

LGBT RIGHTS



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LGBT RIGHTS
WORLDWIDE

FUTURE SCENARIOS

As one of the communities most targeted worldwide, The Lesbian Gay Bisexual and Transsexual (LGBT) Community has historically faced several threats and challenges. In most of the countries of the Middle East and North Africa, homosexuality is still criminalized and even punished with death penalty. In Egypt, although laws do not directly punish homosexuality, local police targets members of the LGBT community.

During the Mubarak regime, homosexuality was neither criminalized. Although the practice was not banned by the criminal code, it was considered as “debauchery law” (an immoral, dishonest and vicious practice) and therefore against the principles of the regime. During Mubarak’s rule, several were accused of both prostitution and debauchery and therefore condemned –indirectly- for homosexuality. It was not until the 2001 “Cairo 52” issue, when people in the Queen Boat Gay Party were arrested, that the international community focused on LGBT Rights in Egypt. Both Amnesty International and Human Rights Watch started to study the case of Egypt in order to put pressure on the regime. Nonetheless, the situation did not change at all.

During the Arab Spring, a large number of LGBT Egyptians massively joined the protests in Cairo to overthrow Mubarak from office. The creation of a new democratic government would include a positive legislation for the LGBT community, decriminalizing homosexuality throughout the country. Nonetheless, the rise of the extremist Muslim Brotherhood and Mohamed Morsi’s regime in 2012 did not favour the oppressed community. LGBT Egyptian Activism was still oppressed by the new government, although Morsi’s rule did not take long. With Al-Sisi’s coup the following year, neither homosexuality was considered as non-criminalized, and the situation did not change despite the government was completely different.

Debates on whether homosexuality should be accepted in Egypt have been taking place since 2011, but those discussions have not been among Egyptian politicians who are not willing to change the country’s anti-gay laws and stop arbitrary arrests. Several articles of the Egyptian Penal Code should be amended to stop the imprisonment of the LGBT community, but Al-Sisi’s strong rule does not seem to do so. The recent news about the use of dating apps to target homosexuals has been added to the long list of LGBT rights’ violations of the past regimes. Although the situation does not really seem to be changing, Egypt is boiling under the surface, and activism remains despite all challenges. Since the Arab Spring hit the country, social movements broke fears that empowered oppressed communities and gave voice to the LGBT in order to be heard worldwide. Although activism is targeted in the country, there is a growing reality of LGBT community members that are raising their voices to claim basic rights.