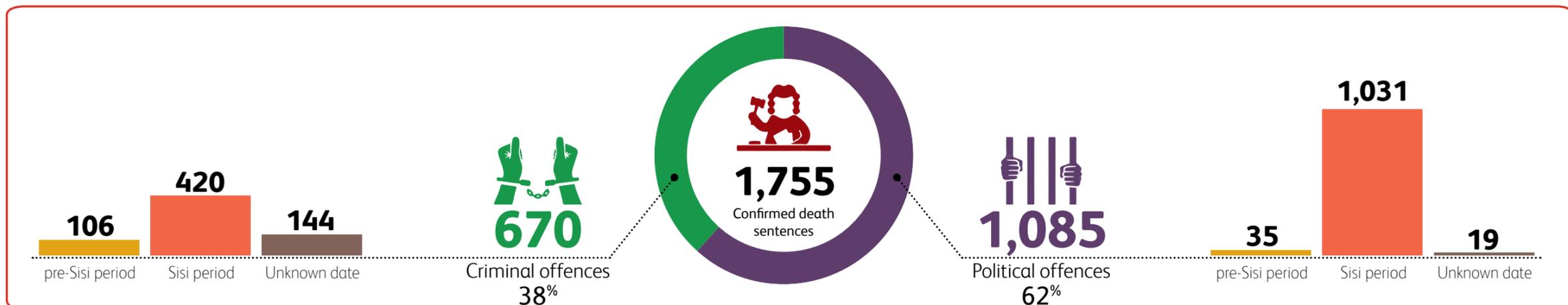


DEATH SENTENCES IN CRIMINAL AND POLITICAL TRIALS

25 JANUARY 2011 - 23 SEPTEMBER 2018



The Index separates death penalty trials into two categories: political trials and criminal trials. Trials are listed as ‘political’ where the alleged facts of the case and the perceived motivation for the commission of the offence are in some way connected to the political and societal changes that have arisen in Egypt since the January 2011 revolution. Charges often stem from broadly defined provisions for terrorism and state security offences in the Penal Code, which have enabled the broad criminalisation of the exercise of fundamental rights and freedoms, in contravention of international standards.

By contrast, trials are listed as ‘criminal’ where the facts of the case and the perceived motivation for the commission of the offence are not deemed to be connected to political events in Egypt. Offences which resulted in death sentences under the criminal category include, premeditated murder, rape and drugs trafficking.

This infographic shows the number of death sentences handed down in criminal and political trials, respectively. Political trials accounted for 2,008 of the 2,443 preliminary death sentences in the Sisi period—a rate of 82%. This is largely a reflection of the huge numbers of death sentences originating in mass trials. Mass trials in Egypt nearly exclusively fall within the political category of trials, and often involve courts trying dozens or hundreds of defendants simultaneously for one alleged political offence. These numbers also reflect the fact that information about political cases is more readily available than information about criminal cases, which is why there are fewer unknown dates for political cases.

Death sentences for criminal trials were also more likely to be confirmed than those for political trials. Of a total 1,077 preliminary death sentences in criminal trials identified by the Index, 670 were confirmed, a rate of 62%. Of 2,180 preliminary death sentences in political trials, 1,085 were confirmed, or 50%. For death sentences handed down during the Sisi period, this gap was even wider—97% of sentences from criminal trials (420 of 435) were confirmed during this period, compared with 51% of sentences from political trials (1,031 of 2,008).