**Criminalization of early marriage (marriage of minors)**

In addition to the Constitution and the national laws, which contain provisions emphasizing the protection of children from all forms of exploitation, Egyptian laws regulate marriage as follows:

* Article 80 of the 2014 Constitution states that” the State is committed to protecting and safeguarding the rights of children under 18 years of age from all forms of violence, abuse, mistreatment as well as sexual and commercial abuse and exploitation”.
* Article 2 of the Children's Law No. 12 of 1996, as amended by Act No. 126 of 2008, “that any child who did not reach 18 of years is considered a child by law”.
* Article (31 bis), added in 2008 to Law No. 143 of 1994 regarding civil status, stipulates that " A marriage contract may not be authenticated for those who have not reached the age of eighteen.” And those who violate those provisions are disciplined.
* The Minister of Justice issued Decision No. 6927 of 2008, which states that ""the marriage contract cannot be commenced or marriage approved unless the spouses are eighteen years old at the time of the contract ".
* Article 227 of the Penal Code stipulates a penalty of imprisonment and a fine for anyone who makes false statements before the competent authority or who has written or submitted papers with the intention of proving that one of the spouses has reached the legally specified age, as well as penalties for those who prepare the marriage’s contract.
* Article 116 bis of the Child Law No. 126 of 2008 stipulates “The minimum penalty decreed for any crime shall be doubled if the crime is committed by an adult against a child, or if it is committed by one of the parents, or by one of the child’s guardians, or by people in charge of supervising or upbringing the child, or by those who have authority over the child, or by a servant to any of the above mentioned."
* The Anti-trafficking in persons Law No. 64 of 2010 criminalizes some child marriages as a form of sexual exploitation and trafficking in persons when the child's guardian gives them to an adult to be married for a specific period of time in exchange for a financial sum, or the so-called " Bargain marriage

In the course of the ongoing legislative review and proposals, the Egyptian Government has introduced an integrated law that would cover all matters that would criminalize early marriage and explicitly stipulate that the legal age for marriage is 18 years**. The law includes amendments and proposals of the following:**

* The legal age for marriage is expressly set out in the law to be 18 years.
* A penalty and a fine for anyone who participates in the marriage of a child or a child under 18 years of age or in the preparatory stages preceding or commencing the marriage contract and a penalty for every person who has notarized a marriage contract (i.e. notarized and authorized) person and he/she knows that one of the parties in the contract is under the legal age. The statute of limitations for the crime is not obsolescence.
* Severe penalties for any person who has used force or threat to force a child to marry or to disclose the identity of the victim, witness or amount, or to publish any information relating to such facts except within the framework of the competent investigating authorities and obtain their consent.
* Prohibition of ratification/authentication of all customary marriage contracts for children.
* An obligation on the (Ma’zoun) to notify the Public Prosecutor's Office of customary marriages and to state a penalty of imprisonment and dismissal in the event of non-notification.
* Amend the notarization articles by tightening the cases of proof of the marriage contract and the need for the approval of the competent family court based on the request of the Public Prosecutor's Office.
* An amendment to the authority of the guardian or parent to add a case of State robbery on guardianship, which is the crime of marring a boy child and a girl child.

The National Strategy against early Marriage has been issued, as well as the Egyptian Women 2030 empowerment Strategy is devoted to protection against all forms of discrimination and violence against women, including combating early marriage. The Egyptian State is working to raise awareness and alert families to the risks of child marriage in all governorates through the mass media and social media. Other direct campaigns, State interventions and activities have also contributed to the monitoring of a large number of child marriages (both directly and indirectly) and the training of various health and services providers is being carried out on the psychological and physical damage to early marriage. Official statistics in 2017 stated 118,000 cases of early marriages.

The Decree No. 9200 of 2015 of the Minister of Justice, which mandates a foreign marriage applicant for Egyptian marriage to submit an investment certificate at the Egyptian National Bank in the amount of 50,000 pounds in the name of the Women applicant and to complete the required documents with the Documentation Office, if they have an age gap of over 25 years on the date of notarizing a contract. The response is not inconsistent with the Anti-Trafficking in Persons Law, on the contrary, it is considered a guarantee to combat forced/early marriage and the loss of the wife’s rights. In all cases, if it is proven that the marriage violates the conditions of the law in terms of marriage age and suspicion of exploitation, it is punished according to the law when the child’s guardian hands her over to someone for marriage for a specified period in return for a sum of money, which is what it is called. bargain marriage."

Public Prosecutions has initiated investigations into a number of cases called tourist and temporary marriages, reaching 8 cases in 2017, 19 cases in 2018, 30 cases in 2019 and 50 cases in 2020