



Egypt is blessed with oil and gas resources as well as huge renewable energy potential but population growth and energy demand have left it scrambling to bridge the gap between fluctuating levels of oil and gas supply and demand. Recent gas discoveries in the Mediterranean offshore and in onshore concessions operated by international oil and gas companies have led to a significant boost to gas production, allowing the country to become self-sufficient with some excess available for export via one of two LNG terminals that had been left idle when gas was being directed to domestic consumption. Egypt is also an important oil and gas transit route both as host to the Sumed pipeline to the Suez Canal and transit through the canal though volumes are dictated by oil production flows from the Gulf and the global economy.

The country's ability to meet future energy demand is contingent on the addition of new renewable energy capacity in order to meet security, equity and sustainability criteria set out in its Integrated Sustainable Energy Strategy (ISES) to 2035. The country's total installed renewables capacity stands at 3.7GW, including 2.8GW of hydropower and around 0.9GW of solar and wind power, according to the International Renewable Energy Agency's 2018 report on Egypt. Egypt is one of the leaders in renewables deployment in the Middle East. Its solar capacity rose to 1.67GW in 2019 on completion of the 1.48GW Benban Solar Park. It also added around 250MW of wind capacity at the end of 2019 and has awarded another wind project for 250MW. The strategy is to increase the share of renewables in the energy mix to 20% by 2022 and 42% by 2035. The government has received strong support from international financial institutions to develop its renewables resources. Given these resources. IRENA says the country could potentially supply 53% of its electricity mix from renewables by 2030.

Egypt has been among countries that has been badly affected by COVID-19. The government imposed some curfews but not a full lockdown to contain the spread of the virus but the economy has suffered as the global economic slowdown have hit key sectors of the economy, particularly tourism, one of the main foreign revenue earners. Suez Canal earnings, another key source of revenues, have declined due to the slowdown in trade while oil production cuts by Gulf producers who use the Sumed pipeline have led to lower volumes of crude oil being shipped through the pipeline, thereby cutting transit fees. The government has also put on hold plans for further increases in electricity prices as part of its energy price reforms implemented in 2016 as part of an agreement with the IMF.

