The Old Rental Laws Reforms in Egypt

ADSERO's 5th Writing Competition - 2025

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Abstract

It has indeed been one of the most controversial topics over the last few decades, but the debate is finally coming to an end with Law No. 164 of 2025 **(the "New Law")** coming into force. The New Law will end the era of indefinite tenancies in Egypt, but what are the consequences? Could the transition trigger legal confusion, a wave of court cases, or hasty evictions? While landlords have welcomed the change, describing Laws Nos. 136/1981 and 49/1977 **(collectively, the "Old Laws")** as a "legislative distortion,"[1] the reform raises many concerns and questions for tenants. In this article, I will address these points as follows: I) Historical Background; II) Overview of the Reforms; III) Interaction with the Civil Code; IV) Potential Benefits and Challenges; V) Proposed Safeguards; VI) Enforcement and Management of the reform.

I. Historical Background

Over the last century, many rental laws were introduced, most of them included reduction in the rent value. The process began with Law No. 11 of 1920, which froze rents at their 1914 level plus an additional 50% (fifty per cent), effectively fixing rents at 150% (one hundred and fifty per cent) of the 1914 rate,[2] and continued after the 1952 revolution[3] with a series of laws that further reduced rents by rates ranging from 15% –35% (fifteen to thirty-five per cent).[4] These post-revolution reductions were generally considered as a part of the state's policy to provide social justice, especially during the era of President Gamal Abdel Nasser.[5]

In 1977, with the issuance of Law No. 49, all previous laws have been repealed. The law introduced a number of new provisions, including the regulation of leases for furnished premises. It entitled landlords to an additional rent surcharge ranging from **100% to 400%** of the legal rent, depending on the date on which the building was constructed.[6] However, the law contained no provisions limiting the duration of a tenant's stay. It also granted the tenant's heirs or **relatives up to the third degree of kinship** the right to remain in the leased premises after the tenant's death,[7] a provision that, in practice, allowed the tenant and their heirs/successors to stay in the property for an unlimited period.

It was not long before Law No. 136 of 1981 was issued. The law was the latest of a very long series of laws regulating the relationship between landlords and tenants, and it has been indeed one of the most controversial laws until this day.

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[1] ' مصر.. قانون "الإيجار القديم" يدخل حيز التنفيذ' (*سكاي نيوز عربية*) <www.skynewsarabia.com/varieties/1817361-مصر-قانون-الإيجار-القديم-يدخل-حيز-التنفيذ> accessed 14 October 2025.

[2] Law No. 11 of 1920, Article 2.

[3] Law No. 199 of 1952, Article 1.

[4] Law No. 55 of 1958, Article 1; Law No. 168 of 1961, Article 1; Law No. 7 of 1965, Articles 1 and 2.

[5] Diwan Alomran, 'The Old Rent System in Egypt: A History of Legislative Interventions and Social Transformations' <https://diwanalomran.com/en/the-old-rent-system-in-egypt-a-history-of-legislative-interventions-and-social-transformations/> accessed 14 October 2025.

[6] Law No. 49 of 1977, Article 45.

[7] Law No. 49 of 1977, Article 29.

The law fixed residential rents at no more than 7% (seven percent) annually of the combined value of the land and buildings.[8] While some might consider this a fair rate, the calculation was based on the property's value **at the time of construction**, not its current market value.[9] As a result, rent levels remained unchanged over the years, regardless of inflation or rising property values.

Then, in the 1990s and early 2000s, new laws were issued with the aim of providing a more realistic framework to regulate the lease relationship. Nevertheless, these laws did not repeal the Old Laws but instead introduced a parallel regime applicable only to contracts concluded after Law No. 4/1996's entry into force in January 1996,[10] as Law No. 4 of 1996 stipulates that the provisions of the civil code on leases shall apply to all lease contracts starting from 31 January 1996.[11] The result was creating two legal regimes that apply to the same relationship, making legal complexities and, as critics say, uneven application.

Provision	Old Rent Regime (Law No. 136/1981 and Law No. 49/1977)	Law No. 4 of 1996
Duration of Contracts	Indefinite (no fixed term)	Definite (fixed term)
Renewal Rights	Tenants have automatic right to remain; landlords cannot refuse renewal.	Landlords decide whether to renew or terminate the contract at the end of the fixed term.
Eviction Process	Tenants can only be evicted under exceptional circumstances (e.g., non-payment) via court order.	Landlords can evict tenants without court proceedings after the contract expires.
Rent Control	Fixed annual rents (7% of land value and construction costs)	Market-determined rents: - Landlords set rents freely upon renewal.
Applicability	Applied to all pre-1996 contracts; still governs older leases unless voluntarily updated.	Applies only to new contracts signed after 1996 (and new buildings).
Customary Key Money (Khlou Regel)	Under the old regime, tenants often paid Key Money to secure rental premises. However, this practice was illegal, and tenants had the right to pursue legal action to recover the Key Money paid.	N/A

Source: *Abdelrahman, Emadaldin, Old Rental Law Reforms in Egypt: A Law and Economics Analysis (May 19, 2025)*

II. Overview of the Old Rental Laws Reforms

The previous provisions quickly became a target of criticism, and the debate began between supporters and opponents. The Supreme Constitutional Court **("SCC")** eventually rendered several judgements addressing these provisions, one of which was its judgement in 1997 which held that Article 29 of Law No. 49 of 1977 was unconstitutional insofar as it provided for the extension of the lease to the tenant's relatives up to the second and third degrees of kinship.[12]

[8] Law No. 136 of 1981, Article 1.
[9] Law No. 136 of 1981, Article 2.
[10] Law No. 4 of 1996, Article 1.
[11] Law No. 4 of 1996, Article 2.
[12] Supreme Constitutional Court (Egypt), Case No. 116 of Judicial Year 18, Judgment, 2 August 1997.

The Court held that, as a general rule, a lease expires upon the death of the original tenant or when the tenant relinquishes it. Extending the lease to relatives up to the third degree, the Court concluded, **"amounted to an encroachment on the right of ownership, infringing one of its essential elements."**[13]

The Court also issued other rulings as it held that extending a lease to first-degree relatives is permissible only to the extent strictly necessary,[14] and that a tenant may not stay in the leased premises if they own suitable housing.[15]

This series of unconstitutionality rulings came to an end when the Court issued its judgment on 9 November 2024, a judgment described by some as historic,[16] declaring Articles 1 and 2 of Law No. 136 of 1981 unconstitutional insofar as they provided for the fixation of the annual rent.[17] The Court described this provision as **"a clear assault on the value of justice, a manifest breach of the principles of social solidarity, and a serious infringement of the right to private property, which must be safeguarded."**[18]

In response, Parliament enacted Law No. 164 of 2025, which terminates all lease contracts concluded under the Old Laws. The termination is phased: it takes effect seven years after the new law's entry into force for residential tenancies and five years for non-residential tenancies.[19] At the end of the seven-year period, the Old Laws are formally repealed.[20] The reform is presented as a corrective to the Court's ruling. However, it still raises urgent questions about transition, enforcement and the protection of vulnerable occupants.

A. Law No. 164 of 2025

The New Law begins by applying an initial uniform rent of EGP 250 (two hundred and fifty Egyptian pounds) for all units until rental zones are classified.[21] This amount will later be adjusted based on the property's geographical location.

To achieve a fair assessment, areas are divided into three categories: Premium, Middle-Class, and Economic Zones. The classification considers factors such as location, building quality, unit size, available utilities, transport access, local services, and average rental values.[22]

In Premium Zones, rent is set at **twenty times** the current legal rate and not less than **EGP 1,000 (one thousand Egyptian pounds).** In Middle-Class Zones, it is **ten times** the current rent, with a minimum of **EGP 400 (four hundred Egyptian pounds).** In Economic Zones,

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[13] Ibid.
[14] Supreme Constitutional Court (Egypt), Case No. 70 of Judicial Year 18, Judgment, 3 November 1997.
[15] Supreme Constitutional Court (Egypt), Case No. 121 of Judicial Year 21, Judgment, 15 May 2002.
[16] 'قانون الإيجار القديم: حكم المحكمة الدستورية يغير "قواعد اللعبة" - المركز المصري للفكر والدراسات الاستراتيجية' <https://ecss.com.eg/49404/> accessed 10 October 2025.
[17] Supreme Constitutional Court (Egypt), Case No. 24 of Judicial Year 20, Judgment, 9 November 2024.
[18] Ibid.
[19] Law No. 164 of 2025, Article 2.
[20] Law No. 164 of 2025, Article 9.
[21] Law No. 164 of 2025, Article 4.
[22] Law No. 164 of 2025, Article 3.

it is also **ten times**, with a minimum of **EGP 250 (two hundred and fifty Egyptian pounds)**.[23] For non-residential units, rent is set at **five times** the current legal rate.[24]

The above adjusted rents shall further increase by 15% (fifteen per cent) annually.[25]

The New Law also did not overlook the issue of eviction. In addition to the termination of the lease, it identifies two other cases in which the tenant is required to vacate the premises and return them to the landlord.

The first case applies when it is proven that the tenant has left the premises closed for more than a year without a valid reason. The second applies when the tenant is found to own another unit, residential or non-residential, that is suitable for the same purpose as the leased property.[26]

III. Interaction with the Civil Code

The Egyptian Civil Code is the *lex generalis* for contracts, and it specifically regulates leases. Law No. 164/2025 is a *lex specialis*. As settled in doctrine and confirmed by the Court of Cassation, *lex specialis derogat legi generali* (the special prevails over the general).[27] The New Law terminates the old lease contracts, which were exceptional from the start and departed from Civil Code rules.[28] This does not create a conflict with the Civil Code. It accords with Civil Code Article 147 that allows rescission or amendment of a contract by party agreement or for reasons provided by law.[29] The New Law also states that it applies only to premises let under the Old Laws.[30] Therefore, it does not overlap with ordinary leases governed by the Civil Code. However, to make things clear and avoid any potential for conflict, this section explains the principal articles that might appear to give rise to a conflict and suggests amendment.

A. Tacit Renewal

The first of these may be Article 599 of the Civil Code, which addresses tacit renewal of the contract if the tenant does not vacate the premises at the end of the contract period without the landlord's objection. Some might argue that this conflicts with the New Law, which terminates the old contracts entirely by force of law without taking tacit renewal into account.[31]

The New Law fixes a specific period for the expiry of old-rent leases, and this may be regarded as an amendment of the contract pursuant to Article 147 of the Civil Code; accordingly, once that period ends, the lease shall be deemed terminated, which is consistent with Article 598, stating that a lease ends upon expiry of the period specified in the contract without the need for notice. Parties then may agree on another contract after the expiry of the old one.

[23] Law No. 164 of 2025, Article 4.
[24] Law No. 164 of 2025, Article 5.
[25] Law No. 164 of 2025, Article 6.
[26] Law No. 164 of 2025, Article 7.
[27] Court of Cassation (Civil and Commercial Chamber), Appeal No 17886 of Judicial Year 91, 16 March 2022.
[28] Supreme Constitutional Court (Egypt), Case No. 24 of Judicial Year 20, Judgment, 9 November 2024.
[29] Egyptian Civil Code (Law No 131 of 1948), Article 147.
[30] Law No. 164 of 2025, Article 1.
[31] Law No. 164 of 2025, Article 2.

B. Indefinite-Term Leases

Articles 562 and 563 address indefinite term leases. Article 562 provides that where the rent cannot be determined, it shall be set at the rent of the like; however, that rule does not apply here, because rent has been regulated through classification committees under the New Law,[32] which will impose gradual increases.[33] Article 563 likewise provides notice periods for indeterminate-term leases; in our case the leases have become fixed-term leases, and therefore there is no room to apply this article either.

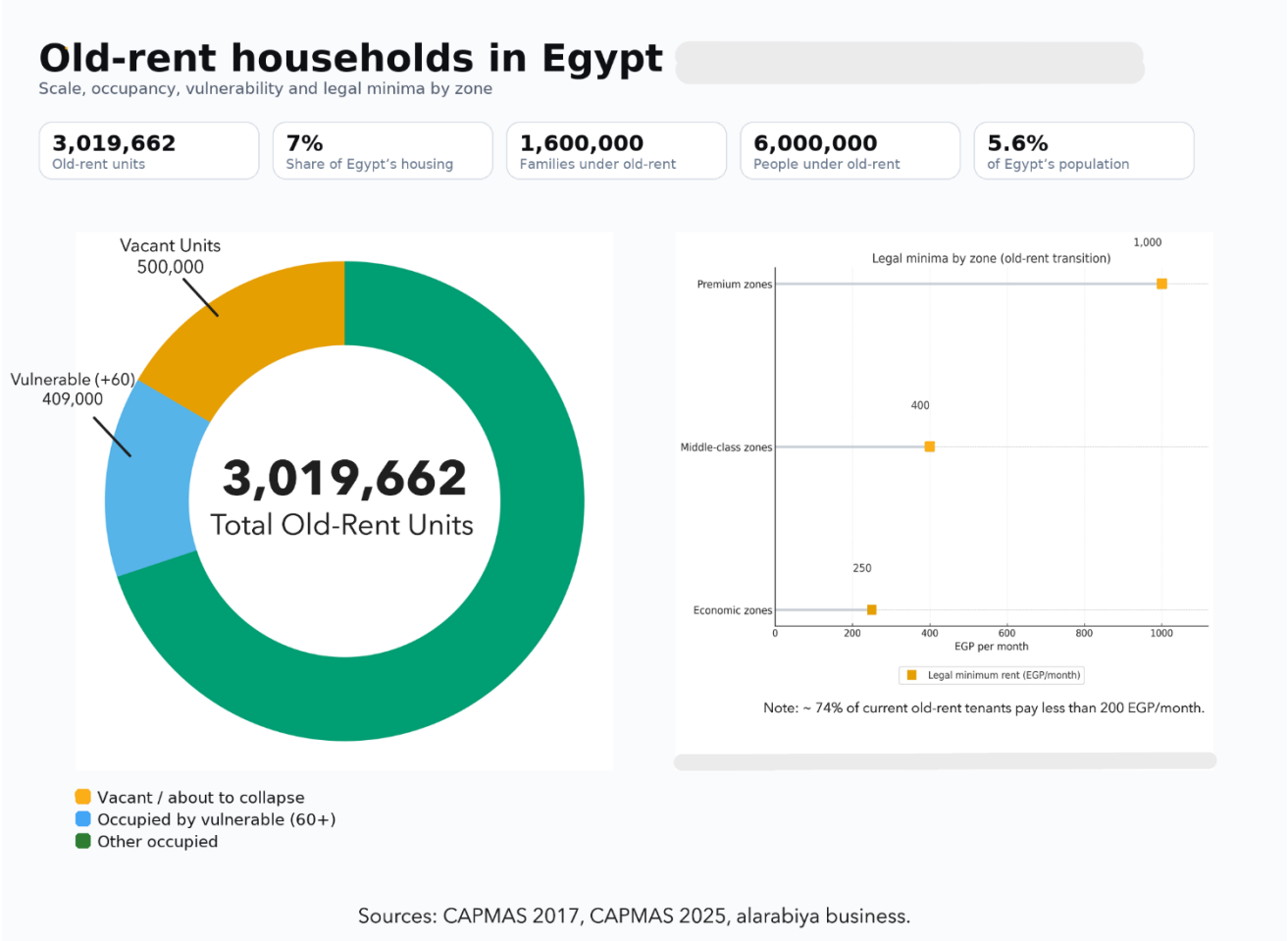
C. Proposed amendments

In order to resolve any potential conflicts stemming from the implementation of the New Law, specific provisions of the Civil Code could be amended as follows:

- **Articles 599 and 563:** add a new paragraph stating: "This article does not apply to lease contracts governed by other special legislations that determine the term and termination."
- **Article 562:** add a new paragraph stating: "This article does not apply where any other mechanism for determining the rent is provided for in special legislation."

Alternatively, a new **Article 558 bis** could be added at the beginning of the lease chapter stating: "The provisions of this Chapter apply unless there exists special legislation governing specified categories of leases. In such cases, the special legislation shall prevail with respect to the term, rent determination, renewal, and termination."

[32] Law No. 164 of 2025, Article 3.
[33] Law No. 164 of 2025, Articles 4, 5 and 6.



IV. Potential Benefits & Challenges

There is no doubt that the Old Rental Laws were exceptional in nature and failed to keep up with legislative and economic developments. Their repeal was only a matter of time, and the successive judgments of the SCC serve as clear evidence of that. And it might be that the main reason these laws lasted for nearly half a century was the sensitivity of the issue, which has always been tied to major social and political concerns. Still, their repeal carries potential benefits. This section explores the main benefits and challenges that may follow this step.

A. Benefits

1. Restoring Balance to the Lease Relationship

The main beneficiaries of this law are, of course, property owners. But the impact goes well beyond them. We can argue that the main benefit of this reform is restoring the lease relationship to its natural legal and economic framework as a temporary arrangement, not a permanent one. The Old Laws have disrupted this balance for decades, undermining basic notions of fairness without taking into consideration fundamental economic factors such as

inflation and market changes. The new reform therefore brings the lease relationship to a more realistic order.[34]

2. Legal Clarity

As discussed earlier, many of the Old Laws' provisions have been deemed unconstitutional by the SCC, showing that there was indeed something wrong with these laws. The new reform then tries to cure this problem by offering a clear and defined timeline for phasing out the old contracts, whereby all contracts will be regulated by the Civil Code after the transitional period. This is expected to mitigate legal uncertainty and reduce the likelihood of further constitutional litigation on this matter.

3. Reviving the Housing Market

The reform can also give new life to the housing market. For many years, fixed rents left owners with little reason to repair or improve their buildings. Many units fell apart, and others stayed empty.[35] Reports further suggest that nearly 500,000 units are currently closed, either because tenants abandoned them or because they already own another property.[36]

With fairer rent levels, owners now have a reason to renovate, sell, or use their properties in better ways. This can bring closed units back to the market, increase the number of units in busy areas, and slowly improve the quality of housing across cities. It can further help revive the real estate market and boost economic activity by bringing these closed units back into use, while also increasing state revenues through taxes and related fees.[37]

B. Challenges

1. Vulnerable Tenants at Risk

Reports indicate that nearly six million people live in old rent units, representing about 7% (seven per cent) of Egypt's population.[38] Many of them depend on stable, low rents to secure

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[34] 'Egypt's Rental Housing Market Transformation: Navigating Real Estate Investment Risks and Opportunities in a Policy-Driven Shift' (*Ainvest*) <https://www.ainvest.com/news/egypt-rental-housing-market-transformation-navigating-real-estate-investment-risks-opportunities-policy-driven-shift-2509/> accessed 14 October 2025.

[35] 'رئيس الوزراء: قانون الإيجار القديم أحد أسباب العقارات الآيلة للسقوط'
<www.youm7.com/story/2025/7/16/7057511/رئيس-الوزراء-لليوم-السابع-قانون-الإيجار-القديم-أحد-أسباب-العقارات> accessed 14 October 2025.

[36] 'بعد إقرار القانون.. 8 أرقام كاشفة عن وحدات الإيجار القديم في مصر'
<https://www.alarabiya.net/aswaq/economy/2025/08/05/بعد-اقرار-القانون-8-ارقام-كاشفة-عن-وحدات-الايجار-القديم-في-مصر> accessed 14 October 2025.

[37] 'Egypt's Rental Housing Market Transformation: Navigating Real Estate Investment Risks and Opportunities in a Policy-Driven Shift' (n 26)

[38] 'Alternative Policy Solutions | Rethinking Rent Reform: Can Egypt's New Old Rent Law Balance Justice and Social Equity?' <https://aps.aucegypt.edu/en/articles/1493/rethinking-rent-reform-can-egypts-new-old-rent-law-balance-justice-and-social-equity> accessed 14 October 2025.

their housing.[39] The New Law puts this stability at risk, as higher rent levels may lead to eviction for a large number of tenants. Even with the five- to seven-year transitional period, many will struggle to meet the new rates, especially the elderly and pensioners, who represent a large portion of those affected.[40]

2. Social Unrest

The reforms touch on housing, memory, and community.[41] Tenants who have lived for decades under old leases feel secure under them; sudden reforms risk being seen as unfair, especially if perceived as benefiting landlords or investors more than ordinary people. Reports show fear among tenants that this could lead to evictions, loss of neighborhoods, and loss of small businesses.[42]

3. Implementation Challenges

Implementation difficulties also loom large. Classifying zones (premium, middle, economic), surveying properties, determining appropriate minimums, and enforcing new rents require administrative capacity and accurate data. If committees are slow, opaque, or biased, classification errors may result, unfair rent hikes, or even legal challenges. Likewise, verifying eligibility for alternative housing or compensation may place serious burden on both tenants and the state.

4. Uncertain Housing Alternatives

Pledges by government to provide alternative housing are good, but scale and delivery are uncertain. Many who are evicted may not find accessible housing, especially closer to jobs, schools, and services. Cost of moving, transport, and loss of community ties will weigh heavily.

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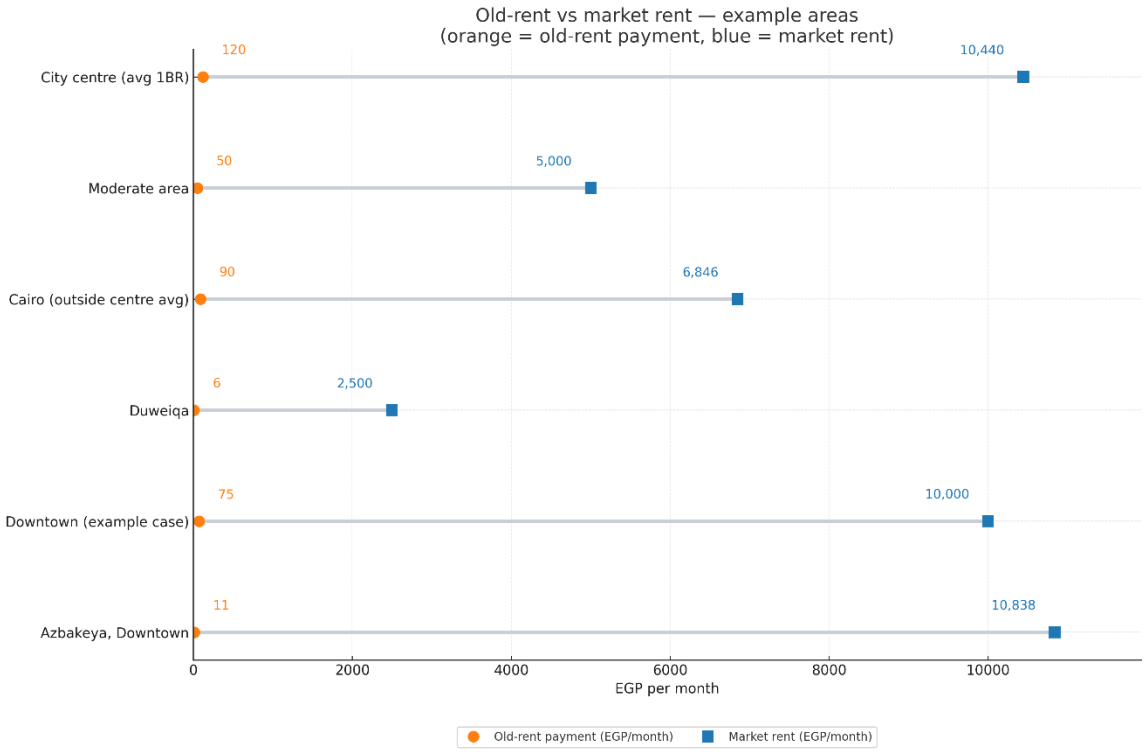
[39] Around 74% (seventy-four per cent) of old-lease tenants pay less than EGP 200 (two hundred Egyptian pounds) monthly. <http://www.alarabiya.net/aswaq/economy/2025/08/05/بعد-اقرار-القانون-8-ارقام-كاشفة-عن-وحدات-الايجار-القديم-في-مصر> accessed 14 October 2025.

[40] According to Khairat Barakat, head of the Central Agency for Public Mobilisation and Statistics (CAPMAS), the number of old-rent tenants aged over 60 is 409,000 as of 2017. See Gamal Essam El-Din, 'Tenants lose, landlords win?' (*Al-Ahram Weekly*, 11 July 2025) <https://english.ahram.org.eg/News/549348.aspx> accessed 27 October 2025.

[41] Khaddara Ibrahim Ali, an 84-year-old old-rent tenant, expressed her fear so much that she cannot sleep at night; she is afraid of being evicted after all the familiarity and memories she holds for her home. See Mariam Rizk and Mohamed Ezz, 'Egypt Scraps Decades-Old Rent Caps, Fuelling Eviction Fears' *Reuters* (3 September 2025) <https://www.reuters.com/world/africa/egypt-scraps-decades-old-rent-caps-fuelling-eviction-fears-2025-09-03/> accessed 14 October 2025.

[42] Ibid.



Sources: Reuters; Nuembo; The New Arab; TIMEP; PropertyFinder; and Wise.

V. Safeguarding Vulnerable Tenants

A. Issues with Alternative Housing

The reform's impact cannot be overlooked. As we have seen, millions of tenants are at risk. And in an attempt to mitigate this risk, the New Law grants all tenants the right to obtain other units, either through rent or ownership, provided that they vacate their current units after securing the new ones.[43] But there are still concerns about whether these measures will be enough. And if they are not, what additional measures are needed to protect vulnerable tenants?

In implementation of Article 8 of Law No. 164 of 2025, Ministerial Decree No. 53 of 2025 was issued to set the rules for allocating new housing units provided by the state. The decree stipulates that applications must be submitted within 3 (three) months from the launch date of the electronic platform established for this purpose.[44]

The decree further establishes the priority criteria for allocation. The first criterion is income, with priority given to lower-income applicants. The second criterion is social status, giving precedence to married applicants over single ones, and to those supporting children over those who are not. The third criterion is age, granting priority to the elderly.[45]

Similar to the New Law, the decree also stipulates that applicants are not eligible if they own another unit, residential or non-residential, that can be used for the same purpose as the leased

[43] Law No. 164 of 2025, Article 8.
[44] Ministerial Decree No. 53 of 2025, Article 3.
[45] Ministerial Decree No. 53 of 2025, Article 6.

property, or if it is proven that they have left the leased premises vacant for more than a year without a valid reason.[46]

And despite the Ministry's efforts to present these procedures in an organized manner, many affected tenants view them as overly complex, bureaucratic, and lacking clarity.[47] In addition to the extensive documentation required, such as a copy of the lease contract and proof of the continued lease relationship,[48] serious concerns remain about the state's ability to provide enough units to meet the demand.[49] This is especially pressing given the absence of clear information regarding the number of available units and the large number of tenants affected.[50]

Moreover, the cost of the new units poses a major obstacle for many affected tenants. Prices range from EGP 7000 (seven thousand Egyptian pounds) to 25000 (twenty-five thousand Egyptian pounds) per square meter,[51] making the average price for a 90-square-meter unit stand at nearly EGP 1.5 million. The units also raise legitimate concerns about whether they are truly comparable in quality or suitability to the old ones. Even with the government's discount scheme, monthly instalments can reach EGP 4,000 (four thousand Egyptian pounds), an amount well beyond the means of most old rent tenants, considering that 74% of them were previously paying less than EGP 200 per month.[52]

B. Proposed Safeguards

Having set out the reform's problems, the government must now ensure the transition does not abandon vulnerable tenants. Practical safeguards are necessary to prevent displacement and ease the financial shock.

Introduce a package of safeguards centred on financial relief, targeted rent subsidies, extended repayment schedules and graduated payments indexed to income, and ensure dedicated support for pensioners and other low-income groups. These measures will reduce displacement risk while preserving the reform's objectives.

Vulnerable tenants have also expressed fear of losing communities or being pushed far away from their current places.[53] Therefore, priority in allocation should go to those most in need and tenants should get the chance to stay close to their communities. At the same time, legal and procedural steps can ease the pressure on these groups. Achieving these steps could be done through setting up hardship committees, simplifying application procedures, and

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[46] Ministerial Decree No. 53 of 2025, Article 2.

[47] 'Three Months to Vacate Your Home: Government Plan Confuses Old Rent Tenants' <https://zawia3.com/en/old-rent-law-5/> accessed 17 October 2025.

[48] Ministerial Decree No. 53 of 2025, Article 3.

[49] 'Three Months to Vacate Your Home: Government Plan Confuses Old Rent Tenants' (n 47).

[50] 'مشيرة خطاب تتساءل عن قدرة الدولة على توفير سكن بديل للمستأجرين قانون قديم' (*صدى البلد 5 May, 2025*) <https://www.elbalad.news/6563461> accessed 27 October 2025.

[51] 'مصدر: أسعار الشقق البديلة للإيجار القديم تصل إلى 25 ألف جنيه للمتر <https://manassa.news/news/26719> accessed 17 October 2025.

[52] ' بعد إقرار القانون.. 8 أرقام كاشفة عن وحدات الإيجار القديم في مصر' <http://www.alarabiya.net/aswaq/economy/2025/08/05/بعد-اقرار-القانون-8-ارقام-كاشفة-عن-وحدات-الايجار-القديم-في-مصر> accessed 14 October 2025.

[53] 'Three Months to Vacate Your Home: Government Plan Confuses Old Rent Tenants' (n 47).

offering them legal assistance. This would give them a fairer and clearer path through the process.

Finally, better communication is essential. Tenants should have access to clear information on units and prices on a straightforward, user-friendly platform that conveys eligibility requirements for units. Doing so will guide their decision-making and remove some confusion. Moreover, the 3-month application period should be re-considered or extended as many tenants expressed the need for more time to understand the process or consider other options.[54]

VI. Judicial System & Enforcement

The law is not just texts on paper; it is how effectively it can be enforced in real life.[55] Egypt's courts have long been filled with cases.[56] Disputes can last for years, sometimes decades,[57] and the New Law will be no exception. The reform is expected to bring another wave of cases to the courts, especially tenant-eviction disputes.[58] Other disputes are also expected, including questions about eligibility for alternative housing and the interpretation of vague terms. In the ordinary course, these cases would likewise drag on for years. How can the courts handle this? Do we need procedural reforms? This section discusses these questions.

The capacity of the courts will indeed be one of the main challenges facing the enforcement. The large number of cases can be overwhelming to the system. This would cause delay in most cases[59] which will, in turn, undermine the very purpose of the reform itself, leaving both, tenants and landlords, in a state of uncertainty.

Alternative Dispute Resolution ("ADR") mechanisms would play a pivotal role in reducing this pressure on the courts. Mediation or settlement procedures could resolve many conflicts before they step into court, especially those related to rent adjustment or relocation. Specialized mediation centres or pre-trial offices may be introduced to ease the burden.

Furthermore, a mandatory conciliation or mediation step, similar to the process in family cases,[60] would be very effective before the case goes to full litigation.[61] This would help in reaching negotiated solutions, preserving social stability, and reducing the risk of sudden mass

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[54] Ibid.

[55] World Bank, *Doing Business 2020: Comparing Business Regulation in 190 Economies* (World Bank 2019) p. 23. <https://documents1.worldbank.org/curated/en/688761571934946384/pdf/Doing-Business-2020-Comparing-Business-Regulation-in-190-Economies.pdf> accessed 18 October 2025.

[56] 'An Overview of the Egyptian Legal System and Legal Research' (*GlobaLex | Foreign and International Law Research*) <https://www.nyulawglobal.org/globalex/egypt.html> accessed 18 October 2025.

[57] 'Egypt's Judiciary: Obstructing or Assisting Reform? | Middle East Institute' <https://www.mei.edu/publications/egypts-judiciary-obstructing-or-assisting-reform> accessed 18 October 2025.

[58] 'مصر: «الإيجار القديم» يدخل حيّز التنفيذ... ما الآثار المترتبة؟' <https://aawsat.com/node/5172129> accessed 18 October.

[59] 'Egypt's Judiciary: Obstructing or Assisting Reform? | Middle East Institute' (n 57).

[60] Law No. 10 of 2004, Article 5.

[61] R Elsaman, 'Mediation and Court Efficiency in Egypt' (2020) SSRN Electronic Journal <https://ssrn.com/abstract=3544665> accessed 18 October 2025.

evictions. It would also provide a channel for vulnerable tenants who may not have the means for lengthy litigation.

Execution is also a major challenge that follows court judgements or orders. Similar to the cases in courts, execution is also slow and prone to disputes.[62] If there is no clarity in the procedures or the coordination between courts, bailiffs and administrative authorities, execution might become another source of congestion. Execution of judgments is, in this sense, not merely a technical legal problem but also a social and economic one. If access to execution is delayed or uneven, the fundamental aims of the reform will be compromised. It is essential, therefore, for the success of the old rent reform, that clarity be given to the procedures to be followed, sufficient resources be available for the execution of judgments and adequate props be made for both parties in the execution.[63]

VII. Managing the Reform's Impact

As I discussed earlier, the reform's impact has many sides; it can only be managed. Managing this impact will be a challenging task, yet it remains manageable only through the intervention of the government, Parliament, the Judiciary, and private stakeholders. All of them must act together. If they do, the shock may be softened; if they do not, the reform risks bringing legal chaos and social instability.

The government is the quickest to move. People need information on the available new units. Clear implementing rules must be issued, alongside a platform displaying information on the new units (numbers, prices, and locations, etc.). Establishing hardship committees will also be of great importance to examine urgent cases. The committees could start at the governorate level as a pilot before expanding to the national level. Likewise, compensation and relocation funds can assist the elderly and low-income tenants who will be most affected by the reform.

The Parliament's role will not be as important as issuing the law itself, as it has already done most of its work; yet it can still add clarifying amendments to the civil code and coordinating clauses to protect due process, and facilitate housing programmes and support the compensation/relocation funds.

The Judiciary must also be prepared for the large number of cases the New Law is expected to bring. The court of cassation in particular is expected to play a major role in shaping out the reform through its judgements. For instance, the New Law stipulates that the tenant should vacate the unit in case they leave it closed for more than one year without a "valid reason" or if they own another "suitable housing".[64] The "valid reason" and "suitable housing" here are subjective and could be interpreted in many ways (e.g., extended medical treatment or temporary work assignment as a "valid reason"; comparable size and location as "suitable housing"). And here is where the court of cassation plays a vital role.

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[62] Matouk Bassiouny, 'Enforcement of Judgments in Egypt: Practical Considerations' (Matouk Bassiouny & Hennawy, Legal Briefing 2022) <https://matoukbassiouny.com/wp-content/uploads/2022/12/Matouk-Bassiouny-Publications-Chambers-Enforcement-of-Judgments-2022-%E2%80%93-Egypt.pdf> accessed 18 October 2025.

[63] 'Egypt's Judiciary: Obstructing or Assisting Reform? | Middle East Institute' (n 57).

[64] Law No. 164 of 2025, Article 7.

Well-known private stakeholders should also intervene, landlord associations can sort out voluntary guidelines that find a balance between the interests of owners and tenants, tenant unions and charities can lend their support to those who need it, property developers can join forces in refurbishing and adding to the number of available apartments, and all of these actors need to be working together towards a single goal.

VIII. Conclusion

The reform is a double-edged weapon. It is presented to correct and replace the old exceptional laws and place a more realistic framework to the lease relationship, but if not managed properly, it can lead to the opposite of the desired result, causing legal and social chaos. The success of the reform depends not only on the text of law, but also on how we can manage the transitional period wisely and realistically.

The challenges are real, yes, and they affect many citizens. The reform can uproot communities and unsettle livelihoods. But it can also unblock a market stuck for decades and restore fairness to property rights. And this is why we must proceed cautiously, to ensure that New Law becomes a step forward, not a step back.

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Biography: Mahmoud is a Mansoura University law graduate with a focus on legal research and writing. He won ADSERO's 2024 Writing Competition with his team and later represented Egypt at the 2025 Nuremberg Moot Court held in Germany, where his team achieved the second-highest global score for the Prosecution Memorandum. He further interned at multiple law firms, developing strong research, drafting, and advocacy skills.