

# **"Before emigration, a difficult process," by Wilson Gu, The Cairo Post (Egypt), Dec. 05, 2013 20:17**

[http://thecairopost.youm7.com/news/49812/inside\\_egypt/emigration-difficult-process](http://thecairopost.youm7.com/news/49812/inside_egypt/emigration-difficult-process)

## **Before emigration, a difficult process**

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AP/Peter McCabe  
By WILSON GU

CAIRO: "I've applied to go to Canada twice and got rejected both times," says Adam, who declined to give his real name, to The Cairo Post. "I don't know why I was rejected, but I will definitely apply again."

Adam, a pharmaceutical sales representative, sells his company's products to doctors in Mohandisseen and Imbaba. Like others facing the current

economic problems in Egypt, he works many hours for little pay, but he knows he is not alone.

“I first wanted to leave Egypt in college when I realized that nobody in Egypt is doing what he studied. In addition, those who work are not paid well,” said Adam.

“Egypt is beautiful, but money is also important. In Canada, I can start a career as a pharmacist and do what I studied. There is opportunity for a future there,” Adam added.

Adam and many other aspiring emigrants from Egypt face much paperwork, bureaucracy and, in some cases, fraud as they attempt to leave Egypt.

“That’s why I hired a lawyer to help me,” said Adam.

### Immigration lawyers

Alghoul Immigration Services and other companies help Egyptians emigrate by guiding them on how to collect and submit paperwork, according to Susan Tan, Office Supervisor for the Egyptian branch of Alghoul. If one part is wrong, then immigration officials will throw out the entire application, she said.

“It’s not worth it to take the risk of one small thing ruining my application,” said Adam. “I work many hours and don’t have much time to read documents.”

“More people are coming to us for professional help in leaving Egypt in the past year,” said Tan. “They want a better future for their children in a country that has a strong education system and stable economy. They don’t see these things in Egypt.”

The lawyers in Canada have the right to ask the government bureau Citizenship and Immigration Canada (CIC) to check the progress of an application. “We know where an application is at every stage which helps us monitor and speed up the process.

Also, our lawyers can see why an application was refused, a right not afforded to applicants. This information helps us advise future clients,” explained Tan.

Even worse, the immigration process is becoming more difficult. “Rules have frequently changed, and applicants often miss the changes. We are in close contact with the CIC so we can inform clients of the most up-to-date information,” said Tan.

### A success story

Ahmed Amr Elsoud currently lives in British Columbia, Canada. In Egypt, he worked as a freelance fixer. Elsoud married a Canadian woman and received his immigration visa in November 2013.

“I also used a lawyer, but one in Canada and not in Egypt. I heard about all the scams and the extremely high fees for Egyptian lawyers, so I didn’t want to deal with that,” said Elsoud.

“The lawyer asked me to send him all the required forms so he could review them. Then, he sent them to the CIC,” said Elsoud.

“At the same time, my wife joined an immigration forum and learned that we could add documents to our file to support the application. For example, she sent our lawyer pictures from our trips together and our families in Egypt,” explained Elsoud.

However, a lawyer cannot solve all problems; many factors determine the success of an applicant.

“Canadian immigration officials are increasingly wary of applicants from politically instable countries like Egypt. They fear that applicants do not want to stay long-term and contribute to Canada, that they just want to escape the turmoil in their home countries,” said Tan.

For Adam, who only graduated from university two years ago, the problem is more about skills and experience.

“I applied to immigrate as a skilled worker, but I don’t have much job experience. I also don’t have a master’s degree which could help my application. These forced me to score very high on the International English Language Testing System (IELTS) test which I did not do,” said Adam.

“Some Egyptians make it over not as a skilled worker but on a business visa. His language skills might not be great, but his father has money that the new immigrant can invest in the Canadian economy,” added Adam.

## Fraud

”Some companies in Egypt prey on the desires of emigrants who are often desperate to leave Egypt. They will tell you to gather your papers and [then they do]not submit them. When you ask for a refund, they will just keep the money or only return part of it,” said Tan.

Other times, lawyers do not have the professional certification to receive payment and fill out forms. “These consultants are invisible. They are unaccountable and are acting illegally. It is illegal to get paid and to act as a representative unless you meet the required professional standards and are approved by the provincial Law Societies,” said Edward Corrigan, Barrister and Solicitor in citizenship, immigration and refugee law in Canada.

The CIC website provides advice on how to avoid fraud, and explains how email and internet scams try to obtain private information from applicants or convince them to pay false fees to obtain a visa.

“Applicants do not need to hire an immigration representative; immigration representatives do not have special connections with the Canadian government and cannot guarantee you a visa; and only authorized officers at Canadian embassies, high commissions and consulates can decide whether or not to issue a visa,” according to the website.

Adam remembers seeing suspicious advertisements in the newspaper. “They just didn’t look right or promised unrealistic results,” said Adam. “Then again, I found my lawyer from a newspaper ad.”

## Return to Egypt

If an applicant successfully navigates the system and gets the visa, he or she is often uncertain about returning to Egypt.

“Before I met my wife, I wanted to leave Egypt to finish college and then come back,” said Elsoud. “Now that I’ve married a Canadian and have an immigrant visa, I’m not so sure that I’ll come back.”

“It’s not that Egypt is so bad, but that it’s just too good over there,” explained Adam.

“My company might offer me a position in Saudi Arabia where I can earn more money. That money can help me move to Canada. I might also study for a master’s degree in Germany. The additional education will also make me more competitive in getting a Canadian visa,” said Adam.

“If I leave Egypt, I will of course come back to visit friends and family. But I’m pretty sure I won’t come back to live here,” added Adam.

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