



IDSC IN BRIEF

Acting as the Egyptian Cabinet's Think Tank... Our mission is to impartially support the government decisions through proposing best policy scenario mix and preparing analytical research to improve the socio-economic well-being of the Egyptian society.

Since Egypt has embarked on an ambitious reform process, the climate surrounding such process has increasingly become more complex and interconnected. It has become evident that public policy design demands a variety of professional policy options.

IDSC derives its success from being a multidisciplinary institution which is capable of meeting these outstanding demands. Moreover, operating at the heart of the decision-making process in Egypt, IDSC encourages public debate on its research findings, which are openly available to all members of the society.

Being a progressive organization, IDSC works to establish cooperation linkages with international counterparts. The main purpose is to share knowledge and integrate best practices into its operations. We appreciate our existing partnerships and we look forward to developing new ones hoping that through cooperation in mutual areas of interest, we will have a significant impact on developing the decision-making process in Egypt.

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ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Population Status in Egypt

In celebration of the release of the 4th annual report about the population status in Egypt, issued by the Egyptian Cabinet's Information and Decision Support Center (IDSC) and directed by its Chairman Dr. Magued Osman, in collaboration with the EPDI and the United Nations Fund for Population Activities (UNFPA), a conference titled "The Population Status in Egypt" was launched on December 29th, attended by The Minister of State for Family and Population, Moshera Khattab, Dr. Zeyad El Refaay – the Representative of the United Nations Fund for Population Activities in Egypt as well as a number of top researchers and experts in the field of demographic and developmental studies.

The report's objective is evaluating the adopted policies and programs in Egypt through the past 15 years since the Cairo

International Conference on Population and Development that took place in 1994.

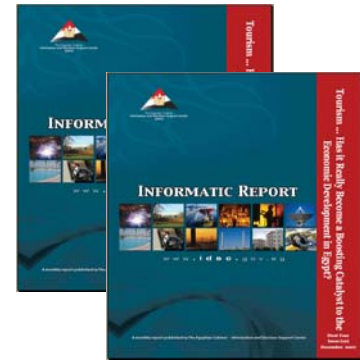
The report tackles a number of vital issues including the current demographic situation in Egypt – that witnessed a rapid growth over the past decades and doubled by 6 times in the 20th century. The report introduces the women's situation in Egypt, and reproductive health. The vital role of media and education in altering negative behaviors was highlighted referring to the main achievements as well as the challenges that Egypt faces in this regard.

The report also tackles the adolescent and youth reproductive health, in addition to partnerships and resource mobilization.

Reports:

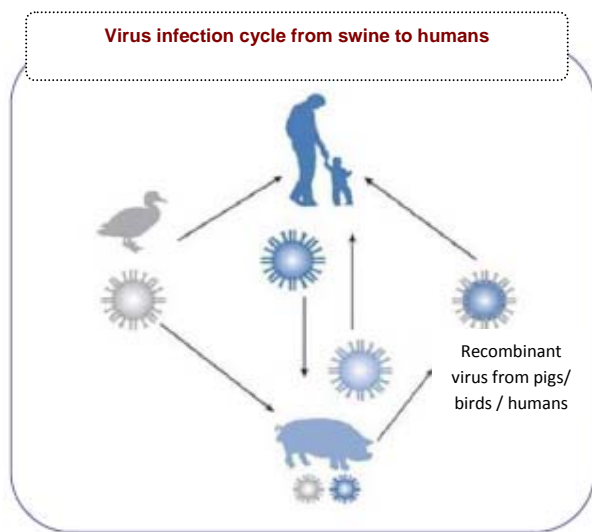
The information and decision support center releases a series of information reports about diverse issues of interest to the public and decision-makers.

The following introduces one of these reports.



A(H1N1) Global Pandemic...Where to?!

Throughout history, different types of influenza pandemics had disastrous effects on the social and economic respects across the globe. The A(H1N1) influenza virus is considered a new threat to humanity.



This information report refers to some facts about the virus' situation on the global, local and regional levels as well as the policies adopted by the Egyptian government to counter the pandemic.

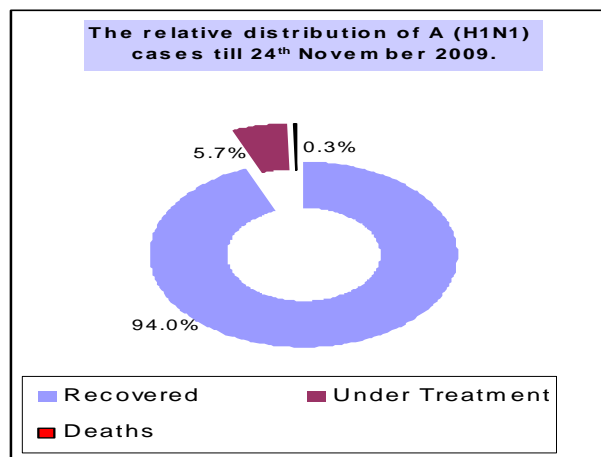
First: The pandemic situation on the international level: The World Health Organization (WHO) announced the virus first human infections in the United States and Mexico.

Regional distribution of A (H1N1) confirmed cases reported to WHO by state parties as of November 8th 2009.

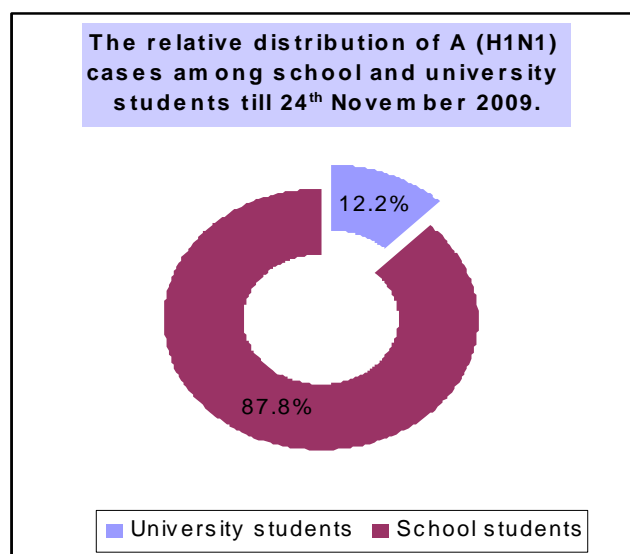
Regions	Cases (Thousand)	
	Infections	Deaths
WHO regional office for Americas (AMRO)	190.8	4.5
WHO regional office for the western pacific (WPRO)	149.7	0.5
WHO regional office for Europe (EURO)	> 78	< 0.3
WHO regional office for South- East Asia (SEARO)	44.7	0.7
WHO regional office for Eastern Mediterranean (EMRO)	25.5	0.2
WHO regional office for Africa (AFRO)	14.9	0.1
Total	> 503.5	< 6.3

Source: World Health Organization

- The total number of A(H1N1) infected cases worldwide – till November 8th – has reached more than 503.5 thousand, with at least 6.3 thousand deaths.
- North and South Americas – including 35 countries– has recorded the highest number of A(H1N1) infected cases (190.8 thousand), as well as the highest number of deaths of 4.5 thousand cases. The United States of America recorded the highest number of infections in the region (57.6 thousand confirmed cases); while South Africa recorded the highest number of cases in the African region – including 46 countries – of 12,4 thousands till November 8th.



- The virus infection for university and school students has reached 12.2% and 87.8% respectively in 23 governorates till November 24th 2009, with most cases located in Cairo governorate reaching a total of 712 students, representing 51.5% of total cases.



Second: The pandemic situation on the local level:

- The first A(H1N1) confirmed case in Egypt was recorded on June-09 for a twelve year old Egyptian American girl coming back from the USA.
- The total number of A(H1N1) confirmed cases in Egypt –till November 24th 2009 – has reached 3216 cases with a recovery rate of 94% representing 3,024 cases, and a death rate of 0.3% representing 11 deaths, with 91% of total deaths for female cases.

Third: The pandemic situation on the regional level:

Kingdom of Saudi Arabia has recorded the highest number of the virus human infections and deaths in the Middle East accounting for 9,355 confirmed cases and 81 deaths till November 15th 2009.

The distribution of A(H1N1) confirmed cases reported by WHO regional office for the Eastern Mediterranean till 21st November 2009.

States	Cases (Thousand)	
	Infected	Death
Saudi Arabia	9355	81
Egypt	3013	9
Jordan	3645	5
Palestine	1090	9
Libya	21	0
Sudan	21	0

Source: WHO Regional Office for the Eastern Mediterranean.

Fourth: Policies adopted by the Egyptian government:

The Egyptian government has adopted a number of policies in countering the pandemic and limiting the virus spread. The following are some of these policies:

- 1- All health quarantine outlets were provided with emission testing cameras.
- 2- A comprehensive media strategy was developed with the following objectives:
 - Raising societal awareness concerning the most important health measures to limit the virus spread.
 - Raising people's confidence in the health system and its ability to best manage the crisis.

- Lessening people's fear, facilitating the required measures through regularly publishing comprehensive information about the pandemic that does not contradict with patients' privacy.
 - Fighting against rumors.
- 3- Hospitals and mobile clinics well equipped and ready to receive A(H1N1) patients.
 - 4- Imposing restrictive rules and regulations regarding pilgrims including preventing persons aged 65 or more and 25 or less from travelling to KSA.
 - 5- Developing a comprehensive plan for the academic year 2009/2010, including the following measures:
 - Postponing the starting date of the academic year for one week.
 - Providing a detailed plan for schools' staff including defining specific roles and responsibilities.
 - Reducing the density of classrooms.
 - Broadcasting all materials through 4 educational channels, 7 days a week.
 - Providing 16 million masks to be distributed among students.
 - Providing all necessary cleaning materials in schools.
 - Closing down any classroom in case of the infection of 2 students.

Polls that Tell:

The Palestinian Cause from Israelis' Perspective

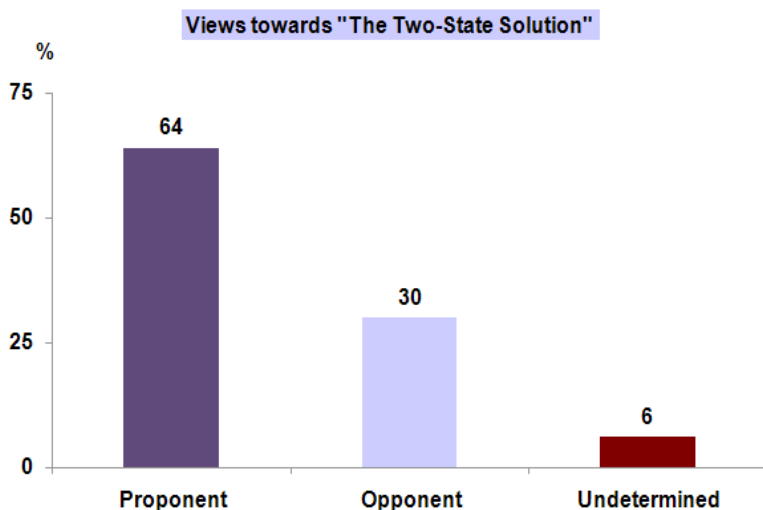
The Arab Israeli conflict throughout history has recently witnessed major developments on both the Palestinian and Israeli sides. There is no doubt that people's views concerning the conflict are as important as that of the official governments. Stemming from this concept, the report reviews the most important results of a number of polls carried out by Israeli and American institutions about the Israeli people's views concerning the most controversial issues in the Palestinian cause and the USA role under the new administration.

1. *Israelis' Stance Towards the Palestinian Cause*

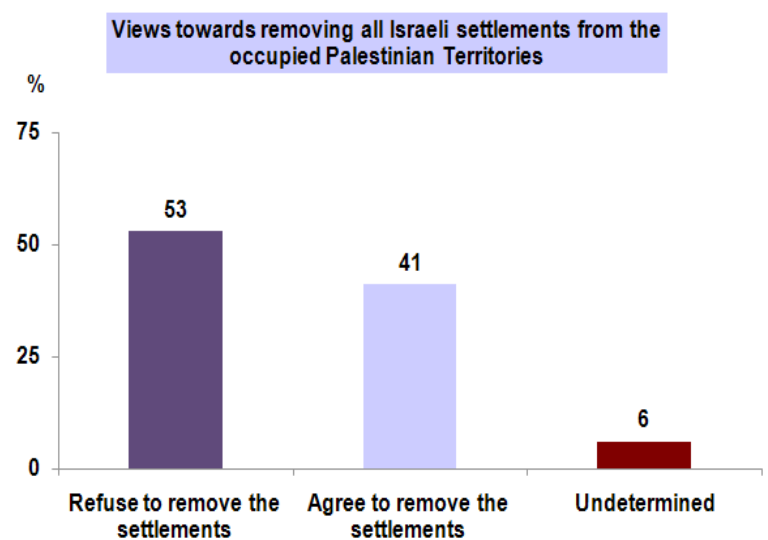
▪ **The Settlements Issue:**

More than half of Israeli interviewees (53%) rejected the complete removal of all Israeli settlements out of the Palestinian lands even if the result would be the failure of previous peace negotiations- while only 41% of them agreed on removing all the settlements until reaching a permanent peace agreement between the two parties.

Those negative views coincide with the official Israeli government's actions of refusing to freeze settlement construction, and carrying on new construction projects in Palestinian lands.



Source: <http://www.tau.ac.il/peace>



Source: <http://www.tau.ac.il/peace>

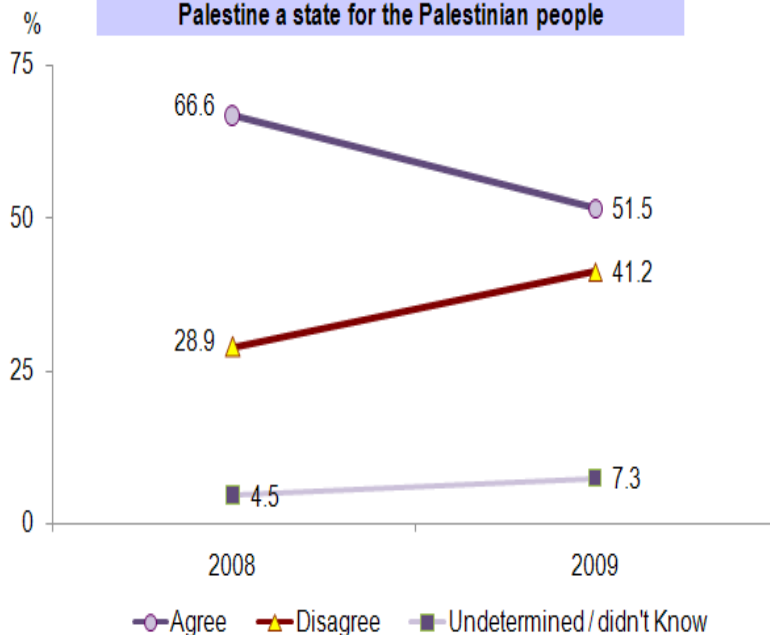
▪ **Two - State Solution:**

64% of Israeli interviewees support the two-state solution, while 30% of them oppose it.

This approach is greatly associated with the Israeli Prime Minister's declaration concerning his acceptance of a demilitarized Palestinian state that acknowledges Israel as a Jewish state, stressing that Jerusalem will remain the only capital of Israel claiming that this will ensure the safety of the Israeli borders with the existence of a Palestinian state.

- **Israel as a State for the Jews:**
- Most of the Israeli interviewees agreed on establishing a Palestinian state to be inhabited by the Palestinian people, side by side with a Jewish state for Jews. However, this percentage decreased from 66.6% in 2008 to 51.5% in 2009.
- This finding is associated with what the Israeli Prime Minister stressed on earlier, stating that the Israeli recognition of a Palestinian state is conditional on the Palestinian and Arabs' recognition of Israel as a Jewish state. Such statement has two manifestations: The first is turning Judaism from a religion into nationality, and turning every Jew into an Israeli citizen. The second is preventing refugees from returning to their homes - which they were forced to leave in 1948 - as well as forcing those living inside Israel to move out of the Jewish state.

Acceptance on considering Israel as a state for Jews, and Palestine a state for the Palestinian people



Source: The Harry S. Truman Research Institute for the Advancement of Peace. <http://truman.huji.ac.il>

Views towards Israelis and Palestinians' preparation to compromise for peace



Source: The Harry S. Truman Research Institute for the Advancement of Peace. <http://truman.huji.ac.il>

▪ **The Willingness of Compromising for the Palestinian and Israeli Parties:**

The interviewees - both Palestinians and Israelis - were convinced that their governments and their peoples are not ready to offer any compromises to help reach a comprehensive peace agreement between the two parties, 50.2% and 43.7% of the Palestinians and Israelis respectively believe that both the people and the officials are unwilling to afford the commitments associated with having a peace agreement between the two parties.

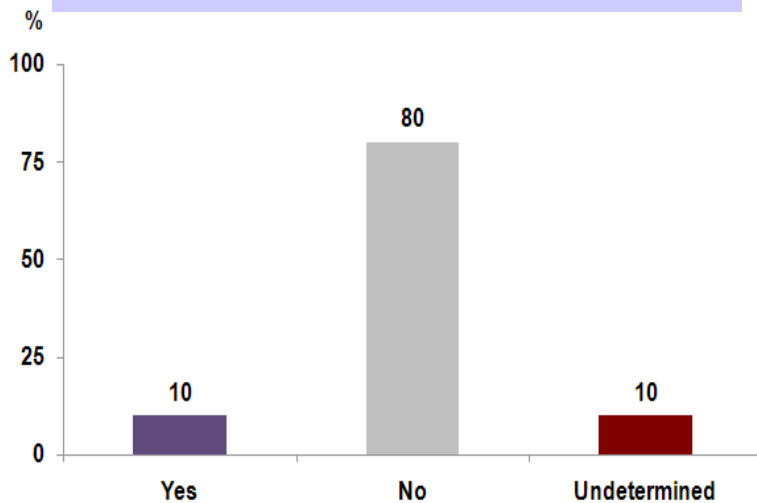
▪ **Effectiveness of Palestinian - Israeli Negotiations as a Mean to Achieve Peace:**

About two thirds of the Israeli interviewees doubt the effectiveness of negotiations as a mechanism to reach peace, as 63.7% of them predict that the negotiations will not lead to a peace agreement between the two parties.



Source: The Harry S. Truman Research Institute for the Advancement of Peace. <http://truman.huji.ac.il>

Will Israel's withdrawal from the occupied lands guarantee the safety of upcoming generations in Israel?



Source: <http://www.imra.org.il>

▪ **The Israeli President's Proposal for Establishing a Palestinian State**

45% of the Israeli interviewees see that the suggestion of President Shimon Perez about the recognition of a Palestinian state without reaching a final agreement with Israel, would lead to instability, and will empower the Palestinians to threaten the Israelis' safety, while 23% of them see this proposal as one solution to achieve Israel's stability and safety.

▪ **The Israeli Withdrawal from all Occupied Lands in 1967:**

Most of the Israelis (80%) do not think that their country's withdrawal from the 1967 occupied lands would ensure safety for the upcoming generations, while only 10% of them agreed to that.

▪ **The Possibility of Establishing a Palestinian State in the Future:**

28.9% and 29.2% of the Israeli interviewees in 2008 and 2009 respectively, believed in the absence of any chance for a Palestinian state to exist in the near future, while 39.9%, 39.4% in 2008 and 2009 respectively believed that such possibility is unlikely to be achieved in the upcoming five years. 7.9% of Israeli interviewees in 2008, and 6.3% in 2009 believed in the high possibility of the existence of a Palestinian state in the upcoming five years.

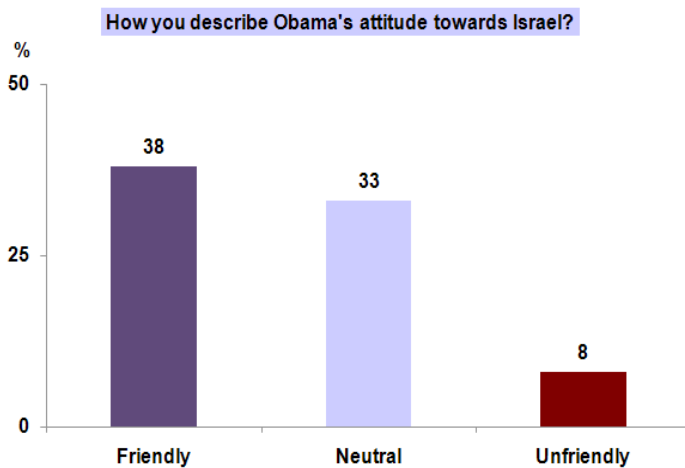
II. The Israelis' Stance Towards the New American Administration:

- President Barak Obama gained the trust of more than half the Israeli interviewees (56%), recording the 1st rank in Israelis' views towards world leaders, followed by the German Chancellor Angela Merkel in the 2nd rank with (48%), then the French president Nicolas Sarkozy (42%), and in the last rank came the Russian president Dimitri Medvedev as the least world leader trusted by the Israelis.



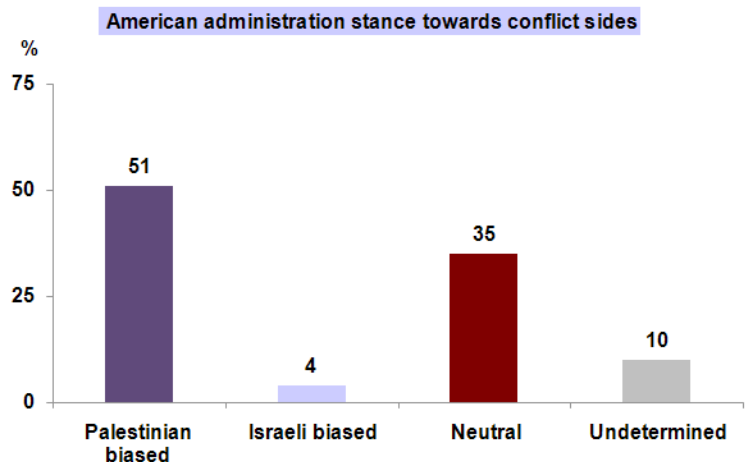
Source: The Pew Global Attitudes Project
<http://pewglobal.org/about/>

- About 38% of the Israeli interviewees believe that the American president have a friendly attitude towards Israel, while 33% of them considered his stances as neutral, and only 8% assessed it as unfriendly.



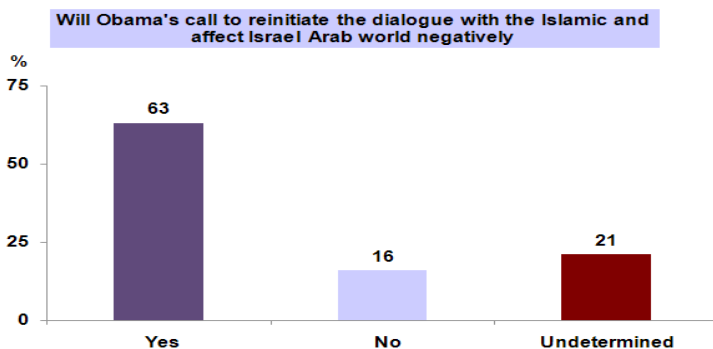
Source: Begin-Sadat Center for Strategic Studies
<http://www.biu.ac.il/SOC/besa>

- 51% of the Israeli interviewees believe that Obama's administration is more biased toward the Palestinians, 4% see the opposite, while 35% state it neutral to both.
- 60% of the Israeli interviewees did not believe that President Obama care for protecting the interests of their country, while 38% saw that the position of the administration is neutral.



Source: <http://www.jpost.com>

- Two thirds of the Israeli interviewees believe that Obama's call to reinitiate dialogue with the Islamic and Arab world will negatively affect the Israeli side, while 16% of them deny that.



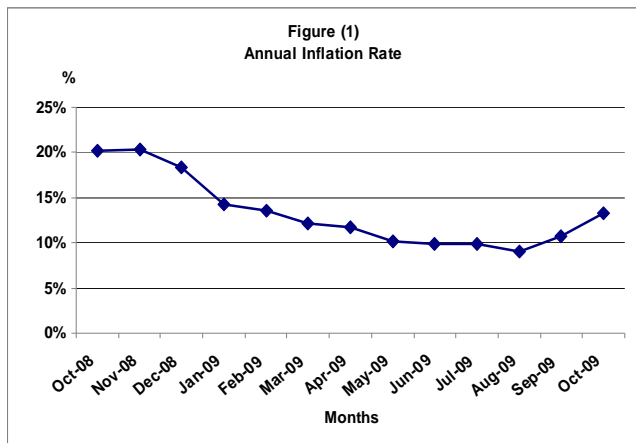
Source: Begin-Sadat Center for Strategic Studies
<http://www.biu.ac.il/SOC/besa>

Figures to Remember:

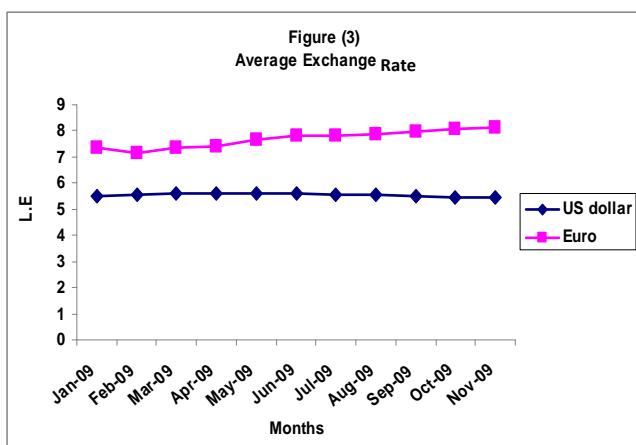
The IDSC Economic and Social Indicators Bulletin is a monthly summarized record of the most important facts about the financial, real, and social aspects of the Egyptian economy. The newsletter presents a number of these vital figures and indicators that provide you with a quick snapshot on the Egyptian economy.

Financial Indicators :

- Inflation Rate:** The Egyptian economy enjoyed a decrease in its inflation rate from 14.3 % in January 2009 to 13.3 % in October 2009.



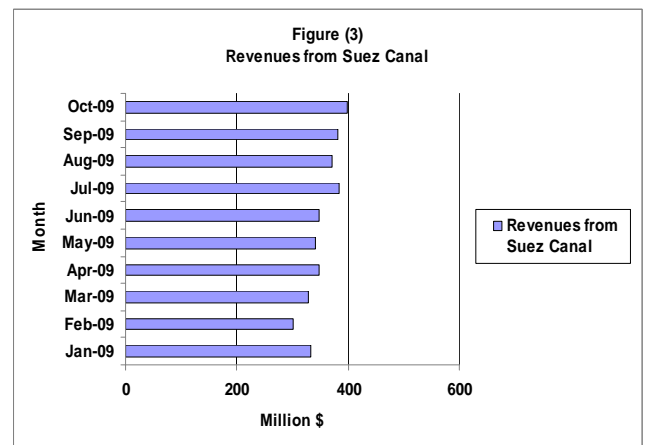
- Exchange Rate:** The exchange rate of the Egyptian pound can be described by stability since the beginning of 2009.



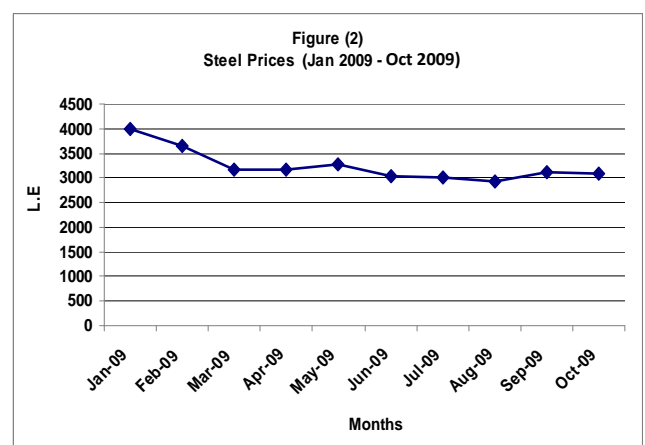
Average exchange rate (Nov.09):
 EUR: L.E 7.03 USD: L.E 5.52

Real Economy's Indicators:

- Revenues from Suez Canal:** Suez Canal revenues witnessed minor fluctuations from January to October 2009.



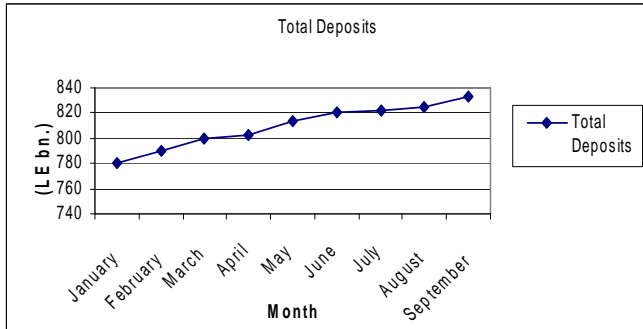
- Average Steel Prices:** Steel prices have decreased from L.E 3,981 in January 2009 to L.E. 3,082 in October 2009, with a decrease of approximately 22.6%.



Other Figures:

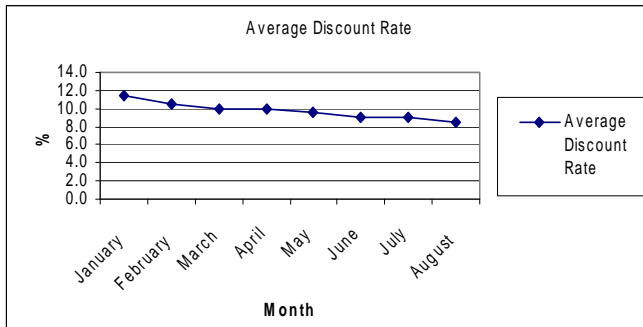
Banking Indicators:

- **Total deposits:** Increasing trend through 2009 from L.E 780.5 bn. in Jan.09 to L.E 832,421 bn in Oct.09.



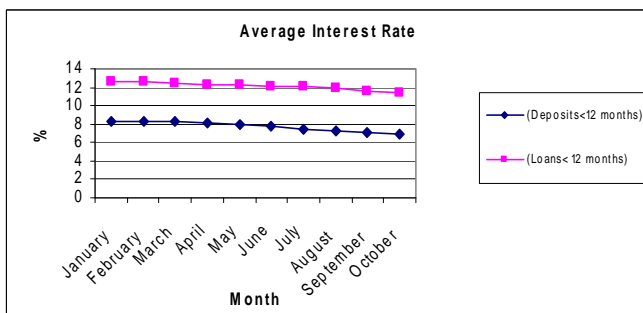
Source: Central Bank of Egypt.

- **Average discount rates:** Noticeable decrease in average central bank discount rate through 2009 from 11.5% in January 2009 to 8.5% August 2009.



Source: Central Bank of Egypt

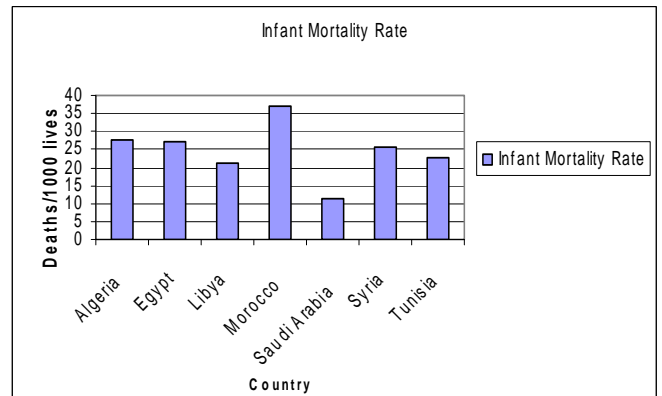
- **Interest Rates:** As a result of the decrease in the Central Bank's discount rate, Average interest rate on deposits is decreasing – from 8.3% in January 2009 to 6.9% in October 2009 – compared to a decrease in loans interest rate from 12.6% in January 2009 to 11.4% in October 2009.



Source: Central Bank of Egypt

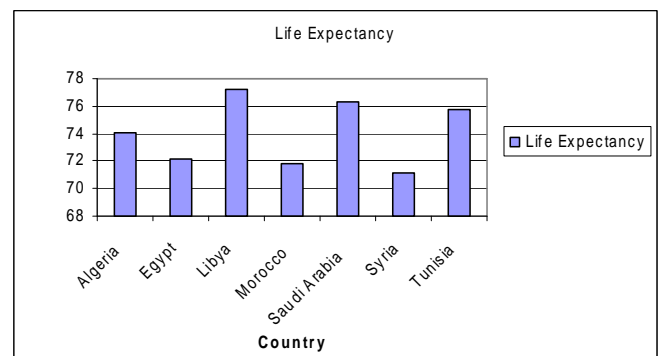
Social Indicators:

- **Population (2008/09):** 74.4 million.
Population growth rate (2008/09): 1.9%.
- **Infant mortality rate (2009):** 27.26 deaths/1000 lives.



Source: CIA World Fact Book, 2009.

- **Life expectancy at birth (2009):**72.12 years.
- **Adult literacy rate (2007):**66.4%.
- **Gross enrollment rate (2007):**76.4%.



Source: CIA World Fact Book, 2009.

Economic Observatory Report:

Assessment of the Global Financial Crisis' Impact on the Egyptian Economy:

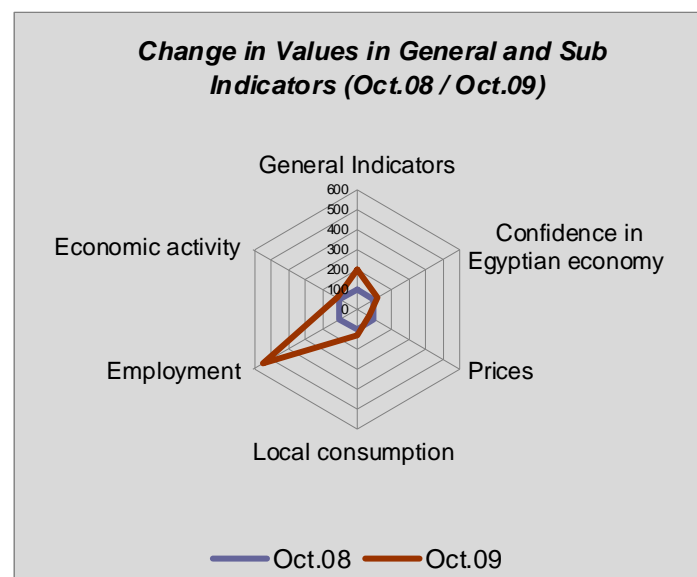
The global financial crisis has affected most of the world's economies; as Egypt is becoming more integrated into the world economy, it was not guarded from the repercussions of the crisis. A need, therefore, has risen for measuring the effect of the financial crisis on the Egyptian economy and for identifying the time when Egypt's economy will recover from these effects. This will help develop the policies necessary to avoid negative implications on economic growth and standard of living. The Information and Decision Support Center has published an economic observatory report for this purpose.

Indicators (points)	August .09	September .09	October .09	Change from August to September	Change from September to October	September compared to situation before the crisis
General indicators	110.3	130.1	196.0	▲	▲	●
Economic activity	93.2	100.0	120.6	▲	▲	●
Employment	163.4	255.0	545.3	▲	▲	●
Local consumption	91.3	98.4	134.5	▲	▲	●
Prices	88.2	85.2	65.0	▲	▼	●
Confidence in Egyptian economy	115.3	111.9	114.7	▼	▲	●

Source: IDSC, Economic Observatory Bulletin, November 2009.

- ▲ Improving □ No change ● Recovered
 ▼ Diminishing ● Not Recovered

The observatory is comprised of a main index in which the economic performance is measured from Zero to 100 points; zero reflecting lowest performance and 100 reflecting the improvement of the indicators to the pre-crisis situation; scoring more than 100 means the situation has improved compared to that before the crisis. The major index is divided into sub-indices, which measures the performance of the economy's different sectors.



Source: IDSC's Economic observatory bulletin, November 2009



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