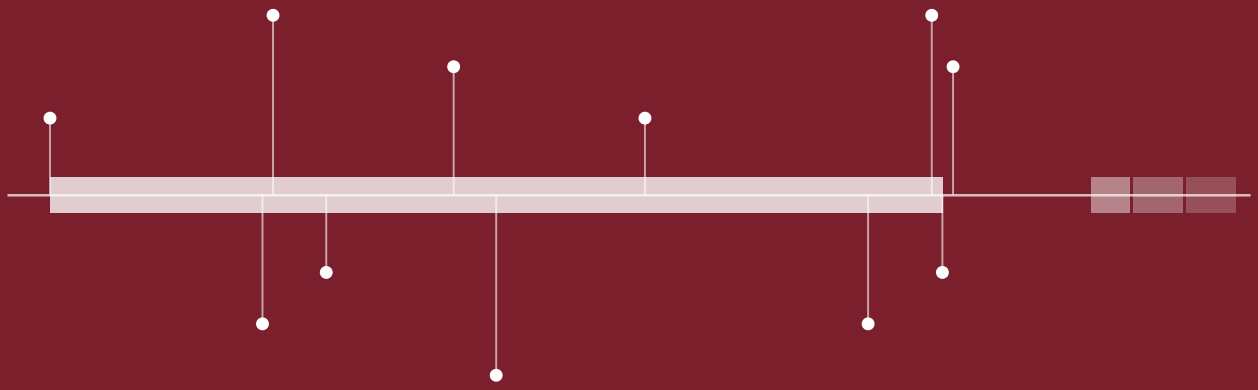
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A Long Game That Can Be Lost: The Muslim Brotherhood and Western Democracy

Foresight to 2040

EPIC Research Team

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Abstract

This paper asks what danger the Muslim Brotherhood poses to Western democracies between now and 2040, and what Western governments should do about it. It uses Egypt, where the movement was founded and where it briefly held the presidency, as the lens. Its answer is that the danger is real but slow. It lies less in any bid for national government than in patient influence over the institutions that democracies rely on to hear, fund and advise their Muslim citizens.

In the centre's assessment, the movement's advantage in time holds only as long as Western policy keeps resetting, and a framework that outlasts elections would take that advantage away.

Every forecast in this paper, and every judgement that goes beyond its sources, is labelled as the centre's assessment. Findings about named organisations are those of the official reports cited, not court findings.

Keywords: Muslim Brotherhood; political Islam; Western democracy; foresight; scenarios; 2040; Egypt; Hassan al-Banna; Mohamed Morsi; United Kingdom; France; Germany; Austria; United States; counter-extremism policy; freedom of association; European Convention on Human Rights; charity regulation; foreign funding transparency

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Executive summary

This paper asks what danger the Muslim Brotherhood poses to Western democracies between now and 2040, and what Western governments should do about it. It uses Egypt, where the movement was founded and where it briefly held the presidency, as the lens. Its answer is that the danger is real but slow. It lies less in any bid for national government than in patient influence over the institutions that democracies rely on to hear, fund and advise their Muslim citizens.

Time is the movement's main asset. The Society of the Muslim Brothers was founded at Ismailia in 1928 by Hassan al-Banna. His project did not begin as a bid for office. It began with preaching, the formation of members and the building of social institutions. Mohamed Morsi, the Muslim Brotherhood's candidate, took office as president of Egypt on 30 June 2012, eighty-four years after the founding. In the centre's assessment, that span is the most important single fact for Western readers. The movement plans in generations. Western governments plan in electoral terms of four or five years, and much of their policy resets each time.

What Egypt shows about power. Once in office, the movement used the forms of electoral democracy without accepting the limits that bind the winner. President Morsi's constitutional declaration, issued on 21 November and announced on 22 November 2012, made his decrees, laws and decisions immune from challenge and barred the courts from dissolving the assembly drafting the new constitution. The army removed him on 3 July 2013, and on 25 December 2013 the Egyptian Cabinet declared the Muslim Brotherhood a terrorist group. The paper cites Egyptian state acts only for what the state decided and when, and it does not offer post-2013 Egypt as a model.

Where the West stands. Official reporting in the United Kingdom (2015), France (2025) and Germany (2026) records closed membership, charitable, educational and mosque-based work, and organisations that have sought a place as partners of government. In the centre's assessment, that record shows the first two of al-Banna's stages, making the call known and forming members, far more clearly than the third. None of the official reports cited here finds any network close to executive power in a Western state, and the UK review found that the Muslim Brotherhood "has not been linked to terrorist related activity in and against the UK". The risk is decisive influence, not office: a say over who speaks for Muslim communities, which organisations receive public money, and how governments define extremism.

Two futures to 2040 (centre's assessment). The paper sets out three routes and two end states.

- *Drift*: policy that reacts to events and resets with each government leads to the first end state, in which the movement gains decisive influence over community representation in at least some Western states, influence that would be hard to reverse by the late 2030s.
- *Ban and adapt*: designations and bans disrupt the movement for a time, but on their own they push it to rebrand, split into deniable fronts and claim persecution. If attention fades, drift resumes.
- *Resilient democracy*: sustained rules aimed at conduct, not belief, lead to the second and better end state. The movement remains lawful but marginal to public institutions, and other Muslim voices take up the space it held.

What we recommend. Western governments should build a conduct-based framework and put it in statute or in a regulator's remit, so that a change of government cannot quietly undo it. It has five parts: transparency on foreign funding, applied to all faiths and causes; a published due-diligence test before ministers consult, fund or platform a group; conflict-of-interest rules for advisory posts; stronger charity oversight; and dissolution only for proven conduct, on evidence specific to the body concerned. In the centre's assessment, a blanket ban on a movement that is non-violent in Europe would be legally fragile and would hand it a story of persecution. Rules about conduct bind everyone equally, which is what keeps them lawful and what lets them last.

In the centre's assessment, the movement's advantage in time holds only as long as Western policy keeps resetting, and a framework that outlasts elections would take that advantage away.

Introduction

This paper addresses a long-range question: what danger does the Muslim Brotherhood pose to Western democracies, and how should those democracies respond over the next fifteen years? Most writing on the subject answers a narrower and more immediate question, such as whether a given organisation is linked to the movement, or whether a given measure is justified. This paper steps back. It treats the Muslim Brotherhood as a project that unfolds over generations, and asks what that means for governments whose own horizons rarely stretch beyond the next election.

Why Egypt. Egypt is the one country where the whole sequence can be followed from beginning to end: the founding in 1928, decades of preaching, member formation and social work, entry into syndicates, campuses and parliament, the presidency in 2012, the year in power, and the ban that followed. Part One sets out that sequence. It is a framework for reading the West, not a full country study, and the paper does not suggest that any Western state stands where Egypt stood in 2011. What Egypt offers is a yardstick: the order in which the work was done, and the record of what the movement did once it held executive power.

The thread. The argument running through the paper is about time. From the founding in 1928 to Morsi's inauguration in 2012 is eighty-four years. A movement that can wait that long gains from every policy that stops and starts. In the centre's assessment, Western democracies are most exposed not to a sudden bid for power, which the official record does not suggest, but to a slow accumulation of influence over the bodies that governments treat as representative, fund or ask for advice. The remedy proposed is equally unhurried: rules that outlast changes of government.

What the paper does not argue. It is not a paper about Islam or about Muslims in the West, and it does not treat Western Muslim organisations in general as part of the movement. Part Two adopts Lorenzo Vidino's distinction between organisations founded by members of the movement, organisations set up by those organisations, and bodies influenced by its ideas without formal links, which is more careful than the common habit of labelling any conservative Muslim body as part of the Muslim Brotherhood (see

section 2.2). The recommendations in Part Four are aimed at conduct, such as undeclared foreign funding, undisclosed conflicts of interest and proven incitement, and they apply to every faith and cause alike.

Sources and standards. The paper rests on official documents (the UK government's 2015 *Muslim Brotherhood Review*, the French interior ministry's 2025 report, the German Federal Office for the Protection of the Constitution's report for 2025, and US Federal Register instruments), on court decisions, and on scholarly work published by university and academic presses. Egyptian state sources are cited only for what the state decided and when, never as proof of the allegations they recite. The Muslim Brotherhood's own writings, including al-Banna's letters, are material the paper analyses, not sources it relies on for its findings. Two contested studies, a 2017 report for the Swedish Civil Contingencies Agency and Florence Bergeaud-Blackler's 2023 book on French networks, are used only for background, and nothing drawn from them appears in this summary or the conclusion without a second, independent source. Findings about named Western organisations are quoted in the words of the official report that made them, attributed to it, and set beside the context and responses the record contains. They are official assessments, not court findings.

Forecasts. Every forecast and every judgement that goes beyond the sources is labelled as the centre's assessment. Part Three uses scenario analysis on the model of the UK Government Office for Science's *Futures Toolkit* (Government Office for Science 2017), with three time horizons: 2026–2030, 2030–2035 and 2035–2040. The scenarios are not predictions. They describe how the choices Western governments make now are likely to shape the outcome.

Structure. Part One sets out the Egyptian model: al-Banna's three stages, the family cell and graded membership, social services and the ballot, the international organisation, the year in power and the move into exile. Part Two measures the official record in the United Kingdom, France and Germany, with notes on Austria and Sweden, against that model. Part Three reviews how bans have played out in Egypt, Austria, France, the United States and the United Kingdom, and builds on that evidence three routes to 2040 and two end states: one in which the movement gains power or decisive influence, and a better one in which it does not. Part Four sets out the policy choices, explains why a blanket ban is legally fragile in Europe, and recommends a conduct-based framework with indicators of success. The conclusion draws the argument together.

Part One. Egypt and the long game

Egypt is the framework for this paper, not a full country study. The movement's methods, the path by which it came within reach of the state, and the year in which it held the presidency are set out here so that the Western chapters can be read against them. The thread is a simple one. From 1928 to 2012 the Society of the Muslim Brothers built society first and took power later. It plans in generations. Western governments plan in electoral terms of four or five years.

1.1 Hassan al-Banna's model and the founding of 1928

The Society of the Muslim Brothers was founded in Egypt in 1928 by Hassan al-Banna, a schoolteacher then in his early twenties, at Ismailia (Ministère de l'Intérieur 2025, 10; United Kingdom 2015, para. 8). The French interior ministry's 2025 report dates the founding to March 1928 (Ministère de l'Intérieur 2025, 10). Al-Banna's project was not, in the first instance, a bid for office. The UK government's 2015 review records that he called for "the religious reformation of individual Muslims, the progressive moral purification of Muslim societies and their eventual political unification in a Caliphate under sharia law" (United Kingdom 2015, para. 8). The same official account records his argument that secularisation and westernisation lay at the root of the problems of Arab and Muslim societies, and that nationalism was not

the answer (United Kingdom 2015, para. 8). The French report describes the early method as Islamisation from below, through preaching (*daʿwa*), in a country then under British dominance and still absorbing the end of the Ottoman caliphate in 1924 (Ministère de l'Intérieur 2025, 10). The movement later moved its work to Cairo; the French report dates that transfer to 1932, and describes a pyramidal command structure (*tanẓīm*) headed by a Supreme Guide (*murshid*) (Ministère de l'Intérieur 2025, 10). Al-Banna remained at the head of the movement until his death in 1949 (Hamzawy and Brown 2010, 7).

The operational scheme that matters for this paper is the three-stage sequence set out in al-Banna's *Risālat al-muʾtamar al-khāmis* (Letter of the Fifth Conference), one of the letters collected in his *Majmūʿat rasāʾil*. In that letter he states that every *daʿwa* passes through three stages, which often run side by side: *taʿrīf*, making the call known, through propaganda and the carrying of the message to the public; *takwīn*, the formation of members, by selecting supporters, preparing soldiers and organising ranks; and *tanfīdh*, execution, work and production (al-Banna n.d.a, 188). Al-Banna describes the same three stages in different words in his *Risālat al-taʿālīm*, where *tanfīdh* becomes "jihad without respite" (al-Banna n.d.b, 311–12); Part Three quotes that version. These writings are material the paper analyses. They are not a source it relies on for its own findings. The three operational stages are not the same as al-Banna's better-known seven-step reform programme, which appears in other letters and runs from the individual and the home through society and the government. The two schemes should be kept distinct.

Centre's assessment. The design is patient. The formation of people and of social institutions comes before a bid for the state. From the founding in 1928 to Mohamed Morsi's inauguration in 2012 is eighty-four years. Time, on this reading, works for a movement that can wait, and against administrations that reset with each election. That is the thread that runs through the rest of this paper.

1.2 The organisation: the usra, graded membership and recruitment

From the start the movement built a tight internal structure. The UK review found that it "organised itself into a secretive 'cell' structure, with an elaborate induction and education programme for new members," relying heavily on "group solidarity and peer pressure to maintain discipline," and that "this clandestine, centralised and hierarchical structure persists to this day" (United Kingdom 2015, para. 9).

The basic unit is the *usra*, or family cell. The French report, describing the Egyptian model, states that the smallest level is that of the families (*usar*), composed of ten members, who meet once a week (Ministère de l'Intérieur 2025, 19). Membership is graded. The same report describes members as divided among affiliates, those who have committed themselves, and those who are active, bound to the Guide by an oath of allegiance (*bayʿa*), with different grades and stages to be passed (Ministère de l'Intérieur 2025, 19). Recruitment, on that official account, often begins in introductory circles (*ḥalaqa*). Tasks are then given to test the recruit. The process ends, if the candidate is accepted, in an oath (Ministère de l'Intérieur 2025, 19).

The same methods were used in public life, not only in private study. After the movement was dissolved under Nasser in 1954, it was able to reorganise in Egypt in the 1970s under Sadat (United Kingdom 2015, paras 10, 16; Hamzawy and Brown 2010, 7). The UK review records that in that decade the Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood "expanded, established a foothold within the Egyptian political system and took a firm hold on student organisations, professional syndicates and trades unions," and that it "developed a large, sophisticated and often clandestine network of commercial enterprises, small businesses and charities" (United Kingdom 2015, para. 10). Amr Hamzawy and Nathan J. Brown, writing for the Carnegie Endowment, trace a similar path from student associations to professional associations, and then into parliamentary elections (Hamzawy and Brown 2010, 7). Under Hassan al-Banna the movement had disavowed partisan politics and avoided forming its own party. When it was allowed to re-emerge, it entered elections in a limited way, including a short-lived alliance with the Wafd party in 1984, in which the alliance won 58 seats, eight of them Muslim Brotherhood candidates (Hamzawy and Brown 2010, 7,

35). Families, mosques, campuses and the syndicates were, in this period, the ordinary channels of recruitment and of influence, not a departure from the original model. The movement remained illegal under Mubarak, but it was permitted to support independent candidates and to work through those same institutions (Hamzawy and Brown 2010, 7; United Kingdom 2015, para. 10). The point for the Western chapters is the order of the work: people and institutions first, a political party only much later, and then only as a vehicle.

Centre's assessment. The *usra*, the graded membership and the work through families, mosques, campuses and syndicates are not a side activity. They are how the first two stages (making the call known and forming members) are carried out in daily life. Section 1.4 follows the international organisation that grew from this Egyptian core.

1.3 Social services as an electoral base

The charitable and service network is the part of this history most often used to explain the Muslim Brotherhood's later votes. The UK review records the scale of the commercial and charitable infrastructure built from the 1970s (United Kingdom 2015, para. 10). Hamzawy and Brown found that, by the late Mubarak years, the movement had "learned to deploy its extensive experience in providing services and charity – both of which have been key elements of its constituency-building activities," and that "charity networks and service provision centers have facilitated constant exchange between the Brotherhood's MPs and considerable segments of the Egyptian population, especially in impoverished areas" (Hamzawy and Brown 2010, 17). Clinics, schools and relief work were part of that presence.

The parliamentary elections of 2005 appeared, at the time, to confirm the argument. Muslim Brotherhood candidates won 88 of 444 elected seats (Hamzawy and Brown 2010, 4). The movement slated 161 candidates (the paper's appendix gives 150 contested; Hamzawy and Brown 2010, 35), a figure Hamzawy and Brown note was still low enough that, even if all had won, it would have held only a third of the parliament, and it avoided running against the most prominent figures of the ruling National Democratic Party (Hamzawy and Brown 2010, 7). In head-to-head contests with National Democratic Party candidates, it won two-thirds of the races (Hamzawy and Brown 2010, 7).

After the uprising of 2011 the same networks, and the same discipline, were tested in a much more open contest. Parliamentary elections were held in stages between 28 November 2011 and 15 February 2012. The Muslim Brotherhood's Freedom and Justice Party, in the BBC's wording, "won 46% of the vote" in that poll (BBC News 2012a). This paper uses that wording and does not convert it into a seat share of its own.

The service-to-votes story is not, however, the whole of the evidence. Tarek Masoud, in *Counting Islam*, argues that a regular claim in the literature (that Islamists won under Mubarak by mobilising the poor recipients of Islamic social services) neglects the way the authoritarian state worked to prevent just that outcome, both by destroying Islamists' own "bricks and mortar" institutions and by heavily policing their links to others. On his account, activists continued to take part in religious social-service networks, but they were "profoundly unable to turn these into a base for clientelistic politics that would have allowed them to challenge the state for the political loyalties of the poor." The Muslim Brotherhood's parliamentary successes under Mubarak, he argues, came instead from mobilising a relatively small middle-class constituency that could afford to refuse regime patronage and cast a protest vote (Masoud 2014, 8; from the publisher's free excerpt of the introduction).

Centre's assessment. Social services were real, and they were part of how the movement became a presence in Egyptian life over decades. They helped to build a reputation and a network of contacts, including with members of parliament. They do not, on Masoud's evidence, by themselves explain why people voted as they did, especially under Mubarak. A paper that uses Egypt as a lens for the West should

hold both points: the long investment in clinics, schools and relief, and the limits of that investment as an account of the ballot. The 2011–12 results show how far a movement with that history could go once the old restrictions fell away. They do not settle the mechanism.

The 2005 parliament as an opposition bloc

The 2005 result matters here less as a number than as a rehearsal. From 2005 to 2010 the movement's deputies worked inside a legislature they could not outvote, and how they behaved is good public evidence of what the movement did with a platform but no power. Hamzawy and Brown, writing in 2010 and so before 2011, say the Muslim Brotherhood "assembled an impressive parliamentary bloc, devoted resources to developing an agenda, drafted its own proposals, strategized about priorities, and played the (generally unofficial) role of leading the parliamentary opposition" (Hamzawy and Brown 2010, 16).

Oversight, not lawmaking. The authors are careful about what that activity achieved. The Muslim Brotherhood's deputies could "pepper its ministers with questions" and bring issues to public debate, but "they do not have the votes necessary to write laws," and the movement's impact on the legislative process "has been minimal" (Hamzawy and Brown 2010, 16). The ruling National Democratic Party held three-quarters of the seats, though the Muslim Brotherhood's deputies made up almost one-fifth of the chamber (Hamzawy and Brown 2010, 16). The measure of activity is oversight. In the 2000–2005 assembly the seventeen Muslim Brotherhood deputies used inquiries, interpellations, questions, discussion requests and investigative committees, in the authors' words, "over 6,000 times, far more than any other parliamentary bloc". In the 2005 assembly the authors report "over 20,000 times" (Hamzawy and Brown 2010, 16). These are the authors' figures; this paper has not tested them against parliamentary records.

What the deputies pressed. The agenda was broader than the movement's religious reputation suggests. Deputies questioned the prime minister and the ministers of justice and interior on torture, interrogation and the actions of intelligence officers, and opposed the extension of the state of emergency, which the ruling party's majority renewed in 2006 and again in 2008 (Hamzawy and Brown 2010, 20). On the economy, the bloc voted against every annual budget between 2000 and 2005 and attacked inflation, unemployment and corruption; in 2008 it sent 104 inquiries and 12 interpellations to the government on imports of expired foods, especially wheat (Hamzawy and Brown 2010, 22, 24).

Constituency services. Hamzawy and Brown link the oversight work to the social network described above. Charity networks and service centres, they write, "have facilitated constant exchange between the Brotherhood's MPs and considerable segments of the Egyptian population, especially in impoverished areas" (Hamzawy and Brown 2010, 17), which in their account let deputies spot corruption and build support for their parliamentary work. Masoud's argument, above, is a reason to weigh this link with care as an explanation of votes.

Relations with other blocs. The picture here is one of limited alliance. Before the 2005 elections the group joined the United National Front for Change with most legal opposition parties, and declared that it would not compete against other opposition candidates, reviving the slogan "participation without domination"; Hamzawy and Brown say it honoured that pledge (Hamzawy and Brown 2010, 15). On their account the leftist Tagammu opposed Islamist participation, the liberal Wafd did little to protest the manipulation of the 2005 elections, and the Kifaya movement distanced itself from the Muslim Brotherhood whenever the state moved against its leaders (Hamzawy and Brown 2010, 14). A 2007 coalition against the constitutional amendments lost members, including the Tagammu and the Wafd (Hamzawy and Brown 2010, 15). The authors also write that in several incidents the movement acted "as though it were virtually self-sufficient, needing no cooperation with weaker opposition actors", while adding that it "has also had legitimate reason to mistrust the attitudes of other opposition actors" (Hamzawy and Brown 2010, 14).

Centre's assessment. Two points carry forward. First, the 2005–10 bloc shows a movement skilled at opposition: organised, disciplined, able to turn a service network into a flow of parliamentary questions. It had no experience of passing laws or governing. Second, its cooperation with other political forces was thin. This is the centre's reading of a 2010 source, not a prediction of what any Western chapter would do.

1.4 From Cairo to an international organisation

The Society of the Muslim Brothers was founded by Hassan al-Banna in Ismailia in 1928 and moved its headquarters to Cairo in the early 1930s (Mitchell 1969; Ministère de l'Intérieur 2025, 10). From the start, the movement's leaders described their project as one for the wider Muslim world, not for Egypt alone. Al-Banna's three stages, set out in section 1.1, were designed to unfold over generations, and they were never bounded by the borders of one state.

Its outward reach began early, with links to sympathisers and sister groups in other Arab countries (Mitchell 1969; Pargeter 2013). This outward reach is the origin of what later became known as the International Organisation (*al-tanẓīm al-duwalī*).

Repression under Nasser in the 1950s and 1960s scattered members across the Arab world and into Europe. Students and exiles founded mosques, student associations and study circles in Germany, Switzerland and the United Kingdom, often in the same cities where they studied (Vidino 2010; Maréchal 2008).

The International Organisation is generally dated to the early 1980s (Pargeter 2013; Vidino 2010). In practice, the structure has always been looser than the name suggests. National branches keep wide autonomy, and the scholarly literature describes a "network of networks" bound more by shared ideology, personal ties and the training of members than by formal command (Vidino 2010; Pargeter 2013).

Centre's assessment. That looseness is a strength for the movement and a problem for Western governments. It allows national bodies to say, accurately in the narrow legal sense, that they take no orders from Cairo, while sharing the same ideas, methods and networks of people.

1.5 Power in 2012–13

On 11 February 2011 Hosni Mubarak stepped down as president, after weeks of protest, and power was handed to the military (BBC News 2011). The Freedom and Justice Party's parliamentary showing, already noted, was followed by a shock before the presidency was even decided. On 14 June 2012 Egypt's Supreme Constitutional Court ruled the parliamentary election law unconstitutional. The head of the court, Farouk Sultan, told Reuters, in a passage reported by the BBC, that the ruling "includes the dissolution of the lower house of parliament in its entirety because the law upon which the elections were held is contrary to rules of the constitution" (BBC News 2012a).

The presidency, when it came, therefore began without a sitting lower house, and without a new constitution already in force. The presidential run-off was held on 16 and 17 June 2012 (BBC News 2012a). On 24 June the Higher Presidential Election Commission declared Mohamed Morsi, the Freedom and Justice Party's candidate, the winner, with 51.73 per cent of the vote (13,230,131 votes) against 48.27 per cent (12,347,380 votes) for Ahmed Shafiq, and a turnout of 51.58 per cent (BBC News 2012b). Morsi took office on 30 June 2012 (BBC News 2013g).

On 12 August 2012 he ordered the retirement of Field Marshal Hussein Tantawi, the head of the armed forces and defence minister, appointed General Abdul Fattah al-Sisi in his place, retired the chief of staff, General Sami Annan, and cancelled a constitutional declaration that had been aimed at curbing

presidential powers (BBC News 2012c). The move was a contest with the military, not an appointment of Muslim Brotherhood officials to the army. It does, however, mark an early assertion of presidential authority over the institutions that had run the country since February 2011.

The sharper test of what the movement would do with executive power came in the autumn. In the November 2012 declaration, President Morsi banned challenges to his decrees, laws and decisions. The declaration also provided that no court could dissolve the constituent assembly that was drafting a new constitution, and he sacked the chief prosecutor (BBC News 2012d). He said the decree was aimed at "cleansing state institutions" and "destroying the infrastructure of the old regime" (BBC News 2012d). The Egyptian Judges' Club called an extraordinary meeting to discuss the decision, and said that "the state of law is at stake" (BBC News 2012d). A new prosecutor was appointed in the same declaration (BBC News 2012d). The same text gave the 100-member constituent assembly two further months to finish its work. The re-drafting of the constitution had already been slowed by a court ruling in April that suspended the first assembly, and by a run of lawsuits that questioned the make-up of its successor (BBC News 2012d). The declaration closed off that judicial route: no court could dissolve the panel that was writing the text.

Clashes outside the Ittihadiya presidential palace took place on 5 and 6 December 2012. The clashes left "10 people, mostly Muslim Brotherhood members" dead and 748 injured, "according to the Health Ministry" (Human Rights Watch 2012a). The constituent assembly completed a draft constitution, which was put to a two-stage referendum on 15 and 22 December 2012. The election commission announced on 25 December that 63.8 per cent of those who voted had cast Yes ballots, on a turnout of 32.9 per cent of Egypt's 52 million voters, and that parliamentary elections were then required within two months (BBC News 2012g). The constitution had therefore been adopted, but only by a minority of the electorate as a whole, and the legislature that might have given it a broader political foundation was still to be elected.

The movement's international links became an asset for the government after the Freedom and Justice Party's success in the 2011–12 parliamentary elections and Morsi's victory in June 2012 (Pargeter 2013; Trager 2016). Its foreign networks were used to argue its case in Western capitals as a moderate, democratic force, at the same time as the November 2012 declaration placed presidential decrees beyond the reach of the courts (Egypt 2012a).

Centre's assessment. The gap between the message abroad and the conduct at home is the most important lesson Egypt offers Western readers. It shows that a movement can speak the language of democracy to outside audiences while concentrating power at home.

Appointments continued into the following year. On 17 June 2013 the BBC reported that Morsi had appointed "a number of Islamist allies as regional governors," and that "the Brotherhood and its allies now control 13 of Egypt's 27 governorships" (BBC News 2013d). The most significant of those appointments, as the same report put it, was in Luxor, where the new governor, Adel al-Khayat, was a member of the political wing of Gamaa Islamiya, not of the Muslim Brotherhood (BBC News 2013d). He resigned on 23 June amid controversy over that link (BBC News 2013e). The episode is cited here as part of the record of appointments and the reaction to them, not as evidence that the Muslim Brotherhood and Gamaa Islamiya were the same organisation.

On Sunday 30 June 2013, a year after Morsi took office, mass protests were held across the country calling for his resignation. In Cairo, the BBC reported the next day (1 July 2013), "tens of thousands of people massed in Tahrir Square and outside the presidential palace in the biggest demonstration there since the 2011 revolution," and "millions of protesters across the country" accused him of failing to tackle economic and security problems (BBC News 2013f). The grassroots movement Tamarod (Rebellion) had organised a petition calling for a snap election, which opposition activists said more than 22 million

people had signed (BBC News 2013f). The army issued an ultimatum which, the BBC later reported, expired on the afternoon of Wednesday 3 July, after four days of mass street demonstrations (BBC News 2013g).

On 3 July 2013 the army removed Morsi from power, suspended the constitution, and said that the head of the Supreme Constitutional Court, Adli Mansour, would run the country's affairs during a transitional period until a new president was elected (BBC News 2013g). The BBC, reporting the removal, noted a growing discontent that had been visible since the previous November, when the constitutional declaration was issued (BBC News 2013g). The UK review, looking back on the Freedom and Justice Party's period in government between 2011 and 2013, and noting the range of views on a complex set of events, concluded that the Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood "did not do enough to demonstrate political moderation or a commitment to democratic values, had failed to convince Egyptians of their competence or good intentions, and had subsequently struggled to draw lessons for what its failure in Egypt meant for its future" (United Kingdom 2015, para. 11). That is the review's assessment, not an independent finding of this paper, and it is recorded here as part of the official record against which the Egyptian year in power has already been judged in a Western capital.

On 25 December 2013, in a statement to the nation after a Cabinet meeting, the Egyptian Cabinet declared the Muslim Brotherhood a terrorist group and its organisation a terrorist organisation within the meaning of article 86 of the Penal Code (Al-Masry Al-Youm 2013b). No Official Gazette text of the decision has been found. This paper records only the fact and date of the state's decision. It does not treat the designation as proof of the allegations on which it was said to rest. Section 3.2 sets out the ban, the court rulings around it and what followed.

The record in office: law, army, appointments, economy and constitution

The sections above set out dates. This one looks at choices, using the BBC and Human Rights Watch, an advocacy body cited here for its own findings and for what the documents it quotes provided.

The courts and the law. Human Rights Watch reported that after Morsi took legislative authority from the military council in August 2012 he issued at least ten laws by late November, on subjects including education, pretrial detention for journalists, trade unions and children's health insurance (Human Rights Watch 2012b). Article 2 of the November 2012 declaration put his decrees and laws, issued from 30 June 2012 until a constitution came into effect and a new People's Assembly was elected, beyond challenge: they would be "final and self-executing, and not subject to legal challenge in any way or before any party" (Human Rights Watch 2012b, quoting the declaration). Human Rights Watch criticised Law 96 of 2012, which created a dedicated court for violence against protesters but also covered offences such as insulting the authorities (Human Rights Watch 2012b). By the end of November, it reported, judges in numerous circuits had gone on strike (Human Rights Watch 2012c). The declaration was annulled by a further constitutional declaration dated 8 December 2012 and announced late that evening, which kept its effects in force and again placed constitutional declarations beyond judicial challenge (Egypt 2012b, 2–3; BBC News 2012f).

The army. The removal of the two senior generals in August was a contest with the military's leadership. Its institutional position fared differently. Human Rights Watch reported that the assembly deleted a draft article barring any trial of civilians by military courts after military justice officials objected, leaving article 198: "Civilians may not be tried before the military justice system except for crimes that harm the armed forces, and this shall be defined by law" (Human Rights Watch 2012c). Law 107 of 2012, issued on 9 December, gave the armed forces "all powers of judicial arrest authority" until the referendum result was announced; a presidency representative later told Human Rights Watch that no civilian would be sent

to a military court under it during the referendum (Human Rights Watch 2012d). **Centre's assessment:** a president who removed the generals while leaving military jurisdiction largely intact asserted authority over one and accommodated the other.

Appointments. The declaration provided for a new prosecutor-general (Human Rights Watch 2012b; BBC News 2012d). Governors are covered above. Human Rights Watch added that prosecutions for "insulting the president" or "insulting the judiciary" had increased since Morsi took office (Human Rights Watch 2012c), a claim this paper reports as the organisation's own.

The economy. The BBC's reporting shows a government under heavy pressure from a slump that predated it. On 4 January 2013 it reported that reserves had fallen from $36bn before the uprising to $15.03bn in December 2012, that the central bank had called them "critical", and that Standard & Poor's had cut Egypt's credit rating to "B-" (BBC News 2013a). Talks with the International Monetary Fund over a $4.8bn loan had been suspended, the BBC said on 30 December 2012, "because of political turmoil over a new constitution" (BBC News 2012h). Reserves fell by a further $1.4bn in January 2013, to $13.6bn (BBC News 2013b). By July the BBC put reserves at about $16bn, inflation at between 13 and 18 per cent, unemployment at a record 13.2 per cent and government debt at around $40bn, up from $30bn before Mubarak fell (BBC News 2013h). Its accounts of the IMF deal differ. In April it wrote that the IMF had agreed a loan deal in November 2012 and then cancelled it after political conflict (BBC News 2013c). In July it wrote that the government had "failed to ratify or implement it", partly because of the austerity measures attached to it, including tax rises and fuel-subsidy cuts (BBC News 2013h). The sources do not settle who bore more of the responsibility. After the referendum, Prime Minister Hisham Qandil called for co-operation with the government to restore the economy (BBC News 2012g). **Centre's assessment:** the constitutional dispute and the economic crisis fed each other, and the government ended with neither a settled constitutional order nor a stabilising loan.

The constitution and the referendum. The 100-member assembly approved the final draft on 29 November 2012, after a number of members resigned in protest at what they said was the failure of the dominant Islamist factions to compromise (Human Rights Watch 2012c). Human Rights Watch credited the text with protections against arbitrary detention (article 35) and torture (article 36) and for dropping a draft provision that would have made women's equality subject to Islamic law, but criticised article 81 for subordinating rights to the chapter on State and Society, including articles 10 and 11, which it called "overly broad", article 43's restriction of worship to the three Abrahamic religions, and articles 31 and 44 on insult (Human Rights Watch 2012c). Turnout in the referendum was 32.9 per cent, as noted above.

Centre's assessment. What the 2012–13 record shows is the limits of electoral power. Electoral victory in Egypt was short-lived: in less than two years from the first parliamentary vote the lower house was dissolved, a constitution had been passed amid resignations from the drafting assembly, and the government was removed. The record also gives grounds for concern about legal immunity for presidential acts and about military privileges left intact. That is as far as the record goes. The influence argument is the centre's inference, not a finding of the record: that the more durable risk lies in what the movement built before and outside office, the institutions, services and networks described above, which sustained its influence through long periods of repression. The sources support only part of that inference. Hamzawy and Brown show that by the 2000s these networks were in place and fed the movement's parliamentary oversight work (Hamzawy and Brown 2010, 17). Nothing in the Egyptian record shows that they would work the same way in a Western state. Part Two examines that question against official reports from Western countries.

1.6 After the fall: the West as refuge and base

After the Cabinet's decision of December 2013, much of the surviving leadership moved abroad, mainly to Turkey and the United Kingdom (Ardovini 2022b; Fulco and Abdelgawad 2025).

The UK government's 2015 review found that small numbers of Brothers arrived from Egypt in 2013 and that, as of July 2014, the Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood ran some of its communications from London (United Kingdom 2015, paras. 25–26). France's 2025 report describes the movement losing influence in North Africa and the Middle East and turning towards Europe (Ministère de l'Intérieur 2025, 24).

Exile placed the organisation under strain. Academic fieldwork in Turkey and the United Kingdom records competing strategies of endurance and adaptation, and a public split in 2021 into rival leaderships associated with London and Istanbul (Ardovini 2022a; Ardovini 2022b; Fulco and Abdelgawad 2025).

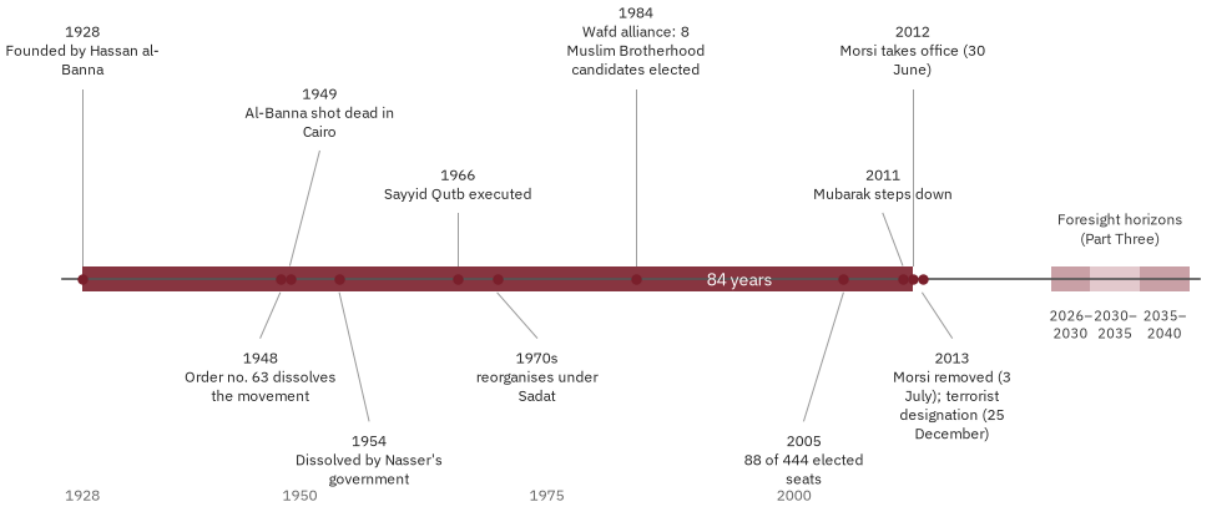
Centre's assessment. The years since 2013 are the best evidence we have of what happens when the movement is banned at home. It did not disappear. It moved its centre of gravity into Western democracies, whose legal protections it was able to use, and it split under pressure. Both facts shape the scenarios in Part Three, and section 3.2 returns to them.

1.7 What the record shows for the "if they gain power" future

Centre's assessment. The Egyptian record is the evidence this paper uses for the "if they gain power" future. It is not a forecast stated as fact. In just over a year the Freedom and Justice Party and Morsi had won a parliament and a presidency, seen that parliament dissolved, put presidential decrees beyond judicial review, pushed a constitution through a referendum on a turnout of about a third of the electorate, appointed allies into provincial government, and entered a confrontation with the judiciary and a large part of the political opposition that ended in mass protest and their removal. Two features of that year matter for Western readers. First, the methods that built the movement over decades (the *usra*, the graded membership, the work in syndicates, campuses and charities) were the foundation, not a substitute, for the bid for power. Second, once in office the movement showed that it could use the forms of electoral democracy without accepting the limits that make those forms a constraint on the winner. The November 2012 declaration, which placed decrees, laws and decisions beyond the courts, is the clearest single illustration. Whether a Western government ever faces an Egyptian-style capture of the executive is a question for Part Three. The Egyptian year in power is what that question is asked against.

1.8 Timeline, 1928–2013

Figure 1. Eighty-four years from founding to the presidency: the Egyptian timeline, 1928–2013, and this paper's foresight horizons to 2040



Dates and events from Table 1 (section 1.8), with the sources listed there. Horizons are the three used for the scenarios in Part Three (section 3.1).

The horizons are the centre's framework, not forecasts of events. Chart: EPIC.

Figure 1. The Egyptian timeline, 1928–2013, and the paper's foresight horizons to 2040. Dates and events from Table 1, with the sources listed there; horizons from section 3.1. Chart: EPIC.

Table 1. Timeline, 1928–2013

Date	Event	Source
March 1928	The Society of the Muslim Brothers is founded in Egypt by Hassan al-Banna	Ministère de l'Intérieur 2025, 10; United Kingdom 2015, para. 8
1932	The movement installs itself in Cairo and multiplies its sections across Egypt, under a pyramidal command headed by a Supreme Guide	Ministère de l'Intérieur 2025, 10
8 Dec 1948	Order no. 63 of 1948, issued under martial-law powers, dissolves the Muslim Brotherhood and its branches	Abou El Zalaf 2022, §5 (date); Al-Sayyid 2015 (order number and wording; opinion piece)
12 Feb 1949	Al-Banna is shot dead in Cairo	Abou El Zalaf 2022, §5; Ministère de l'Intérieur 2025, 11 (assassination, 1949); Hamzawy and Brown 2010, 7 (1949)
1954	Dissolved by Nasser's government; on the UK review's account this "led to the arrest, torture and execution of many members and the co-option of others"	United Kingdom 2015, para. 10; Al-Sayyid 2003 (ban of January 1954; final ban October 1954; mass imprisonment)
1966	Sayyid Qutb is executed in Egypt	United Kingdom 2015, para. 16; Al-Sayyid 2003
1970s	Allowed to reorganise under Sadat, the movement expands and takes a firm hold on student organisations, professional syndicates and trades unions	United Kingdom 2015, para. 16 (reorganise) and para. 10 (all three bodies); Hamzawy and Brown 2010, 7 (student and professional associations only)
1984	The Muslim Brotherhood enters a short-lived electoral alliance with the Wafd party; the alliance wins 58 seats, 8 of them Muslim Brotherhood candidates on the New Wafd list	Hamzawy and Brown 2010, 7, 35
2000–05	Seventeen Muslim Brotherhood members sit in the People's Assembly	Hamzawy and Brown 2010, 16

Date	Event	Source
2005	Muslim Brotherhood candidates win 88 of 444 elected seats, from a slate of 161 candidates (the paper's appendix gives 150 contested)	Hamzawy and Brown 2010, 4, 7, 35
11 Feb 2011	Mubarak steps down; the military takes over	Associated Press 2019; BBC News 2011
28 Nov 2011 – 15 Feb 2012	Multi-stage parliamentary elections: the Muslim Brotherhood wins "nearly half the seats" (Associated Press 2019); the Freedom and Justice Party "won 46% of the vote" (BBC)	Associated Press 2019; BBC News 2012a
14 Jun 2012	Supreme Constitutional Court rules the election law unconstitutional; lower house dissolved: the court head is quoted by the BBC as saying the ruling includes dissolution of the lower house "in its entirety" (BBC News 2012a); the BBC Q&A says the entire People's Assembly "was affected and considered wholly invalid" (BBC News 2012e)	BBC News 2012a; BBC News 2012e
16–17 Jun 2012	Presidential run-off	BBC News 2012a
30 Jun 2012	Morsi takes office	Associated Press 2019
12 Aug 2012	Morsi removes the defence minister, Field Marshal Tantawi	Associated Press 2019
21 Nov 2012 (issued); 22 Nov 2012 (announced)	Constitutional declaration issued on 21 November and announced on 22 November 2012: presidential decrees, laws and decisions made immune from challenge; no court may dissolve the constituent assembly or the Shura Council. Dated and published in Official Gazette no. 46 *mukarrar* of 21 November 2012	Egypt 2012a, 2–3; BBC News 2012d (announcement)
5–6 Dec 2012	Clashes outside the Ittihadiya presidential palace, starting on 5 December; 10 dead ("mostly Muslim Brotherhood members") and 748 injured, according to the Health Ministry	Human Rights Watch 2012a; BBC News 2019 (month)
8 Dec 2012	Further constitutional declaration annuls the declaration of 21 November 2012 but keeps its effects in force, and again places constitutional declarations beyond judicial challenge; announced late that evening	Egypt 2012b, 2–3; BBC News 2012f
15 and 22 Dec 2012	Constitutional referendum: 63.8% Yes; turnout 32.9%	BBC News 2012g
3 Jul 2013	Army removes Morsi after mass protests and a 48-hour ultimatum; constitution suspended	BBC News 2013g; BBC News 2019
14 Aug 2013	Rab'a sit-in dispersed: "at least 817" killed, "likely more than 1,000"	Human Rights Watch 2014, *All According to Plan*
23 Sep 2013	Cairo Court of Urgent Matters, case 2315 of 2013, "banned the group's activities and placed its assets under conservatorship"	Judgment, Manshurat archive scan (not a certified text)
23 Dec 2013	The government notifies the Central Bank of a freeze on the funds of 1,055 associations, reported as implementing the 23 September judgment	*Al-Masry Al-Youm* 2013a
25 Dec 2013	Cabinet "statement to the nation" declares the Muslim Brotherhood a terrorist group under article 86 of the Penal Code. No Official Gazette text found	Al-Masry Al-Youm 2013b (article 86 and text); BBC News 2013i (fact and date of the announcement only)

Part Two. Where the West stands on the Egyptian timeline

The question for this part is not whether Western networks are about to form governments. It is whether the methods documented in Egypt (building society first, recruiting through a closed membership, and working through charities, student bodies, mosque federations and "representative" councils that governments consult or fund) are in use in the West, and how far they have gone.

2.1 The Egyptian pattern as a yardstick

Part One shows a sequence in Egypt: decades of preaching, social service and member training; then entry into professional syndicates, student unions and parliament; and only then a bid for executive power. In the 2005 parliamentary election, independent candidates backed by the movement won 88 of 444 elected seats, more than three decades after it began to reorganise under Sadat (Hamzawy and Brown 2010, 4). Morsi took office in 2012, 84 years after the movement's founding (United Kingdom 2015, para. 8; BBC News 2013g).

Al-Banna's three stages, as set out in his Fifth Conference letter (section 1.1), give a simple yardstick for reading Western networks today (al-Banna n.d.a, 188). The paper treats that text as material to analyse, not as a source it relies on.

2.2 How the Western networks are organised

Vidino distinguishes between organisations founded by members of the movement, organisations set up by those organisations, and bodies that are influenced by the movement's ideas without formal links (Vidino 2010; Vidino 2020). This is a more careful framework than the common habit of labelling any conservative Muslim body as part of the Muslim Brotherhood, and the paper uses it throughout.

The French report describes the movement's organisation in Europe as concentric circles, with a restricted core of sworn militants which, in France, would number only a few hundred members, and a wider "fréristе" milieu of people in contact with, or inspired by, that core who adopt its methods (Ministère de l'Intérieur 2025, 6). The report considers this organisation "highly probable" in France, since it "exists everywhere else in Europe" (Ministère de l'Intérieur 2025, 6). That finding is an official assessment, not an adjudicated fact, and is treated as such here.

2.3 The official record

The United Kingdom

Organisations associated with the Muslim Brotherhood were established in the United Kingdom, and elsewhere in Europe, more than fifty years before the 2015 review, mainly by exiles and overseas students. In their earliest phase they were not politically active in the United Kingdom. Their priorities were "to recruit and educate new members (through study groups) and support the Muslim Brotherhood in the Arab world" (United Kingdom 2015, paras. 20–21). In the late 1980s and early 1990s, the review found, the movement and its associates developed "a new strategy of domestic engagement in western countries" (United Kingdom 2015, para. 22).

In the 1990s they "established public facing and apparently national organisations in the UK to promote their views. None were openly identified with the Muslim Brotherhood and membership of the Muslim Brotherhood remained (and still remains) a secret." The review's wording is that "for some years the Muslim Brotherhood shaped the new Islamic Society of Britain (ISB), dominated the Muslim Association of Britain (MAB) and played an important role in establishing and then running the Muslim Council of Britain (MCB)" (United Kingdom 2015, para. 23). The same paragraph records that MAB "were active partners in a security dialogue with the police and collaborated with the police in ejecting" a militant Salafist preacher from a mosque in north London (United Kingdom 2015, para. 23). The Muslim Council of Britain "sought and obtained a dialogue with Government" (United Kingdom 2015, para. 23). In 2009 "the then government suspended dialogue with the MCB after an office holder signed a public document which appeared to condone violence against any country supporting an arms blockade against Gaza." The review recorded that there had been "no substantive dialogue since then between any part of the Brotherhood in the UK and Government" (United Kingdom 2015, para. 24). The MCB rejected these findings on the day of publication. It said that no single organisation dominated its founding, that

relations with government "resumed in late 2009/early 2010", and that it has "no affiliation to the Muslim Brotherhood or any other foreign organisation" (Muslim Council of Britain 2015). It added that the Islamic Society of Britain, like the Muslim Association of Britain, was "one of the many founding affiliates of the MCB" and is represented on its National Council (Muslim Council of Britain 2015).

The review also found that "Muslim Brotherhood associates and affiliates here have at times had significant influence on the largest UK Muslim student organisation, national organisations which have claimed to represent Muslim communities (and on that basis have sought and had a dialogue with Government), charities and some mosques." It added that, though their domestic influence had declined, "organisations associated with the Muslim Brotherhood continue to have an influence here which is disproportionate to their size" (United Kingdom 2015, para. 39). A "complex network of charities associated with the Muslim Brotherhood has developed here over many years." The review noted that Interpal, a UK charity, was designated a terrorist entity by the US Treasury in 2003, "primarily on the grounds of alleged links to Hamas", and that it had been investigated three times by the Charity Commission, which took regulatory action against it in 2009 (United Kingdom 2015, para. 30). The Commission's 2003 inquiry cleared the charity, stating that the US had not substantiated its claim (Casciani 2005). Its 2009 inquiry found that "BBC material suggesting that some of Interpal's partner organisations may be promoting terrorist ideology or activities" was "of insufficient evidential value", but directed the charity's trustees to end the charity's relationship with the Union for Good (Holmwood 2009). Interpal has also obtained a retraction and apology from the Board of Deputies of British Jews (Casciani 2005). Interpal's trustees also received an apology and damages in the High Court on 22 July 2010 from Express Newspapers, publisher of the Sunday Express, over a website article that had described Interpal as 'Hamas-supporting'; the publisher accepted that the words were incorrect and withdrew them (Carter-Ruck 2010a; 2010b). More generally, the review concluded that, "though never publicly acknowledged by the Muslim Brotherhood[,] charities in the UK are an important part of the Hamas and Brotherhood infrastructure in this country" (United Kingdom 2015, para. 30).

The same official account records later distance as well as entry. Since 2001, it found, the Islamic Society of Britain "has distanced itself from the Muslim Brotherhood and Muslim Brotherhood ideology and also from the MCB," and "has consciously set out to try to promote a British Muslim identity and to support British values", and "can lay some claim to be the first post Islamist organisation which has emerged from the UK Brotherhood movement" (United Kingdom 2015, para. 28). By mid-2014 the Muslim Association of Britain "appears much less active than it was between 2002 and 2006," claimed a membership of 600, and maintained eight welfare houses and associated mosques, with nine UK branches (United Kingdom 2015, para. 27). The review also found that the Muslim Brotherhood "has not been linked to terrorist related activity in and against the UK", and that "the Muslim Brotherhood in the UK (eg MAB) has often condemned terrorist related activity in the UK associated with al Qai'da" (United Kingdom 2015, para. 36). Those qualifications belong in the same paragraphs as the findings of influence. They are part of the official record, not a later softening of it.

Read against the Egyptian pattern, the UK material shows the first two stages more clearly than the third: a long period of study circles and member formation, then public-facing bodies that sought, and for a time obtained, a consultative relationship with government, together with a charitable infrastructure. The political prize it describes is influence, not office.

France

The French interior ministry's report of May 2025 (the PDF is dated 2 May 2025; the report was made public on 21 May 2025) identifies Musulmans de France, which began as the Union des organisations islamiques en France, became the Union des organisations islamiques de France in 1989 and took its present name in 2017, as "the national branch of the Muslim Brotherhood in France" (Ministère de l'Intérieur 2025, 40; translated from "identifiée comme la branche nationale des Frères musulmans en

France"). The report counts 139 places of worship affiliated to Musulmans de France, and a further 68 considered close to the federation, across 55 departments, or 7 per cent of the 2,800 Muslim places of worship recorded in France. It also records that 45 of the 447 places of worship opened between 2010 and 2020, or 10 per cent, affiliated to Musulmans de France (Ministère de l'Intérieur 2025, 40). The restricted circle of the French branch is estimated, "according to attentive observers of the milieu," at 400 sworn members, and at a maximum of 1,000 people (Ministère de l'Intérieur 2025, 40). The report further refers to 280 associations attached to the milieu, operating "in a multitude of sectors that frame the life of the Muslim" – worship, but also charitable work, schooling, professional life, youth and finance (Ministère de l'Intérieur 2025, 40).

The report offers "une évaluation de la menace que peuvent représenter Musulmans de France et ses satellites" (an evaluation of the threat that Musulmans de France and its satellites may represent), focused on preaching, education and charitable work (Ministère de l'Intérieur 2025, 7). On the institutional side, it finds, as the ministry's assessment, that representatives of Musulmans de France "remain largely present in the institutional game" of the Muslim faith in France (Ministère de l'Intérieur 2025, 42; translated from "restent largement présents dans le jeu institutionnel"). Musulmans de France rejected the report's claims. In a statement reported by AFP on 21 May 2025, it called them "accusations infondées" (unfounded accusations) and said: "Nous rejetons fermement toute allégation qui tenterait de nous associer à un projet politique étranger, ou à une stratégie d'entrisme" (We firmly reject any allegation that would try to associate us with a foreign political project, or with a strategy of entryism) (Le Parisien 2025; franceinfo 2025; centre translation). The report dates the founding of the Association des étudiants islamiques de France (AEIF) to 1963 (Ministère de l'Intérieur 2025, 14). These are the ministry's assessments, not court findings, and they are cited as such.

The parallel with Egypt is the order of the work, not a claim that France stands where Egypt stood in 2011. A closed core, a wider set of associations in worship, education and charity, and a continuing place in official consultation are the same sequence that, in Egypt, occupied the decades before any bid for the state.

Germany

Germany's Federal Office for the Protection of the Constitution, in its report for the year 2025, published on 30 June 2026, describes "many Islamist organisations" as pursuing "their religious-political goals with a long-term, sustained and comprehensive strategy" and seeking "targeted contact with essential political and social levels – from municipal politics and public services to national and international political initiatives", and counts the Muslim Brotherhood among "the significant actors of strategic Islamism" in Germany (Bundesamt für Verfassungsschutz 2026, 251–52). In the same report's structure table, the Muslim Brotherhood / Deutsche Muslimische Gemeinschaft e.V. is given a strength of 1,450 members or supporters in each of 2023, 2024 and 2025 (Bundesamt für Verfassungsschutz 2026, 229).

The entry for the Muslim Brotherhood states that it is "regarded as the oldest and most influential Sunni Islamist movement," that it is, on its own account, present in more than 70 countries, and that its aim, "still shaped today by the ideology of its founder Hasan al-Banna, is the establishment of a political and social system on the basis of the Qur'an and the Sunna" (Bundesamt für Verfassungsschutz 2026, 271). On the German organisation the report's wording is as follows. "The Deutsche Muslimische Gemeinschaft e.V. (DMG) is the most important and central organisation of the Muslim Brotherhood following in Germany. It pursues a strategy of influence in the political and social sphere, aligned with Muslim Brotherhood ideology. Despite a recognisable decline in its public engagement, the DMG holds to its goals: among other things, it seeks, vis-à-vis politics, authorities and civil-society partners, to appear as the interlocutor of a supposedly moderate, cosmopolitan Islam." It adds that "numerous connections between high-ranking DMG functionaries and prominent foreign Muslim Brothers nevertheless make clear the organisation's belonging to the worldwide Muslim Brotherhood network," and that the DMG "maintains its

own mosques and, on its own account, also cooperates with further congregations" (Bundesamt für Verfassungsschutz 2026, 271). A footnote to the strength figure states that it includes 350 members of the Deutsche Muslimische Gemeinschaft e.V. (Bundesamt für Verfassungsschutz 2026, 271n122). The same entry states that the Muslim Brotherhood has "since the 1970s… postulated the renunciation of violence, though resistance to 'occupation', which the MB relates above all to Israel, is excluded from this" (Bundesamt für Verfassungsschutz 2026, 271). These sentences follow the official German text and are the service's assessment.

Here too the official finding is about influence, not office: a mosque infrastructure, a claim to speak for a moderate Islam, and a long-term attempt to become the partner of public authorities.

Austria and Sweden

Austria's measures, including the Islamgesetz 2015 and the work of the Documentation Centre for Political Islam, are covered in Part Three's account of how bans have played out (section 3.2). Vidino's 2017 study of the movement in Austria was produced by George Washington University's Program on Extremism in cooperation with the University of Vienna's Institute of Near Eastern Studies, with support from Austria's domestic intelligence agency (BVT) and the Austrian Integration Fund, and it was later drawn on in the Operation Luxor case, in which the Graz appeal court ruled against the authorities (Vidino 2017).

In Sweden, a 2017 report for the Swedish Civil Contingencies Agency describes the movement's presence in Swedish civil society (Norell, Carlbom and Durrani 2017). The report was criticised in an open letter from scholars in March 2017, so it is used here only for background. The French report lists Sweden, with the United Kingdom, Germany and Austria, among the countries where the European dimension of the subject is felt (Ministère de l'Intérieur 2025, 6).

2.4 Which stage has the West reached?

Centre's assessment. Measured against the Egyptian sequence, the official record in the United Kingdom, France and Germany shows the first two stages more clearly than the third. There are documented findings of closed membership, of charitable, educational and mosque-based work, and of organisations that have sought, and in some cases obtained, a place as consultees of government or as partners in the institutional life of Muslim communities. There is no official finding, in the reports cited here, that any of these networks is close to winning executive power in a Western state. The risk this paper identifies, and that Part Three will take up, is of a different kind: lasting influence over the bodies that governments treat as representative, fund, or ask for advice, built by the same patient methods that, in Egypt, preceded the year in power. That is an assessment by the centre, grounded in the official reporting above and in the Egyptian pattern set out in Part One. It is not a claim that the West is Egypt, or that the next stage is inevitable.

In practical terms, decisive influence would mean a say over which voices speak for Muslim communities, which organisations receive public money, and how governments define extremism itself. Part Three sets out the routes by which that could, or could not, come about by 2040.

Part Three. Two futures to 2040

Every forecast in this part is the centre's assessment. Facts underneath each forecast are sourced; the forecasts themselves are not, and should not be read as predictions stated as fact.

3.1 Method

This part uses scenario analysis as set out in the UK Government Office for Science's *Futures Toolkit* (Government Office for Science 2024). We identified the two drivers that are both most important to the outcome and most uncertain, and used them as the axes of a matrix:

- **Western policy:** short-term and fragmented (measures that change with each government, differ between states and react to single events), against sustained and conduct-based (measures that outlast elections and target specific conduct rather than belief or identity).
- **Movement cohesion:** a central organisation with recognisable leadership, against dispersed and deniable fronts.

The four quadrants of the matrix collapse into the three routes this paper uses, and those routes lead to two end states. For each route we set out drivers, early warning signs and a rough timeline, with three horizons: 2026–2030, 2030–2035 and 2035–2040.

Table 2. The scenario matrix: two drivers and the routes they produce (centre's assessment)

	Movement stays cohesive	**Movement disperses into fronts**
Western policy short-term and fragmented	Route A: Drift	Route B: Ban and adapt
Western policy sustained and conduct-based	Route C: Resilient democracy (cohesive movement contained in the open)	Route C: Resilient democracy (dispersed movement denied new footholds)

Why these two axes. Many factors will shape the movement's future in the West, including demographics, events in the Middle East and the state of Western politics in general. Most of these either cannot be influenced by Western governments or will move in a broadly known direction. The two axes chosen here differ on both counts. Western policy is the factor governments control directly. Movement cohesion is the factor that most changes how hard the movement is to see and to answer, and Egypt shows that it can move sharply in either direction within a few years. The Muslim Brotherhood's party won 46 per cent of the vote in the 2011–12 parliamentary elections (BBC News 2012a) and its candidate won the 2012 presidential run-off (BBC News 2012b), yet the same organisation had split into rival factions by 2021 (Ardovini 2022b; Fulco and Abdelgawad 2025).

How the routes connect to the Egyptian timeline. Part Two measured Western networks against the three stages al-Banna set out in the Fifth Conference letter (section 1.1). His *Risālat al-taʿālīm* glosses them more starkly: taʿrīf, "spreading the general idea among people"; takwīn, "selecting the elements fit to bear the burdens of jihad and binding them together"; and tanfīdh, "jihad without respite" (al-Banna n.d.b, 311–12). For brevity, the table calls them making the message known, forming members and putting the project into effect. The stages are used here as an analytical yardstick drawn from the movement's own text, not as evidence that any Western body follows them. The table shows where each stage sits in Egypt, what it would look like in the West, and which route lets it advance.

Table 3. Al-Banna's stages, the Egyptian record and the routes that let each stage advance in the West

Stage	**What it looked like in Egypt**	**What it would look like in the West (centre's assessment)**	**Route that lets it advance**
Making the message known (taʿrīf)	Preaching, publishing and welfare work from 1928 onwards (Mitchell 1969; United Kingdom 2015, para. 8; Ministère de l'Intérieur 2025, 10)	Preaching, education and charitable work, the areas the French report identifies (Ministère de l'Intérieur 2025, 7)	All three; it is lawful activity
Forming members (takwīn)	Closed membership built over decades (Mitchell 1969; Wickham 2015; United Kingdom 2015, para. 9; Ministère de l'Intérieur 2025, 19)	"membership of the Muslim Brotherhood remained (and still remains) a secret" (United Kingdom 2015, para. 23)	Routes A and B; Route B pushes it further underground

Stage	What it looked like in Egypt	What it would look like in the West (centre's assessment)	Route that lets it advance
Putting the project into effect (tanfīdh)	The year in power, 30 June 2012 to 3 July 2013 (BBC News 2013g)	Decisive influence over community representation, funding and advisory roles (End state 1)	Route A

Part Two found that the official record in the United Kingdom, France and Germany shows the first two stages more clearly than the third. Part Three asks which policy choices would allow the move to the third.

3.2 How bans have played out so far

The scenarios in this part rest on a simple question: when states have tried to stop the Muslim Brotherhood, what actually happened? Five cases give an answer. Taken together, they show that bans and raids disrupt the organisation but rarely end it, and that measures which reach beyond provable conduct tend to lose in court.

Egypt from December 2013: the ban at full strength

Egypt is the hardest test, because it is the case where the state used everything it had. On the evening of 25 December 2013 the Cabinet announced in a statement that it had declared the Muslim Brotherhood a terrorist group, and its organisation a terrorist organisation, within the meaning of article 86 of the Penal Code. The statement set out the consequences: the penalties for terrorism would apply to anyone who took part in the group's activities, promoted it or financed it, and to anyone who remained a member after the statement (Al-Masry Al-Youm 2013b; BBC News 2013i). This was a Cabinet statement, not a gazetted law, and no Gazette text was found. The Cabinet's step built on an earlier court ruling. On 23 September 2013 the Cairo Court of Urgent Matters (case 2315 of 2013) banned the group's activities and placed its assets under conservatorship. The ban covered the Muslim Brotherhood organisation, group and association, and any body branching from them, funded or supported by them, or receiving donations and having one of their members. The conservatorship extended to the assets of persons belonging to them, and the court directed the Council of Ministers to form an independent committee to manage those assets until final judgments were given (Cairo Court of Urgent Matters 2013). Prime Minister's Decree no. 1141 of 2013 set up that committee (Egypt 2013). In the days before the Cabinet statement, the bank accounts of 1,055 associations and branches were frozen under the court ruling of 23 September 2013 and the government committee formed to implement it. Some of these associations, but not all, were said to be linked to the Muslim Brotherhood (Al-Masry Al-Youm 2013a; EIPR 2014; BBC News Arabic 2013). On 24 February 2014 the Cairo Court of Urgent Matters (First Circuit, case 3343 of 2013) ruled, in an urgent matter, that "the banned Muslim Brotherhood group is a terrorist organisation" (Cairo Court of Urgent Matters 2014; centre translation). Egyptian official acts are cited here only for what the state decided and when, not as evidence of how the Muslim Brotherhood behaved.

What it stopped. The ban ended the Muslim Brotherhood's open presence in Egyptian politics. *The centre's assessment:* it also dismantled much of its social infrastructure inside the country.

How the movement adapted. Its leadership moved abroad. The exiled leadership rebuilt its institutions in Istanbul and kept an international network run from London (Ardovini 2022b; Fulco and Abdelgawad 2025). Exile did not bring renewal. Ardovini (2021; 2022a) finds that the old guard chose stagnation over adaptation, and that the gap between the leadership and younger members widened. In 2021 those tensions broke into an open split between rival camps centred on London and Istanbul, each claiming the authority of the acting General Guide (Fulco and Abdelgawad 2025).

What failed. The freeze was cast so widely that it hit services the poor relied on. The BBC reported fears for the millions who relied on the frozen associations' services, and the interim president exempted the Egyptian Food Bank from the freeze (BBC News Arabic 2013). The freeze also fell on charities whose links to the Muslim Brotherhood were disputed (EIPR 2014; BBC News Arabic 2013). *The centre's assessment:* Egypt does not offer a civil-liberties model the West can copy, and the paper should not present it as one. Its lesson is narrower. A ban does not break a movement that has already built a transnational structure, but it can split one.

Austria: funding rules that held, a raid that collapsed

Austria tried two different tools, and they had very different results.

The first was the Islamgesetz 2015 (BGBl. I Nr. 39/2015). Section 6(2) requires that the ordinary religious activity of Islamic religious societies be funded at home. In 2019 the Constitutional Court upheld the rule as a justified interference under Article 9(2) of the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR). It read the rule narrowly, though, as barring funding from foreign states and their institutions but not from private foreign donors who do not threaten a community's independence (VfGH 2019). The second tool was the Documentation Centre for Political Islam (Dokumentationsstelle Politischer Islam), set up in July 2020 as an independent federal fund to research and document the field, without any power to enforce (Bundeskanzleramt 2020).

Operation Luxor was different in kind. On 9 November 2020, a week after the Vienna terror attack, some 930 police officers searched homes, businesses and association premises in four federal provinces. About 70 people were under investigation on suspicion of terrorist financing and forming a terrorist organisation, and assets worth "millions" were frozen (Kronen Zeitung 2021; ORF Steiermark 2021). In August 2021 the Higher Regional Court of Graz (Oberlandesgericht Graz) upheld all nine complaints that had reached it and found the searches unlawful for want of sufficient suspicion. It held that the Muslim Brotherhood could not, on the evidence, be treated as a homogeneous worldwide terrorist organisation, and that attributing someone to it "on the basis of conjecture and vague indications" could not justify coercive measures (Die Presse 2021). In July 2022 the same court held that account inspections and surveillance of an association had also been unlawful, and ordered the results destroyed. It said that an expert study by Lorenzo Vidino, and testimony based on it, did not establish suspicion against that association (Der Standard 2022; Die Presse 2022). Answering a parliamentary question in April 2023, the Federal Minister of Justice reported that more than 70 natural persons and 22 legal persons had been investigated, that the Higher Regional Court of Graz had found about 30 of the court-approved coercive orders unlawful or in breach of the law, and that proceedings had so far been discontinued for about 35 suspects, and that the investigation was still being conducted against more than 60 known natural and legal persons and one unknown suspect (Bundesministerin für Justiz 2023).

What it stopped. The funding rule survived constitutional review (VfGH 2019). *The centre's assessment:* it cut off direct foreign-state financing of imams and mosque associations.

How the movement adapted. This is not documented to evidential standard. The paper should not claim it.

What failed. Luxor failed in court, and it failed because it treated membership of a broad movement as evidence of terrorism. Vidino's 2017 study of the Muslim Brotherhood in Austria, produced in cooperation with the University of Vienna's Institute of Near Eastern Studies and with support from the Austrian Integration Fund (ÖIF) and the BVT, Austria's then domestic intelligence agency, remains usable for what it argues. Where the paper cites it, it notes that the Graz court declined to treat it as proof of a terrorist suspicion (Vidino 2017; Der Standard 2022).

France: a law about conduct, and a report about networks

France chose to regulate conduct rather than designate the Muslim Brotherhood. Loi n° 2021-1109 of 24 August 2021 does three relevant things. Article 12 requires any association or foundation that applies for a public subsidy to sign a republican commitment contract (contrat d'engagement républicain), with the subsidy withdrawn if the contract is broken. Article 16 widened the grounds on which the government may dissolve an association under Article L. 212-1 of the Internal Security Code. Article 77 requires religious associations to declare foreign funding above a threshold that the implementing decree set at €15,300 a year (Loi n° 2021-1109; Décret n° 2022-619).

What it stopped. According to the Ministry of the Interior's report *Frères musulmans et islamisme politique en France* (PDF dated 2 May 2025, made public 21 May 2025), the 2021 law allowed the state to penalise endowment funds for missing transparency filings. It records the judicial dissolution of the Al-Wakf endowment fund by the Bobigny court on 4 July 2024, describing it as the most important fund of the national "mouvance" (Ministère de l'Intérieur 2025). The report identifies Musulmans de France, known until 2017 as the Union des organisations islamiques de France, as "la branche nationale des Frères musulmans en France" (Ministère de l'Intérieur 2025). That is the ministry's assessment, not a court finding.

How the movement adapted. Musulmans de France rejected the report's claims. In a statement reported by AFP on 21 May 2025, it called them "accusations infondées" (unfounded accusations) and said: "Nous rejetons fermement toute allégation qui tenterait de nous associer à un projet politique étranger, ou à une stratégie d'entrisme" (We firmly reject any allegation that would try to associate us with a foreign political project, or with a strategy of entryism) (Le Parisien 2025; franceinfo 2025; centre translation). The report records that Musulmans de France has said it is pulling back from its non-religious activities and refocusing on worship. The report doubts this, noting the organisation's own admission that it cannot set up separate structures (Ministère de l'Intérieur 2025). It also says officials hold back for fear of "victim" reactions in the media, and concludes that, despite the 2021 law, "les effets escomptés ne semblent pas suffisants" (Ministère de l'Intérieur 2025). Bergeaud-Blackler's (2023) account of a decentralised "frérisme" supports the report's picture of influence without formal membership. Her work is contested by other scholars, however, and the paper should lean on the official report instead.

What failed on civil-liberties grounds. Of the law's provisions on associations, the Constitutional Council struck down only the power to suspend an association's activities pending its dissolution, for up to three months renewable once, as an interference with freedom of association that was not necessary, appropriate and proportionate (Conseil constitutionnel 2021, paras. 44–47). It upheld the commitment contract, but held, as a reservation, that a withdrawn subsidy cannot be clawed back for any period before the breach (Conseil constitutionnel 2021, paras. 25, 27). *The centre's assessment:* dissolutions grounded in documented conduct are the ones most likely to stand. The Council of State upheld the 2020 dissolution of the Collectif contre l'islamophobie en France, citing its publications and statements as provocation to discrimination, hatred or violence. It also found that one of the government's grounds, provocation to terrorism, had been wrongly applied (Conseil d'État 2021). A challenge to that dissolution was communicated to France by the European Court of Human Rights on 9 January 2023. HUDOC listed no judgment or decision in the case as at 19 November 2026 (ECtHR 2023).

United States: designation by chapter

Executive Order 14362, signed on 24 November 2025, "sets in motion a process" for considering chapters of the Muslim Brotherhood for designation, naming those in Lebanon, Jordan and Egypt. It required a report within 30 days and action within 45 days of the report (Executive Office of the President 2025). The order designated no one itself. The designations came later. The Lebanese Muslim Brotherhood was named a Foreign Terrorist Organisation and a Specially Designated Global Terrorist in notices published

on 14 January 2026 (Department of State 2026a; 2026b; US Department of State, Office of the Spokesman 2026). The Egyptian and Jordanian chapters were designated Specially Designated Global Terrorists, as announced by the US Treasury on 13 January 2026. The Treasury release records that OFAC designated them under Executive Order 13224 for material support to Hamas (US Treasury 2026; Rubio 2026). The Sudanese Muslim Brotherhood followed in notices published on 16 March 2026 (Department of State 2026c; 2026d).

What it stopped. The designations block US-linked property and bar transactions with the designated chapters. Only the Lebanese and Sudanese designations were published as Federal Register notices; the Egyptian and Jordanian designations were made by OFAC under Executive Order 13224 and announced by Treasury (US Treasury 2026).

How the movement adapted, and what failed. It is too early to say on either count. The centre found no federal court ruling against the 2026 designations as at 19 November 2026. Legally, the US approach is narrower than it looks. It targets named foreign chapters on grounds of terrorist support, and does not touch the Muslim Brotherhood as an ideology or Western bodies as such.

United Kingdom: review, definition, regulator

The *Muslim Brotherhood Review: Main Findings* (HC 679, 17 December 2015) concluded that "aspects of Muslim Brotherhood ideology and tactics… are contrary to our values and have been contrary to our national interests and our national security." It also found that the Muslim Brotherhood "has not been linked to terrorist related activity in and against the UK", and that "the Muslim Brotherhood in the UK (eg MAB) has often condemned terrorist related activity in the UK associated with al Qai'da" (United Kingdom 2015). The government did not proscribe the Muslim Brotherhood. On 14 March 2024 it published a non-statutory definition of extremism, together with engagement standards for deciding whom central government meets, funds or platforms, including due diligence for public appointments. The definition creates no new criminal powers (DLUHC 2024a). The Charity Commission can open inquiries, issue official warnings and disqualify trustees. On 14 October 2026 the government launched a consultation on widening its powers to disqualify trustees in cases of extremism (DCMS 2026).

What it stopped, how the movement adapted, what failed. The UK model works through access. It denies extremist groups government engagement and charitable status, and it leaves association itself free. It has not been tested in court as a policy toward the Muslim Brotherhood. The 2024 guidance said the Secretary of State would "in due course publish a list" of organisations and groups that, in his opinion, meet the definition, and a May 2024 privacy notice repeated that commitment (DLUHC 2024b; MHCLG and DLUHC 2024). The centre found no such list on GOV.UK as at 19 November 2026.

Cross-case finding (the centre's assessment). Measures tied to specific, provable conduct, such as unfiled accounts, foreign-state money, incitement and terrorist financing, have survived review. Measures that treated affiliation itself as the offence, as in Luxor and Egypt's mass freeze, either failed in court or imposed heavy collateral costs. Germany's domestic intelligence service shows a middle path. It keeps the Muslim Brotherhood under observation without a ban, describes the Muslim Brotherhood's main German organisation as the most important and central organisation of its following in Germany, and puts that following at 1,450, including 350 members of that organisation (Bundesamt für Verfassungsschutz 2026, pp. 229, 271 n. 122).

3.3 The two end states

End state 1: the movement gains power or decisive influence. In Western democracies this does not mean winning national government. It means decisive influence over the institutions that matter most for the movement's long-term goals: the bodies governments consult on Muslim communities, the channels through which public money reaches community organisations, advisory roles on integration, education and extremism, and a foothold in local and national politics.

The record of 2012–13 is set out below. Morsi took office on 30 June 2012 (BBC News 2013g). Less than five months later, the constitutional declaration issued on 21 November and announced on 22 November 2012 banned challenges to his decrees, laws and decisions and barred any court from dissolving the constituent assembly (Egypt 2012a; BBC News 2012d). A constitution followed, approved in a two-stage referendum on 15 and 22 December 2012 by 63.8 per cent of those who voted, on a turnout of 32.9 per cent (BBC News 2012g). By 17 June 2013 "the Brotherhood and its allies" controlled 13 of Egypt's 27 governorships (BBC News 2013d). On 3 July 2013, after mass protests, the army removed Morsi and suspended the constitution (BBC News 2013g).

Centre's assessment. Egypt in 2012–13 shows what the movement does with power once it has it, and how fast it moves. Eighty-four years of slow building were followed by a single year in which the movement moved quickly to lock in its position. The lesson for the West lies in that difference of speed. Influence builds slowly and is rarely contested in the open, but once the movement reaches a decisive position it uses it quickly, before its opponents can organise. In a Western setting, the harm would be gradual and quiet. It would show up as the capture of community representation, pressure on dissenting Muslims, especially women and minorities within Muslim communities, and the shaping of public policy on extremism by those it is meant to scrutinise. Once established, this influence is hard to reverse, because the institutions involved are publicly funded and politically sensitive to challenge.

End state 2: the movement does not gain power. This is the better outcome and the one this paper recommends. The movement remains a lawful participant in public life but is denied privileged access to public money, consultation and advisory roles unless it meets the same standards of transparency and conduct as any other group. After 2013 the Egyptian movement moved its leadership abroad and split (Ardovini 2022b; Fulco and Abdelgawad 2025). **Centre's assessment.** Egypt after 2013 suggests that, under sustained pressure, the movement fragments, loses momentum and turns its energy inward. The task for Western democracies is to achieve that effect lawfully, without the repression that marked Egypt after 2013 and without the judicial failures of cases such as Austria's Operation Luxor (section 3.2).

3.4 Route A: Drift (leads to End state 1)

What it looks like. Governments respond to events rather than to the long-term pattern. Due diligence on community partners is uneven, foreign funding remains opaque, and each new government resets policy. No single decision causes harm. The harm comes from many small decisions made without a view of the whole.

Drivers.

1. *Short political cycles against a long organisational horizon.* The movement took 84 years to go from its founding in 1928 to the Egyptian presidency in 2012 (United Kingdom 2015, para. 8; BBC News 2013g). Western policy on the movement, by contrast, has tended to change with each government and each report.

2. *Dependence on a few organised community bodies.* The UK review found that movement associates had "at times had significant influence on… national organisations which have claimed to represent Muslim communities (and on that basis have sought and had a dialogue with Government)" (United Kingdom 2015, para. 39). Governments that need a single interlocutor will keep turning to the best-organised one.

3. *Weak cross-border tracing of money.* The French report identifies preaching, education and charitable work as the main fields in which Musulmans de France and its satellites are active (Ministère de l'Intérieur 2025, 7). In the centre's assessment, these are the activities where funding is hardest to follow. The UK review described a "complex network of charities associated with the Muslim Brotherhood" built up "over many years" (United Kingdom 2015, para. 30).

4. *Reluctance to scrutinise faith-based bodies.* **Centre's assessment.** Fear of being accused of discrimination leads officials to apply lighter due diligence to faith-based partners than to secular ones. This is the driver most likely to persist, because it is cultural, not legal.

Evidence. In Egypt, the movement took 84 years to go from its founding to power (United Kingdom 2015, para. 8; BBC News 2013g). The UK review found that, though their domestic influence had declined, "organisations associated with the Muslim Brotherhood continue to have an influence here which is disproportionate to their size" (United Kingdom 2015, para. 39). The French ministry assessed that representatives of Musulmans de France "remain largely present in the institutional game" of the Muslim faith in France (Ministère de l'Intérieur 2025, 42). These are official assessments, not court findings.

Early warning signs.

- The same small set of organisations repeatedly selected to speak for Muslim communities in government consultations.
- Public funding to community bodies without published due diligence or beneficial-ownership checks.
- Movement-linked individuals in advisory roles on extremism, education or integration without conflict-of-interest declarations.
- Coordinated campaigns to redefine official terminology on extremism or "Islamism".
- Growth of foreign-funded endowments and property holdings that regulators cannot trace to source.
- Official reviews published but not followed by any change in practice within two years.

Timeline (centre's assessment).

- *2026–2027:* attention is high after the US designations and the French and German reports. Some governments announce reviews, but few build lasting systems.
- *2028–2030:* attention fades as other security priorities take over. Funding and consultation practices return to their earlier pattern.
- *2031–2035:* a generation of members and sympathisers educated in Western universities moves into senior professional, municipal and advisory roles. Influence grows without any public moment that would draw attention to it.
- *2036–2040:* in at least some Western states, decisive influence over community representation and parts of public funding becomes difficult to reverse without heavy political cost. This is End state 1.

What would push Route A off course (centre's assessment). A major public scandal over funding or representation, or a security event linked to movement-associated bodies, would most likely trigger Route B, not Route C, because the response would be driven by events.

3.5 Route B: Ban and adapt (holds the movement back, but carries risks)

What it looks like. States act through designations and bans, often in response to a single event or a change of government, without a sustained framework behind them.

Drivers.

1. *Political pressure for visible action.* Bans and designations are quick to announce and easy to explain.

2. *The US designation process.* Executive Order 14362 of 24 November 2025 started the process, and designations of the Lebanese, Egyptian, Jordanian and Sudanese chapters followed in January and March 2026 (Executive Office of the President 2025; section 3.2). **Centre's assessment.** These measures put pressure on allies to act in parallel, though European legal systems set a higher bar for banning non-violent bodies.

3. *The example of Egypt.* Between September and December 2013 the Egyptian state moved from a court ban on the movement's activities, through the conservatorship of its assets, to declaring it a terrorist group (section 3.2). Within three months, the state had moved from a court ban to a terrorist designation.

Evidence. After 2013, the Egyptian movement moved its leadership abroad, adopted survival strategies, and split in 2021 (Ardovini 2022b; Fulco and Abdelgawad 2025). The ban did not end the movement. It changed where it lived and how it worked. In Europe, outright bans on non-violent movements are legally fragile under the European Convention on Human Rights, and Austria's Operation Luxor shows how weakly founded action can collapse in court (section 3.2).

What the movement is likely to do (centre's assessment).

- **Rebrand:** renaming organisations and dropping explicit references to the movement.
- **Split into deniable fronts:** spreading activity across small, legally separate bodies with no visible link.
- **Go quiet:** shifting from public institutions to informal circles, family networks and online spaces.
- **Use the language of victimhood:** presenting bans as proof of discrimination against Muslims, to win sympathy from mainstream Muslim opinion and from parts of the Western left.
- **Move base:** relocating leadership and funds to more permissive jurisdictions, as it did from Egypt after 2013.
- **Lose control of its fringe:** a smaller, angrier periphery may drift towards violent groups once the organisation's discipline weakens.

Early warning signs.

- New associations registered by individuals previously active in banned bodies.
- Sudden drop in the public profile of known organisations without a matching drop in activity.
- Court defeats for government measures used in campaigns claiming persecution.
- Transfers of assets or registration to other jurisdictions.
- Divergence between allies, with one state banning and its neighbours not, creating safe havens next door.

Timeline (centre's assessment).

- *2026–2027:* further designations and bans in states under US pressure or after domestic events. Visible disruption of known bodies.
- *2028–2030:* reorganisation. First court challenges are decided, and any government defeat becomes a campaigning asset for the movement.
- *2031–2035:* rebuilt networks under new names, harder to identify than before. Official knowledge of the movement falls behind its new structure.
- *2036–2040:* the route splits. If attention fades, the rebuilt networks drift back towards End state 1, now better hidden. If bans are folded into a sustained framework, the route converges with Route C.

What would push Route B off course (centre's assessment). A significant court defeat for a flagship ban, or a new government that reverses its predecessor's measures, would return the situation to Route A, with a movement that has learned to operate under pressure.

3.6 Route C: Resilient democracy (leads to End state 2)

What it looks like. States build a sustained, conduct-based framework that outlasts changes of government. It targets what organisations do, not what their members believe: how they are funded, whether they are transparent about their links, and whether they respect the democratic order when they take public money or public roles.

Drivers.

1. *Cross-party agreement on a small number of durable rules.* **Centre's assessment.** Rules that both main parties accept are the only ones likely to survive two or more changes of government, which is the minimum the movement's time horizon requires.

2. *Existing legal models.* France's 2021 law on respect for the principles of the Republic includes a contract associations sign before they receive public funds (Loi n° 2021-1109, art. 12). Austria's 2015 Islam Act requires the ordinary religious activities of Islamic communities to be funded from within Austria (Islamgesetz 2015, § 6(2)).

3. *Better official knowledge.* France, Germany and the United Kingdom already publish official assessments of the movement (Ministère de l'Intérieur 2025; Bundesamt für Verfassungsschutz 2026; United Kingdom 2015). Regular, comparable reporting would let governments see change over time rather than in single snapshots.

4. *European cooperation on funding transparency.* **Centre's assessment.** Because the movement operates across borders, a rule applied in one state can be avoided by moving money or registration to the next. Shared standards close that gap.

Evidence. The French and Austrian laws above. After 2013 the Egyptian movement moved its leadership abroad and split (Ardovini 2022b; Fulco and Abdelgawad 2025). **Centre's assessment.** That record suggests sustained pressure breaks up the movement's cohesion. Route C aims to get the same effect by lawful, proportionate means.

What the movement is likely to do (centre's assessment). It will test the rules in court and in public debate, and parts of it will adapt by meeting the standards required. Others will withdraw from public funding and consultation rather than accept transparency. Over time, without privileged access, the movement's claim to speak for Muslim communities weakens, and other voices take up the space.

Early warning signs that the route is working.

- A wider and more varied set of Muslim voices in government consultation.
- Published due diligence and beneficial-ownership data for publicly funded community bodies.
- Measures that survive court challenge and changes of government.
- Declining reach of campaigns that present transparency rules as persecution.

Early warning signs that the route is failing.

- Rules applied to Muslim bodies alone, not to all publicly funded groups, which hands the movement its discrimination argument.
- Measures repealed or left unenforced after a change of government.

Timeline (centre's assessment).

- *2026–2027:* governments agree a framework built on conduct and transparency, applying to all publicly funded civil-society bodies.
- *2028–2030:* the first measures are tested in court. Those drafted on conduct, not identity, survive.

- *2031–2035:* the rules settle into normal administrative practice and survive at least one change of government in the main states.
- *2036–2040:* the movement remains present but marginal to public institutions. This is End state 2.

What would push Route C off course (centre's assessment). A framework that targets belief or identity instead of conduct would fail in court and slide into Route B.

3.7 Early warning dashboard (centre's assessment)

The table brings together the signs that show which route a Western state is on. It is intended for annual review. The whole table, including the choice of indicators and what each entry points to, is the centre's assessment.

Table 4. Early warning dashboard (centre's assessment)

Indicator	Points to Route A (Drift)	Points to Route B (Ban and adapt)	Points to Route C (Resilient democracy)	Where to look
Who government consults on Muslim communities	The same few organised bodies, year after year	Known bodies dropped, no replacement	A wider, changing range of voices	Published consultation lists
Due diligence on publicly funded community bodies	Not published	Ad hoc, after scandals	Published and applied to all groups	Funders' and regulators' reports
Foreign funding of religious and community bodies	Untraced	Banned in part, then rerouted	Disclosed under a general rule	Charity and association registers
Official reporting on the movement	One-off reviews with no follow-up	Reports tied to single events	Regular, comparable reporting	Interior ministries and security services
Court outcomes of government measures	Few measures tested	Repeated government defeats	Measures upheld	Court records
Policy after a change of government	Reset	Reversed or widened suddenly	Kept	Legislation and guidance
Registration of new bodies by people from banned ones	Not applicable	Rising	Low, and visible when it happens	Association registers
Advisory roles on extremism, education and integration	No conflict-of-interest rules	Purges after scandals	Declarations required for all	Appointment records

3.8 Wild cards (centre's assessment)

Some events are unlikely in any given year but would change the route a state is on if they happened. They are listed here so that governments can plan for them instead of reacting. All are the centre's assessment.

- **A terrorist attack by people from the movement's fringe.** Route B warns that bans can loosen the organisation's hold on its periphery. An attack carried out by people who had passed through movement-linked circles would bring strong pressure for immediate bans across Europe and would push states from Route A or C into Route B almost overnight.
- **A leading court ruling against a ban or designation.** A judgment from a national constitutional court or the European Court of Human Rights that a measure against a non-violent body breached fundamental rights would limit what states can do. It would make conduct-based measures (Route C) the only realistic option and would weaken Route B across the continent.
- **A change in Egypt or in the movement's leadership in exile.** Any reconciliation between the Egyptian state and the movement, or the reunification of the factions that split in 2021, would restore central cohesion. Under the matrix in section 3.1, that would make the movement easier to see but also more capable, and would raise the stakes of Route A.
- **A change in the policy of the movement's regional supporters.** The movement relocated its leadership abroad after 2013 (Ardovini 2022b; Fulco and Abdelgawad 2025; United Kingdom 2015, para. 26). If the states that host

it withdrew their support, more of its leadership and funds would look for a base in Europe. That would raise the pressure on European regulators at the very moment they would need to be at their strongest.

- **A shift in US policy.** The US designations of 2025–26 are executive measures. A future administration could widen them to more chapters or narrow them. Either change would alter the pressure on European allies and the pace of Route B.
- **A shift in how members are recruited. Centre's assessment.** If formation of members moves further from mosques and associations into closed online groups, the indicators in the dashboard, which rely on registers and public records, would lose much of their value. Official reporting would need new methods to keep pace.

3.9 Country outlooks to 2040 (centre's assessment)

This section applies the matrix to the four Western states with the fullest official record. For each it sets out the route the state is on now, the reason, and how that is likely to change by 2040. The facts are sourced. The judgement on which route each state is on, and every forecast, is the centre's assessment.

United Kingdom: Route A, with parts of Route C in guidance only

Where it stands. The United Kingdom reviewed the movement in 2015 and did not ban it. The review found that movement associates had "at times had significant influence on… national organisations which have claimed to represent Muslim communities (and on that basis have sought and had a dialogue with Government)", and that, though their domestic influence had declined, "organisations associated with the Muslim Brotherhood continue to have an influence here which is disproportionate to their size" (United Kingdom 2015, para. 39). It found that the movement had not been linked to terrorist activity in or against the UK (para. 36), and recorded that small numbers of Brothers arrived from Egypt in 2013 and that, as of July 2014, the Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood ran some of its communications from London (paras. 25–26). The government's response since has been to control access to government, not to restrict association. The 2024 guidance promised to publish "in due course" a list of groups meeting the government's definition of extremism (section 3.2); the centre found no such list on GOV.UK as at 19 November 2026. Separately, in October 2026 the Home Office said it "does not hold a list" of organisations subject to non-engagement and takes engagement decisions "on a case-by-case basis" (UK Parliament 2026).

Why Route A. The UK has the right instinct, which is to control access rather than belief. But almost all of its approach sits in guidance, and that guidance can be withdrawn by a new government without legislation. A promised list that has not appeared after more than two years, and engagement decisions taken case by case, are the marks of drift, not of a sustained framework.

Outlook.

- *To 2030:* the UK stays on Route A unless the access rules are put on a statutory footing or given to a regulator. Each change of government brings a fresh review of engagement policy.
- *2030–2040:* if the rules stay in guidance, the bodies the 2015 review described regain their place in consultation as attention moves elsewhere, and the UK moves towards End state 1 in community representation. If the rules are put into law and applied to all publicly funded bodies, the UK can move to Route C at low cost, because it has already avoided a ban that could fail in court.

The signal to watch. Whether the access rules are put into statute or given to a regulator before the next general election.

France: closest to Route C, with Route B pressures

Where it stands. France has chosen to regulate conduct rather than designate the movement. Loi n° 2021-1109 requires associations that apply for public subsidies to sign a contract committing them to respect the principles of the Republic (Loi n° 2021-1109, art. 12). The Constitutional Council upheld that contract, holding, as a reservation, that its withdrawal cannot lead to repayment of subsidies paid for a

period before the breach, and it struck down a power to suspend an association's activities pending its dissolution (Conseil constitutionnel 2021, paras. 25–27, 44–47). The interior ministry's 2025 report identifies Musulmans de France as "the national branch of the Muslim Brotherhood in France" and finds that its representatives "remain largely present in the institutional game" of the Muslim faith (Ministère de l'Intérieur 2025, 40, 42). Musulmans de France rejected the report's claims. In a statement reported by AFP on 21 May 2025, it called them "accusations infondées" (unfounded accusations) and said: "Nous rejetons fermement toute allégation qui tenterait de nous associer à un projet politique étranger, ou à une stratégie d'entrisme" (We firmly reject any allegation that would try to associate us with a foreign political project, or with a strategy of entryism) (Le Parisien 2025; franceinfo 2025; centre translation). It also warns of a "municipal Islamism" with growing effects in public space and local politics, while cautioning that the national-level risk must be assessed in proportion (Ministère de l'Intérieur 2025, 6). These are the ministry's assessments, not court findings.

Why closest to Route C. France has what the other states lack: a statutory, conduct-based rule that applies to all associations seeking public money and has passed constitutional review. It also publishes detailed official assessments. The Route B pressure comes from the other direction. Political demand for dissolutions and bans is strong, and the Constitutional Council struck down a power to suspend associations whose activities had "not yet" been shown to seriously disturb public order (Conseil constitutionnel 2021, paras. 45–47).

Outlook.

- *To 2030:* the framework holds, and the main risk is political. Measures aimed at identity, not conduct, would hand the movement court victories and its discrimination argument.
- *2030–2040:* if France keeps to conduct, it reaches End state 2 first among the four states, with the movement present but marginal to public institutions. The ministry's warning about municipal influence is the area where End state 1 could still be reached locally even while it is avoided nationally.

The signal to watch. Whether the republican commitment contract is enforced consistently at municipal level, where the ministry places the growing risk.

Germany: Route C in knowledge, Route A in practice

Where it stands. Germany's domestic intelligence service publishes the most detailed annual reporting of the four states. Its report for 2025, published on 30 June 2026, describes "many Islamist organisations" pursuing their goals with "a long-term, sustained and comprehensive strategy" and seeking "targeted contact with essential political and social levels – from municipal politics and public services to national and international political initiatives". It counts the Muslim Brotherhood among "the significant actors of strategic Islamism" in Germany (Bundesamt für Verfassungsschutz 2026, 251–52). It names the Deutsche Muslimische Gemeinschaft e.V. as the movement's most important organisation in Germany, pursuing "a strategy of influence in the political and social sphere", and records that, "despite a recognisable decline in its public engagement", it seeks to appear to politics and authorities "as the interlocutor of a supposedly moderate, cosmopolitan Islam" (Bundesamt für Verfassungsschutz 2026, 271). The same entry records that the movement has "since the 1970s… postulated the renunciation of violence", with the exception of "resistance" to "occupation", which it applies above all to Israel (Bundesamt für Verfassungsschutz 2026, 271). These are the service's assessments.

Why this split. Germany knows more than any other Western state about how the movement works, and it says so every year. What it lacks is a federal, conduct-based rule that turns that knowledge into consistent decisions on funding and consultation across its federal states and municipalities. The service's own finding that the movement targets "municipal politics and public services" points to the level where those decisions are made.

Outlook.

- *To 2030:* annual reporting continues, but decisions on partners and grants remain uneven between federal states. The route is Route A with good intelligence.
- *2030–2040:* if the service's findings are tied to a common standard for public funding and consultation, Germany moves to Route C with the strongest evidence base of the four. If not, the gap between what the state knows and what it funds becomes the movement's main opening.

The signal to watch. Whether the service's annual findings are reflected in published funding and consultation decisions at federal-state level.

United States: Route B, aimed abroad

Where it stands. The United States has gone furthest in form. Executive Order 14362 of 24 November 2025 started a designation process (Executive Office of the President 2025). The designations of the Lebanese chapter and of the Egyptian and Jordanian chapters, the latter two as Specially Designated Global Terrorists, were announced on 13 January 2026 (US Treasury 2026); the Lebanese notices were published in the Federal Register on 14 January 2026 (Department of State 2026a; 2026b). The notices designating the Sudanese chapter are dated 8 March and were published on 16 March 2026 (Department of State 2026c; 2026d). Every instrument names a foreign chapter.

Why Route B. This is the textbook case of acting through designation. It is strong against named foreign chapters and their funding, and weak on the domestic questions the European reports raise, because each designation rests on terrorist support by a chapter abroad, not on conduct inside the United States (section 3.2). The measures are executive, so a future administration could widen or narrow them.

Outlook.

- *To 2030:* further designations of foreign chapters are possible. The main effect falls on funding channels and on allies, who come under pressure to act in parallel.
- *2030–2040:* if the approach stays executive and foreign-facing, it disrupts networks abroad without changing access at home, and its future depends on each administration. Folded into a durable, conduct-based standard for domestic funding and consultation, it would converge with Route C.

The signal to watch. Whether any measure moves from executive designation of foreign chapters to legislation or domestic standards that outlast an administration.

Reading the four together

Centre's assessment. None of the four states is fully on Route C. France is closest because its rule is in statute and has passed constitutional review. Germany has the best knowledge but the weakest link between knowledge and decisions. The United Kingdom has the right approach, sitting in guidance that a new government can withdraw. The United States has acted hardest, but against targets abroad. The lesson from Egypt applies to all four: the movement's patience is measured in decades, and only rules that survive changes of government are likely to match it.

3.10 The choice for Western governments

Centre's assessment. The movement's main asset is time. It plans in generations, while Western governments plan in electoral terms of four or five years. In Egypt, 84 years of patient work came before a year in which it moved fast. Route A hands the movement that advantage. Route B disrupts the movement but, on its own, is likely to produce a harder, more hidden version of the same networks. Only Route C changes the clock, because it sets rules that do not reset with each election. Part Four sets out what that framework contains and in what order it can be built.

Part Four. How the West can be saved

4.1 Three policy choices and the futures they lead to

Western governments face three choices. Each leads, in the centre's assessment, towards one of the two end states set out in Part Three.

1. No action (Drift). Consultation, grants and advisory seats go to whoever claims to speak for Muslim communities, without checks. *The centre's assessment:* this is the route most likely to end in decisive influence by 2040. Patience is the Muslim Brotherhood's main strength, and Western policy that keeps resetting with each election lets it play to that strength.

2. Blanket bans (Ban and adapt). These would outlaw the movement as such. *The centre's assessment:* bans hold the movement back for a time, but they carry the Egyptian and Austrian risks. The movement goes underground and rebrands, and it gains a story of persecution that a lost court case makes far more convincing.

3. Conduct-based measures (Resilient democracy). These target funding, access and specific unlawful acts. *The centre's assessment:* this is the only route that keeps the Muslim Brotherhood from gaining power or decisive influence while staying lawful long enough to matter.

4.2 Trade-offs and costs of each policy choice

Each choice in the previous section has a price as well as a benefit. The table sets them side by side. Every entry is the centre's assessment, drawn from the cases in Part Three.

Table 5. Trade-offs and costs of each policy choice (centre's assessment)

Cost or gain (the centre's assessment)	1. No action (Drift)	2. Blanket ban	3. Conduct-based measures
Legal cost	Low in the short term. No measure is litigated, so none is lost.	High. Strasbourg has accepted dissolution where there was specific evidence of a threat to democracy or links to violence (*Refah Partisi* 2003; *Herri Batasuna* 2009; *Vona* 2013). Graz has already rejected the single-organisation premise (Die Presse 2021).	Moderate and manageable. Each measure is litigated on its own facts. Some parts fail, as the suspension power did in France, while the core survives (Conseil constitutionnel 2021, paras. 27, 47; Conseil d'État 2021).
Security and intelligence cost	Low visibility. No funding or engagement records are kept, so the state learns little.	High. Activity moves out of registered bodies that file accounts and into informal networks.	Low. Declarations, accounts and engagement logs add to what the state can see.
Social cost	Mainstream Muslim civil society competes for state contact with whoever claims to speak for it.	High. Wide measures hit bodies whose links are disputed, as Egypt's freeze did (EIPR 2014; BBC News Arabic 2013).	Low if the rules apply to all faiths and causes; real if officials apply them unevenly.
Political and administrative cost	None at first. The cost comes later and is hard to reverse.	Heavy enforcement burden. Court losses become a political liability.	Steady demand for trained staff. Guidance-only measures can be withdrawn by a new government.
What it buys	Nothing beyond short-term calm.	Visible action, for as long as the courts allow it.	Measures that last, and a factual record for later cases.

1. No action. The legal account looks clean because nothing is tested. The cost moves elsewhere. Without due diligence, consultation, grants and advisory seats go to whoever claims to speak for Muslim communities, and the state keeps no record of who it funds or meets. The Egyptian year in power shows that the safeguards that matter most here, independent review of appointments and decisions, are the

ones that go first when influence reaches the centre (Egypt 2012a; BBC News 2013d). *The centre's assessment:* Drift costs least now and most later. It also gives mainstream Muslim organisations no protection from rivals that claim to speak for them. It buys nothing that the conduct-based route does not also buy.

2. Blanket ban. The legal cost comes first and is the most likely. A ban covering a movement that is non-violent in Europe would have to justify each dissolution on its own evidence, and the Graz rulings show what happens when it cannot. In Luxor about 930 officers searched homes and premises. The court found the searches unlawful in all nine complaints that reached it, and by April 2023 proceedings against about 35 suspects had been discontinued (Kronen Zeitung 2021; Die Presse 2021; Bundesministerin für Justiz 2023). The security cost follows. Registered bodies that file accounts are easier to watch than informal networks. Germany keeps the Muslim Brotherhood's main German organisation under observation and publishes its assessment every year, a record that a ban would make harder to keep (Bundesamt für Verfassungsschutz 2026, pp. 229, 271 n. 122). The social cost is collateral harm. Egypt's freeze reached charities whose links were disputed, and services that millions relied on (EIPR 2014; BBC News Arabic 2013). *The centre's assessment:* in Europe a blanket ban buys visible action at the price of probable court defeats. Each defeat would strengthen the persecution narrative the measure was meant to counter.

3. Conduct-based measures. The legal cost is real but survivable. France lost the power to suspend an association's activities pending its dissolution (Loi n° 2021-1109, art. 16 I 3°; Conseil constitutionnel 2021, paras. 44–47), and the Council barred repayment of subsidies paid for any period before a breach (para. 25). It kept the commitment contract, subject to that reservation, and won the Collectif contre l'islamophobie en France case on the grounds it proved (Conseil constitutionnel 2021; Conseil d'État 2021). A challenge to that dissolution was communicated by the Strasbourg court in 2023, and HUDOC lists no judgment yet (ECtHR 2023). The security gain is visibility: foreign-state funding declarations and accounts filed with a regulator. The administrative cost is the steady burden described below, together with the hesitation the French report records among officials (Ministère de l'Intérieur 2025). The political cost is reversibility. The United Kingdom's definition and engagement standards are non-statutory, and the promised list depends on a ministerial decision (DLUHC 2024a; 2024b). The Lebanese and Sudanese designations were published as notices in the Federal Register, and the Egyptian and Jordanian designations were made by OFAC under Executive Order 13224 (Department of State 2026a; 2026c; US Treasury 2026). *The centre's assessment:* formal designations of this kind are harder to undo quietly than guidance. The centre found no federal court ruling against them as at 19 November 2026. *The centre's assessment:* this route buys durability and a record that later measures can rely on. Its price is slower results, steady staffing, and acceptance that some groups the West dislikes will stay legal.

4.3 Why a blanket ban is legally fragile in Europe

Articles 9, 10 and 11 of the ECHR protect religion, expression, and assembly and association. Each allows restrictions only where they are "prescribed by law" and "necessary in a democratic society". The Strasbourg court treats dissolution as the most drastic measure available. In *United Communist Party of Turkey v. Turkey* (1998) it found a violation where a party was dissolved for its programme alone. Where bans have been upheld, there was something more to point to. In *Refah Partisi v. Turkey* (2003) the Grand Chamber accepted a dissolution because the party had a real prospect of taking power and a programme the Court found incompatible with democracy. In *Herri Batasuna and Batasuna v. Spain* (2009) the parties were found to be instruments of a terrorist strategy. In *Vona v. Hungary* (2013) an association had staged paramilitary rallies that intimidated a minority. Article 17, which strips protection from activity aimed at destroying Convention rights, was applied to Hizb ut-Tahrir because of its calls for violence and its antisemitism (*Hizb ut-Tahrir v. Germany* 2012; *Kasymakhunov and Saybatalov v. Russia* 2013). Even where an association has acted unlawfully, wholesale dissolution can be disproportionate if lesser measures would do (*Association Rhino v. Switzerland* 2011).

A Europe-wide ban on a movement that is non-violent in Europe could not show these things for every body it caught. Graz has already rejected the idea that the Muslim Brotherhood is a single terrorist organisation (Die Presse 2021). The OSCE/ODIHR and Venice Commission guidelines treat dissolution as a last resort, and say that no blanket restrictions should be applied (Venice Commission and OSCE/ODIHR 2015, para. 114 and Principle 9). Transparency rules carry their own trap. Russia's foreign-agent law was found to breach Article 11 because it was neither foreseeable nor necessary, and its 'foreign agent' label was stigmatising (*Ecodefence v. Russia* 2022). The EU Court of Justice held that Hungary's NGO funding law imposed discriminatory and unjustified restrictions, contrary to the free movement of capital and to Charter rights to private life, data protection and association, and that its labelling stigmatised the organisations concerned (*Commission v. Hungary* 2020). Any Western funding rule must be drafted so that it cannot be confused with them.

4.4 The Egyptian warning: which safeguards are tested first

The year in power in Egypt shows the order in which safeguards come under strain. President Morsi's November 2012 declaration put his decrees beyond challenge and barred the courts from dissolving the constituent assembly. The same declaration dismissed the public prosecutor (Egypt 2012a; BBC News 2012d). Eight days later the assembly, boycotted by most liberal, secular and Christian members, voted through all 234 articles of a draft constitution overnight. It did so to head off a Supreme Constitutional Court ruling on its own legitimacy (BBC News 2012e; Guardian 2012). The referendum passed with 63.8 per cent in favour, on a turnout of 32.9 per cent (BBC News 2012g). In June 2013 Morsi appointed Islamist allies as regional governors. That left the Muslim Brotherhood and its allies controlling 13 of Egypt's 27 governorships, and the governor named to Luxor came from the political wing of al-Gamaa al-Islamiya (BBC News 2013d). The order is the warning. Judicial review went first, then constitution-making, then appointments (Kandil 2015; Trager 2016; Wickham 2015).

The centre's assessment: in the West, influence would arrive through advisory bodies, grant streams and public appointments, not a coup. The safeguards to protect first are therefore independent review of funding and appointment decisions.

4.5 Lessons from the five cases

Egypt: maximum force, collateral damage, a movement split abroad. The court ban and conservatorship, the freeze, the Cabinet statement and the 2014 ruling described in Part Three ended the Muslim Brotherhood's open political presence inside Egypt. They also reached services that millions relied on, and the interim president exempted the Egyptian Food Bank from the freeze (BBC News Arabic 2013). On 9 January 2014 Al-Gameya Al-Shareya, a charity that by its own account, as EIPR reports it, runs about 1,000 incubators for premature babies, issued a statement headed "The crisis is over and we pledge to continue our services", saying most of its branches had come out of the banking freeze (EIPR 2014; centre translation). *The centre's assessment:* the freeze reached bodies whose links to the Muslim Brotherhood were disputed, and parts of it were unwound within weeks. The movement adapted by moving its leadership to Istanbul and London, where it failed to renew itself and in 2021 split into rival camps (Ardovini 2021; 2022a; 2022b; Fulco and Abdelgawad 2025). *The centre's assessment:* a Western state could not lawfully use most of the Egyptian toolkit, and the Egyptian record suggests it should not want to. What it does show is that pressure on an exiled leadership can deepen its divisions without ending the movement.

Austria: the narrow rule survived, the broad raid did not. Austria's foreign-funding rule survived constitutional review. The Constitutional Court upheld section 6(2) of the Islamgesetz 2015 under Article 9(2), but only after reading it narrowly, as covering money from foreign states and their institutions and not private foreign donors who leave a community's independence intact (VfGH 2019). Operation Luxor

went the other way. The Graz rulings of 2021 and 2022 set out in Part Three removed its legal premise (Die Presse 2021; Der Standard 2022). By April 2023 the Justice Minister reported that about 30 court-approved coercive orders had been found unlawful and that proceedings had been discontinued for about 35 suspects, while the investigation continued against more than 60 known natural and legal persons and one unknown suspect (Bundesministerin für Justiz 2023). How the movement adapted in Austria is not documented to evidential standard. *The centre's assessment:* the Austrian lesson for Part Four is about drafting. A rule aimed at a defined source of money, and read in line with the Convention, holds. A criminal case built on the idea that membership of a mass movement is itself suspicious does not, and its collapse costs the state credibility it needs for later cases.

France: transparency and conduct-based dissolution, with limits set by the courts. The 2021 law's three tools have had a mixed reception in the courts. The Constitutional Council upheld the commitment contract, subject to a reservation that a withdrawn subsidy cannot be clawed back for any period before the breach. Of the provisions on associations, it struck down only the power to suspend an association's activities pending its dissolution (Conseil constitutionnel 2021, paras. 25–27, 44–47). The Council of State upheld the dissolution of the Collectif contre l'islamophobie en France, which rested on documented statements and publications, on grounds of provocation to discrimination, hatred or violence, while finding that the terrorism ground had been wrongly applied (Conseil d'État 2021). The Interior Ministry's report credits the law with penalising endowment funds that failed to file, and records the Bobigny court's dissolution of the Al-Wakf endowment fund. It also records that Musulmans de France says it is refocusing on worship, a claim the report doubts, and it concludes that the law's effects "ne semblent pas suffisants" (Ministère de l'Intérieur 2025). *The centre's assessment:* France shows that conduct-based tools work case by case and survive review when each ground is proved. It also shows that tools are wasted if officials hesitate to use them.

United States: designation of named foreign chapters. Executive Order 14362 opened a designation process. The implementing instruments named the Lebanese chapter as a Foreign Terrorist Organisation and Specially Designated Global Terrorist, OFAC designated the Egyptian and Jordanian chapters as Specially Designated Global Terrorists under Executive Order 13224, for what Treasury described as material support to Hamas, and the Sudanese Muslim Brotherhood under both authorities (Executive Office of the President 2025; Department of State 2026a; 2026b; 2026c; 2026d; US Department of State, Office of the Spokesman 2026; US Treasury 2026; Rubio 2026). The centre found no federal court ruling against them as at 19 November 2026. *The centre's assessment:* the US model goes furthest in form but is narrowest in reach, because each designation rests on alleged terrorist support by a named foreign chapter. European states are unlikely to follow it without comparable chapter-by-chapter evidence.

United Kingdom: no ban, controls on access. The United Kingdom reviewed the Muslim Brotherhood and did not proscribe it. The review recorded both a critical finding on ideology and tactics and the finding that the Muslim Brotherhood in the UK has not been linked to terrorism in or against the UK (United Kingdom 2015). Its response has been to control access: a non-statutory definition and engagement standards for central government, a list the 2024 guidance promised to publish, which the centre could not find on GOV.UK as at 19 November 2026, and charity regulation now under consultation for wider disqualification powers (DLUHC 2024a; 2024b; DCMS 2026). None has yet been tested in court as policy towards the Muslim Brotherhood. *The centre's assessment:* the British model is the cheapest and the most exposed to reversal, because almost all of it sits in guidance that a new government can withdraw without legislation.

4.6 Long-horizon recommendations

Each measure below is tied to a precedent, checked against the Convention, and paired with an indicator of success. All are designed to be put into statute or a regulator's remit, so that a change of government cannot quietly undo them.

Table 6. Long-horizon recommendations

Measure	Precedent	ECHR check	Indicator of success
1. Foreign-funding transparency. Religious and civic associations declare foreign-state and large foreign donations above a fixed threshold to a regulator. Public summaries are aggregated, and donors are not named.	France, Art. 77 of the 2021 law (€15,300 threshold); Austria, §6(2) Islamgesetz, upheld by the VfGH; UK Foreign Influence Registration Scheme, in force 1 July 2025 (Home Office 2025); EU proposal COM(2023) 637.	Lawful if precise, applied to all faiths and causes, and without stigmatising labels. *Ecodefence* (ECtHR) and, for EU states, *Commission v. Hungary* (CJEU) mark the limits.	Share of foreign-state funding that is declared; no adverse court rulings; fall in undeclared transfers found on audit.
2. Due diligence before governments consult or fund. A published, conduct-based test is applied before ministers meet, fund or platform a group. Decisions are reasoned and can be reviewed.	UK engagement standards 2024; French republican commitment contract (Loi n° 2021-1109, art. 12), upheld with a reservation on clawback (Conseil constitutionnel 2021, para. 25).	Requiring a commitment contract as a condition of a subsidy does not regulate how an association is formed or operates (Conseil constitutionnel 2021, para. 23). Reasons and appeal protect Art. 14 fairness.	Every engagement decision is logged with reasons; decisions survive review; partners from mainstream Muslim civil society do not shrink.
3. Conflict-of-interest rules for advisory posts. Candidates disclose foreign funding, organisational roles and affiliations before appointment, with independent vetting.	UK 2024 standards applied to public appointments and honours.	Questions are limited to conduct and roles, not belief, which keeps the rule within Art. 8 and Art. 9.	Disclosure rate; number of appointments reversed after the fact (it should fall).
4. Charity oversight. Annual accounts with sources of income; regulator powers to warn, suspend and disqualify trustees.	Charities Act 2011 as amended in 2016; DCMS consultation 2026; French penalties on endowment funds.	Individual, reasoned decisions open to tribunal appeal.	Accounts filed on time; inquiries completed; few trustee disqualifications overturned on appeal.
5. Conduct-based dissolution. Dissolution only for proven incitement, violence, terrorist financing or evasion of the law, on evidence specific to the body concerned.	Conseil d'État upholding the 2020 dissolution (2021); dissolution of the Al-Wakf fund (2024).	Meets *Vona* and *Refah* where the evidence is specific; fails on the *Luxor* pattern.	Dissolutions upheld in court; no measure struck down for resting on affiliation alone.

4.7 Implementation sequence

The sequence below orders the recommendations so that each stage builds the factual and legal base for the next. Every milestone is the centre's assessment, not a forecast stated as fact.

Table 7. Implementation sequence (centre's assessment)

Stage (the centre's assessment)	Step	Precedent	ECHR safeguard it must pass	Indicator
First 2 years	Put engagement due diligence on a statutory or published footing, with written reasons and a route to review.	UK engagement standards 2024 (DLUHC 2024a; 2024b); French republican commitment contract (Loi n° 2021-1109, art. 12).	French Constitutional Council: requiring a commitment contract as a condition of a subsidy does not regulate how an association is formed or operates (Conseil constitutionnel 2021, para. 23); reasons must be given and applied equally (Art. 14 ECHR).	Share of engagement and grant decisions logged with reasons; no decision quashed for lack of reasons.

Stage (the centre's assessment)	Step	Precedent	ECHR safeguard it must pass	Indicator
First 2 years	Introduce foreign-state funding declarations above a fixed threshold, for all religious and civic associations alike.	Islamgesetz 2015, § 6(2), as read by the VfGH (2019); Loi n° 2021-1109, art. 77 and Décret n° 2022-619; UK Foreign Influence Registration Scheme (Home Office 2025).	Article 9 (collective religious freedom) and Article 11, read with *Ecodefence* (2022); for EU states also EU law (*Commission v. Hungary* 2020): precise terms, no stigmatising label, aggregated publication.	Declaration rate; no court finding of unforeseeable terms, discrimination or stigma.
2 to 5 years	Extend conflict-of-interest disclosure to advisory bodies and public appointments, vetted independently.	UK engagement standards applied to public appointments and honours (DLUHC 2024a).	Articles 8 and 9: questions limited to roles, funding and conduct, never belief.	Disclosure completed before appointment; appointments reversed after the fact fall year on year.
2 to 5 years	Give charity regulators powers to warn, suspend and disqualify trustees for extremist abuse, with appeal to a tribunal.	Charities Act 2011 as amended; DCMS consultation 2026; French penalties on endowment funds (Ministère de l'Intérieur 2025).	Article 11 and proportionality: individual, reasoned decisions; lesser measures tried first (*Association Rhino* 2011).	Accounts filed on time; share of disqualifications upheld on appeal.
5 to 10 years	Reserve dissolution for proven incitement, violence, terrorist financing or evasion of the law, on evidence specific to each body.	Conseil d'État 2021; Al-Wakf dissolution (Ministère de l'Intérieur 2025).	Article 11 with Articles 9 and 10: *Vona* (2013) and *Refah* (2003) where evidence is specific; never membership alone, as in Luxor (Die Presse 2021; domestic precedent).	Dissolutions upheld; none struck down for resting on affiliation.
10 years and beyond	Review the whole regime against its indicators every parliamentary term, through an independent reviewer reporting to the legislature.	Annual BfV reporting (Bundesamt für Verfassungsschutz 2026) as a model of a recurring public record.	Articles 9, 10 and 11. *The centre's assessment:* periodic review is itself evidence that restrictions remain necessary and proportionate.	Review published on schedule; measures repealed or narrowed where indicators show no effect.

The centre's assessment: the first stage matters most. Due diligence and funding transparency cost little, are already lawful in at least one European state, and produce the records on which every later step depends. A state that starts with dissolution instead of disclosure is likely to repeat Luxor.

4.8 What holding the line costs

Conduct-based policy is not cheap. It needs trained investigators, accountants and lawyers in regulators that are now stretched thin. Luxor shows the price of cutting corners. A huge police operation, years of surveillance and frozen accounts ended in rulings that the searches were unlawful, along with a narrative of persecution handed to the people targeted (Die Presse 2021; Der Standard 2022). The French report shows a quieter cost. Officials hesitate for fear of "victim" reactions in the media, and the tools go unused (Ministère de l'Intérieur 2025). The rules also bind everyone. Funding declarations and engagement tests apply equally to churches, synagogues and secular NGOs, and that equal treatment is what keeps them lawful. Some groups the West dislikes will stay legal, and governments will have to argue with them in public instead of banning them.

The centre's assessment: those costs are small next to the alternatives. Drift risks a slow version of the Egyptian sequence. Blanket bans risk court defeats that would leave the West weaker than before. A conduct-based regime, set in statute and checked by indicators, is the one approach that can outlast election cycles, and time stops working in the movement's favour only once Western policy stops resetting.

Conclusion

The Muslim Brotherhood's greatest strength has never been its numbers. It has been its patience. Hassan al-Banna founded the movement in 1928 with a programme that put the formation of people and institutions before any bid for the state, and eighty-four years passed before one of its members became president of Egypt. That is the fact this paper has kept returning to, because it sets the terms of the problem for Western democracies. In the centre's assessment, a movement that thinks in generations will outlast any policy that thinks in electoral terms.

Egypt shows both halves of the story. The first half is the long work of building: preaching, the family cell, graded membership, and decades of presence in syndicates, campuses and charities. The second half is what came after victory at the ballot box. In the November 2012 declaration, President Morsi made his decrees, laws and decisions immune from challenge and barred the courts from dissolving the assembly writing the constitution. Within a year he had been removed by the army, and by the end of 2013 the Egyptian state had declared the movement a terrorist group. The paper does not hold up what followed as a model. Its point is narrower. The year in power shows that winning an election and accepting the limits on the winner are two different things.

The West is not Egypt, and nothing in the official record suggests that a Muslim Brotherhood-linked network is close to taking power in any Western state. The UK review found that the Muslim Brotherhood "has not been linked to terrorist related activity in and against the UK". In the centre's assessment, the danger is of a quieter kind. Official reporting in the United Kingdom, France and Germany describes the first two of al-Banna's stages at work, and organisations that have sought a role as government partners. The prize in a Western democracy is not the presidency. It is decisive influence over who speaks for Muslim communities, which organisations receive public money, and how extremism is defined and countered.

In the centre's assessment, the route Western governments take will decide which of the two futures arrives by 2040. Drift, in which consultation, grants and advisory seats go to whoever claims to represent Muslim communities without checks, leads towards decisive influence. Bans on their own buy time but drive networks into deniable fronts, give the movement a story of persecution and, where they rest on affiliation rather than proven conduct, risk defeat in court. Only a sustained, conduct-based framework changes the clock, because it sets rules that do not reset with each election.

That framework is unglamorous. It means declaring foreign funding, publishing reasons before ministers consult or fund a group, disclosing conflicts of interest before public appointments, giving charity regulators the tools to act, and dissolving organisations only on evidence of what they have done. It costs money and staff, and it binds churches, synagogues and secular groups as much as mosques. That equal treatment is the point. It keeps the rules lawful, it keeps them from being read as hostility to Muslims, and it gives them a chance of surviving changes of government.

In the centre's assessment, the better outcome is within reach. In it, the Muslim Brotherhood remains a lawful participant in public life but loses its privileged access to public institutions, and a wider range of Muslim voices takes up the space. Reaching it does not require Western democracies to become less

democratic. It requires them to be as patient in defending their institutions as the movement has been in trying to win influence over them. Time is on the movement's side only for as long as Western policy keeps starting again.

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Dated source log

Date checked	Key	Route	Status
21 Nov 2026	Abou El Zalaf 2022	Opened (publisher page)	Retrieved; DOI resolves
21 Nov 2026	Al-Bannā n.d.a; n.d.b	Opened	Retrieved
21 Nov 2026	Al-Masry Al-Youm 2013a	Opened	Retrieved
21 Nov 2026	Al-Masry Al-Youm 2013b	Opened	Retrieved
21 Nov 2026	Al-Sayyid 2003	Opened	Retrieved
21 Nov 2026	Al-Sayyid 2015	Opened	Retrieved
21 Nov 2026	Ardovini 2022a	Opened (publisher page)	Retrieved; DOI resolves
21 Nov 2026	Associated Press 2019	Opened via archived copy cited	Live page behind a bot check; archived copy of 21 Apr 2019 retrieved
21 Nov 2026	BBC News Arabic 2013	Opened	Retrieved
21 Nov 2026	BBC News 2011	Opened	Retrieved
21 Nov 2026	BBC News 2012a	Opened	Retrieved
21 Nov 2026	BBC News 2012b	Opened	Retrieved
21 Nov 2026	BBC News 2012c	Opened	Retrieved

Date checked	Key	Route	Status
21 Nov 2026	BBC News 2012d	Opened	Retrieved
21 Nov 2026	BBC News 2012e	Opened	Retrieved
21 Nov 2026	BBC News 2012f	Opened	Retrieved
21 Nov 2026	BBC News 2012g	Opened	Retrieved
21 Nov 2026	BBC News 2012h	Opened	Retrieved
21 Nov 2026	BBC News 2013a	Opened	Retrieved
21 Nov 2026	BBC News 2013b	Opened	Retrieved
21 Nov 2026	BBC News 2013c	Opened	Retrieved
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21 Nov 2026	BBC News 2013e	Opened	Retrieved
21 Nov 2026	BBC News 2013f	Opened	Retrieved
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21 Nov 2026	BBC News 2013h	Opened	Retrieved
21 Nov 2026	BBC News 2013i	Opened	Retrieved
21 Nov 2026	BBC News 2019	Opened	Retrieved
21 Nov 2026	Bundesministerin für Justiz 2023	Opened	Retrieved
21 Nov 2026	Cairo Court of Urgent Matters 2014	Opened	Manshurat archive record retrieved (case 3343, 24 Feb 2014)
21 Nov 2026	Cairo Court of Urgent Matters 2013	Opened	Manshurat archive record retrieved (case 2315 of 2013)
21 Nov 2026	Carter-Ruck 2010a	Opened	Retrieved
21 Nov 2026	Carter-Ruck 2010b	Opened	Retrieved
21 Nov 2026	Casciani 2005	Opened via Internet Archive copy	Retrieved; live page returned a server error; dated 29 Dec 2005
21 Nov 2026	Der Standard 2022	Opened	Retrieved
21 Nov 2026	Die Presse 2021	Opened	Retrieved
21 Nov 2026	Die Presse 2022	Opened	Retrieved

Date checked	Key	Route	Status
21 Nov 2026	DLUHC 2024b	Opened	Retrieved
21 Nov 2026	Egypt 2012a	Opened	Retrieved
21 Nov 2026	Egypt 2012b	Opened	Retrieved
21 Nov 2026	EIPR 2014	Opened	Retrieved
21 Nov 2026	Executive Office of the President 2025	Opened	Retrieved
21 Nov 2026	franceinfo 2025	Opened	Retrieved
21 Nov 2026	Fulco and Abdelgawad 2025	Opened (publisher page)	Retrieved; DOI resolves
21 Nov 2026	Government Office for Science 2024	Opened	Retrieved
21 Nov 2026	Holmwood 2009	Opened	Retrieved
21 Nov 2026	Human Rights Watch 2012a	Opened	Retrieved
21 Nov 2026	Human Rights Watch 2012b	Opened	Retrieved
21 Nov 2026	Human Rights Watch 2012c	Opened	Retrieved
21 Nov 2026	Human Rights Watch 2012d	Opened	Retrieved
21 Nov 2026	Islamgesetz 2015	Link checked	Not opened: official site returned a security check; statute cited by its Federal Law Gazette number
21 Nov 2026	Kronen Zeitung 2021	Opened	Retrieved
21 Nov 2026	Le Parisien 2025	Opened via Internet Archive copy	Retrieved; live page blocked automated access; dated 21 May 2025
21 Nov 2026	Loi n° 2021-1109	Opened via Internet Archive copy	Retrieved; live page behind a bot check
21 Nov 2026	MHCLG and DLUHC 2024	Opened	Retrieved
21 Nov 2026	Muslim Council of Britain 2015	Opened	Retrieved
21 Nov 2026	Norell, Carlbom and Durrani 2017	Opened	Retrieved
21 Nov 2026	Rubio 2026	Opened	Retrieved
21 Nov 2026	US Department of State 2026	Opened	Retrieved
21 Nov 2026	US Treasury 2026	Opened	Retrieved
21 Nov 2026	Vidino 2017	Opened	Retrieved

Date checked	Key	Route	Status
21 Nov 2026	Ministère de l'Intérieur 2025	Opened	Retrieved from interieur.gouv.fr (PDF dated 2 May 2025)
21 Nov 2026	United Kingdom 2015	Opened	Retrieved from GOV.UK (HC 679)
21 Nov 2026	Department of State 2026a to 2026d; Executive Office of the President 2025	Opened	Federal Register records retrieved
21 Nov 2026	ECtHR 2023	Searched	HUDOC lists the communication of 9 Jan 2023 and no judgment

Calculations by EPIC

- 84 years: from the founding of the Society of the Muslim Brothers in March 1928 to Mohamed Morsi taking office as president on 30 June 2012 (United Kingdom 2015, para. 8; Ministère de l'Intérieur 2025, 10; Associated Press 2019).

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