other candidates have their supporters in other areas within the same constituency. Naturally, alliances enjoy more flexibility in working within electoral “kitchens”, which even increases when the number of seats required to be won in a constituency is larger.

The total number of party candidates running for individual seats is 560 candidates from 34 parties. Given that political parties—mainly the bigger ones—seem to be more capable than the of individual (independent) candidates in this system, the competition during electoral campaigns and the race among parties to win the 284 lists-seats were relatively limited. Nevertheless, the race among parties to win seats was intense, because the parties realize the fact that individual candidates, despite spending less, are more capable of mobilizing families and tribes to vote for them. It is worth noting that 2,038 independent candidates competed—among themselves and against party candidates—leading tough campaigns with over spending – in both financially and non-financially – relying on family votes and kinship mobilization.

In the governorates, and under the individual system, *Mustaqbal Watan* sought to be present, along with *Humat Al-Watan*, in most governorates. The former had no candidates running under the individual system only in two governorates:

Luxor and Port Said, while *Humat Al-Watan* had no candidates for the individual system only in Aswan, North Sinai, and Suez. *The National Front*, newly founded to represent the Arab tribes, further lagging behind both parties, had no candidates in Dakahlia, Damietta, Port Said, and even in governorates known as home to tribes such as Matrouh and North and South Sinai, repeating what happened in the most recent Senate elections. *The National Front* participated in one of the three constituencies in the Red Sea and two of the four constituencies in Qena, both known to be tribal governorates.

The House of Representatives elections feature heated competition for individual seats, while lack competition for list seats— since it is only single list running uncontested. Therefore, the concerns that the list might fail to secure 5% of votes – required to win uncontested – become baseless, as the heated competition for individual seats is enough to drive people to participate and go to polling stations. However, there might be other concern, namely about the voters casting their ballots only for individual candidates, and invalidating their ballots for the list. Against that concern, the list seeks to mobilize voters support, and joins the campaigns actively during the publicity period, it also may bind certain parties across both list individual systems, through their candidates in the latter.

Electoral campaigns revealed that having an alliance of certain parties under *The National List* does not rule out their rivalry on the individual seats. Parties may not only be rivals apart from the list, rather, the four state-linked parties may compete against each other. It is not an overstatement to believe the four parties may even compete internally, leading strong campaigns against one another.

The competition between the four state-linked parties on one hand, and other parties running under *the List* on the other, becomes more evident in many of the 143 constituencies. For example, there was intense competition between *Mustaqbal Watan* and *At-Tagammu* over the seats in Mahalla First, Gharbia, while *Humat Al-Watan* and *the Egyptian Social Democratic Party* have competed fiercely in Al-Manzala, Dakahlia.

As for competition among the four parties, it gets evident as they, in total, have more candidates than the number of seats run for. In Tahta, three candidates

from *Mustaqbal Watan* competed against one candidate from *Republican People Party* over three seats.

Speaking of internal competition among same party members, in the case of the four parties, it shows up two forms. The first form, competition between candidates of the same party, as seen in Al-Montaza, Alexandria, where two candidates of *Mustaqbal Watan* competed over one seat. The second form, competition between a party candidate and a member to the same party who is running independently. For instance, the case of MP Mohamed El-Husseini who was member to 2022 Parliament, whose candidacy was rejected by *Mustaqbal Watan*, prompting him to run independently against his own party in Bulaq. Another instance is Khaled Abu Nahoul, MP for *Republican People*, who has run independently for the Abu Tisht seat against his party's candidate.

It is, therefore, beyond doubt that what unites the four state-linked parties are purely interest-based considerations and electoral – rather than political – alliances, as dictated only by the state. Such alliances are temporary and pragmatic, far from turning into blocs or coalitions based on solid foundations, which is particularly more visible in confrontations with other parties.

Back to the individual system, statistics show that 2,598 candidates run for 284 seats, making the approximate general competition ratio 9 candidates per seat—lower than the rate in the 2020 elections general ratio, which was 16 candidates per seat. At the governorate level, Beheira, Sohag, and Luxor had the highest competition ratios, with 20.1, 19.6, and 17 candidates per seat respectively. The lowest competition ratios were in the Red Sea, followed by Qalyubia and Beni Suef governorates, with 3.7, 4.4, and 4.4 candidates per seat respectively. Governorates ratios are also lower than the 2020 elections, where the highest competition ratios were in Port Said, Luxor, and Ismailia governorates, with 25, 25, and 22.6 candidates per seat respectively, and the lowest competition ratio then were in South Sinai, Fayoum, and Minya governorates, with 5, 8, and 11.7 candidates per seat respectively. Thus, competition ratios declined significantly when comparing the two elections — another indication of reduced momentum and perhaps diminished confidence in the elections or even their usefulness, to begin with.

2. Electoral Publicity and Platforms

While running their publicity campaigns, candidates used various media to reach out to their voters. Some relied on conventional approaches, either public ones such as newspapers and television, or rather personal communications, such as electoral conferences, attending planned events, or even showing up spontaneously in personal events such as funerals and weddings. It is worth mentioning that *Mustaqbal Watan*, *Humat Al-Watan*, *The National Front*, *Al-Wa'y*, *The Conservatives*, *The Republican People*, *Al-Adl*, *The Egyptian Social Democratic Party*, *The Generation Democratic party*, among others, have all organized large-scale party conferences across the country, seeking to rival each other, and overcome family voting in favor of independent candidates.

Political parties and some individual candidates, while running their publicity campaigns, embraced digital approaches, attempting to cope with atmosphere of globalization and the information revolution. According to a study by *Al-Masry Al-Youm* newspaper, the *National Front Party* championed this approach, while *Humat Al-Watan Party* was the most active in replying to comments—apparently reacting to messages of severe criticism stirred by selling *the Party's* share in the *Unified National List*. It is worth noting that digital publicity aligns with the preferences of young voters, who constitute about two-thirds of the electorate, and is also a low-cost approach if compared to conventional publicity approaches.

The most outstanding features of electoral publicity, can be spotted in the massive scale of spendings, mounting to violate of publicity spending ceilings for both lists and individual seats. It has been observed amid a complete absence of oversight by *the National Election Authority*, which remained restrained to paperwork, while monitoring only the bank accounts that have been opened for campaign spending in compliance with the law and the *Authority's* decisions. *The Authority* explicitly stated that it monitors campaign spending through auditing the bank accounts, to prevent exceeding of financial ceilings—as if candidates spend only through the bank accounts. It is important to highlight that many banners and posters placed in streets and squares carried, in extremely small print, the phrase “donated by” followed by names, as a way to avoid counting such expenses as part of candidates’ campaign spending.

During the electoral campaigns, candidates’ electoral platforms have – generally – been presented verbally. Candidates’ promises have rather been regional or local in nature, further aligning with the majority electoral system. In the general

survey of campaigns, the study found only one documented platform—that of the *Al-Adly Party*, written in 56 pages. That platform has been drafted in a rather general rather than local tone, and found to be selective in touching upon the concerns of Egyptian citizens. The platform addressed four pillars, namely, administrative and structural reform, economic and social affairs, and Egyptian expatriates, and further highlighted Egypt's need to enact dozens of laws addressing concerns such as education, health, labor and civil service, social insurance, and personal status, among others. Yet, what stands out the most in *Al-Adl Party's* platform, is that it utterly disregards political issues, such as freedoms of opinion and expression, human rights, political parties, civil society, the judiciary, the electoral law, and Egyptian foreign policy.

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