



i MONTHLY

A publication by INFORMATION INTERNATIONAL



14% of Lebanese
Read Books

41% of Lebanese
**Ready to
Use Arms**

Following Az-Za'im...
"Defending Family,
Country & Religion"



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AWORD

33 Riddles of Numbers and Symbols from Lebanon Lexicon



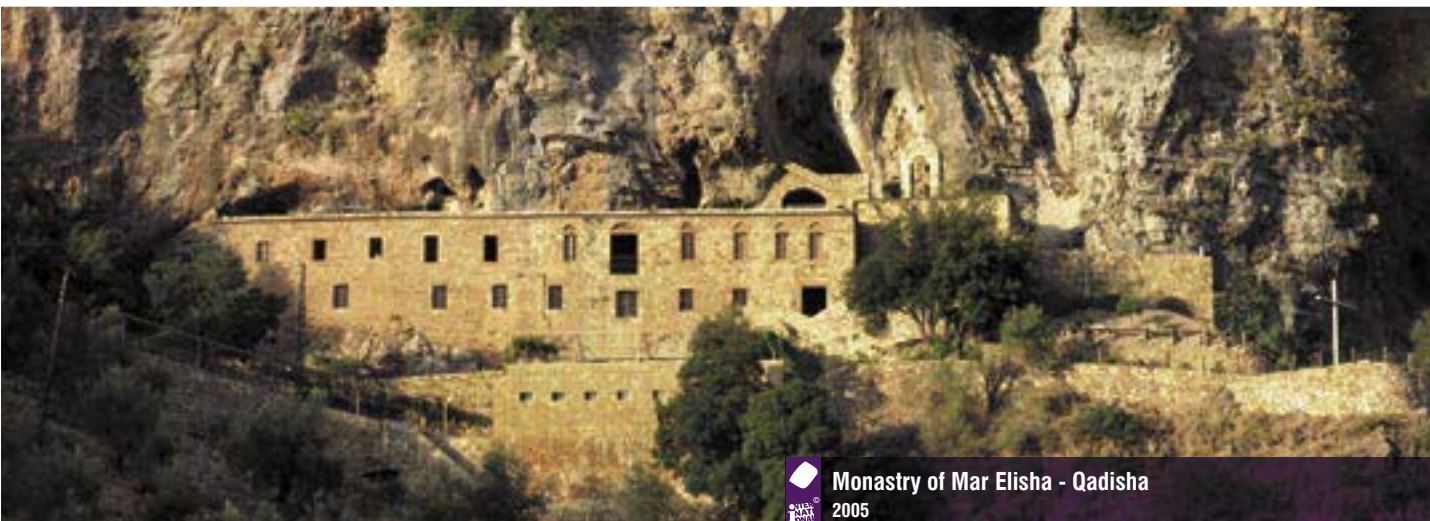
A colleague, addicted to LBC, Future and Al-Manar since 3 months, came out with a lexicon which he intends to expand on. Here are some excerpts:


- 1- A Government of National Unity: Council of Lebanon Tribes Chiefs.
- 2- Fight Corruption: A term used to enhance one's image and tie the hands of his opponents.
- 3- Transparency: See through me if you can.
- 4- "This is not Lebanese": A term used to confirm that "Lebanese" is a positive idea of one's self, with all "others," who disagree with him being "non Lebanese".
- 5- "Shia'a and Sunni have always loved each other": Especially when the Sunni feudal lords were co-hooting with Shia'a feudal lords to manipulate their "followers".
- 6- Christians, Muslims and Druze lived peacefully together: Except in 1840, 1860, 1920, 1943, 1952, 1958, 1969, 1975 till 2007.....
- 7- "What is your name?": Are you one of "us"?
- 8- "What village do you come from?": Your name is misleading and I could not figure out your confession.
- 9- "Are you related to Mr. Georges?": Forget your name and village; they are both confusing.
- 10- "What is your confession?": Hell with it all, Tell me your confession and get over with it.
- 11- My Za'im is (sheikh so and so or bey so and so): Without him I cannot find a job and if it was not for him I would have to work in the job.
- 12- "Illegitimate government" vs. "Legitimate government": Al-Manar's lexicon vs. Future's lexicon.
- 13- International Legitimacy (Ashara'iyah Al Douwalia): I am going to use my connections to beat you.
- 14- Let justice take its course: Catch me if you can.

- 15- "Is he the only one?": We all break the law and get away with it, why him?
- 16- "Lahoud is bad": Sanioura is great = anti Shia'a and Aoun = Sunni.
- 17- "Sanioura is bad": Lahoud is great = pro Aoun and the Shia'a = Shia'a.
- 18- "Development and Reconstruction is the path": I support Hariri and I don't care whether we develop the country or not.
- 19- "State of Laws and Institutions": I support Lahoud and I don't care whether we break the law or not.
- 20- "Hizbullah and its appendages" vs. "the de-facto government and its militias": Future Movement vs. Free Patriotic Movement in an eloquent expression of the principle of tolerance.
- 21- "The Ugly Enemy": A term used to depict Israel and all our cousins and neighbors and potential ugly ones.
- 22- "The Beast of Poverty": An animal found in Mesopotamia, highly reproductive, hunted by the UN, US and the EU and thousands of NGOs for almost a century now. It is assumed that once killed, poverty will be saved.
- 23- Martyrs: A term used to elevate those killed to a divine state so we do not mourn their absence as human beings.
- 24- Terrorists: A term used to downgrade those committing acts of violence to justify worse acts of violence.
- 25- "Tire Burners": A newly coined term used by the March 14 supporters against Aoun and Hizbullah and other (March 8) supporters.
- 26- Signés Tires: A term coined by Omar Karami for tires burnt in 1992 by Hariri supporters and which brought his downfall.
- 27- "201 times I shall not resign": A term coined by Sanioura improvising on the commonly used 100 time term and proposing one thousand-time as a prospect.
- 28- "Burning tires on January 23, 2006 has caused stoppage of rain and many suffocation cases": An "unbiased and scientific" statement made by an "expert" at the Lebanese Official Weather Authority to LBC, and who failed to mention the chimneys of Chekka, Sibline and Zouk, where tires and petrocake are sometimes incinerated illegally.
- 29- "Talk Numbers": A term currently in use in two rival advertising campaigns by opposition and pro-government forces to explain their positions on the Paris 3 Conference and what is called a "reform plan". Here are some numbers:
- 30- 1.5 Million: A number identified by the Lebanese opposition for those who demonstrated in Beirut on Sunday, December 10, 2006.
- 31- 1.06 Million: A number identified by the Lebanese Minister Ahmad Fattat for those who demonstrated on the 14th of March, 2005.
- 32- 2.56 Million: Being the addition of the above two numbers or 100% of all Lebanese between the age of 18 and 70.
- 33- 160% is the new statistical method created in Lebanon and used internationally by BBC and CNN which quoted the hundreds of thousands or the million-figure several times particularly on March 14, 2005. It also explains why 80% of the Lebanese said in an li poll "I abide by the laws" and the same 80% said that "the Lebanese in general" do not abide by the laws. This method is now adopted by the Neo-Conservatives to explain the decrease in the rate of their supporters and how they are winning against the "axis of evil".
- Another colleague, having read the above, said that there was nothing unique about those 33 riddles, quoting US President George Bush's "we are not winning, we are not losing in Iraq" speech, as a riddle that defies all.
- 33 happens to be the number of days required for "the birth of a new Middle-East" as described by US Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice after "diagnosing" the July-August 2006 Israeli war on Lebanon.

The Maronite Confession in Lebanon

Saints, Patriarchs and Presidents



 **Monastery of Mar Elisha - Qadisha**
2005

Events and experiences over the past years have confirmed that Lebanon is not a “country” in the legal and political context of the term but an “agreement” between 18 confessions to live on one land and find an appropriate framework (the state) to deal with their differences. If they respect this agreement, peace and prosperity are established; but if they fail to comply with it, wars and crises erupt.

Understanding Lebanon’s different confessions is a necessity to get to know the country’s reality with its wars, conflicts and accords.

Starting this issue, *Li Monthly* will dedicate a section to talk about the 18 confessions, beginning with the Maronite confession.

Origin

The Maronites are a Christian confession named after Saint Maron, a Christian hermit. Saint Maron was born in the fourth century A.D. and lived in Qourshieh, northern Syria (70 kilometers from Aleppo) in an arid mountain called Nabou. He passed away in 410 A.D. and was buried in the grotto of Saint Zabila but then the citizens of Kfar Nabou moved his body to their town, where a church was built and named after him.

Saint Maron lived in solitude to worship God. His disciples increased in number, and they began to call themselves Maronites. He quickly became famous for healing people from illnesses.

The Maronite Church follows the decrees of the Chalcedonian Council (held in 451 A.D. and which stated that Jesus has two natures - divine and human - united in one person and that the Maronite Church since 1182, follows the Pontifical Seat in Rome).

The Maronites in Lebanon

The Maronites came to Lebanon near the end of the fifth century. The Maronite patriarch was then appointed by the emperor of Byzantium, who was the head of the church. However, in 687 A.D., the Maronites elected their own patriarch, Mar Youhanna Maroun, who took the town of Kfarhay in Batroun as his seat. In 1823, Bkirki became the patriarchal seat in the winter and the northern town of Diman in the summer.

During the Ottoman era, the Maronite leaders or zu’ama, along with the Druze, enjoyed an independent authority, which enabled them to establish relations with foreign countries, mainly France. These relations empowered them and made them prevail over the other confessions. In fact, French King Louis XIV (1643-1715) has stated that “the

Maronite nation is part of the French nation". The Maronite patriarchs, in particular Patriarch Elias Houwayek, played a major role in the creation of the Lebanese State.

Saints

On February 9, the Maronite confession celebrates the anniversary of its patron, Saint Maron, who was canonized by the Catholic Church on September 28, 1753. The following are other saints from the Maronite confession: Saint Charbel (born on May 8, 1828, passed away in 1898 and canonized on October 9, 1977); Saint Nea'amatallah al-Hardini (born in 1808, passed away in 1858 and canonized on May 16, 2004); and Saint Rafqa (born in 1832, passed away in 1914 and canonized on June 10, 2001).

76 Patriarchs, Bishops and Bishoprics

The current Maronite Patriarch, Mar Nasrallah Boutros Sfeir (born in Rayfoun in 1920), is the 76th patriarch elected on April 19, 1986. The patriarch assumes his responsibilities until his death. He can only resign when he becomes unable to continue his duties.

Patriarch Sfeir's predecessors since the nineteenth century are listed in the following Table no. 1.

Patriarch Sfeir's Predecessors from 1823 till 1986	
Patriarch	Years
Youssef Hobeish	1823-1845
Youssef al-Khazen	1845-1854
Boulos Masa'ad	1854-1890
Youhanna al-Hajj	1890-1898
Elias al-Houwayek	1898-1931
Antoine Arida	1931-1955
Boulos al-Ma'eoushi	1955-1975
Antonios Khreish	1975-1985

Source: Information International

Note: Ibrahim al-Helou was appointed by the Vatican as an apostolic director after removing Patriarch Khreish in 1985 and until the election of Patriarch Sfeir in 1986.

The Maronite Patriarch has a major role in the Maronite confession, as its religious and earthly head. Patriarchs also played an important role in Lebanon's political life and in the creation of the Lebanese State, mainly Patriarchs Houwayek, Ma'eoushi and Sfeir.

The Patriarch is assisted by a number of bishops, who are elected by the Maronite Bishops' Council. The bishop retires from his seat at the age of 75.

There are 13 Maronite Bishoprics in Lebanon as listed in Table no. 2.

The word Qadisha comes from a Semitic root meaning "holiness;" consequently, Wadi Qadisha means the "Holy Valley". At the dawn of the Christian era, when the Christian religion was introduced into the valley, caves and rock shelters were transformed into chapels, hermitages, and monasteries. In addition to the Christians, Muslim Sufis also lived in the valley. According to Ibn Joubair, an Andalusian traveler who visited the area during the 12th century A.D., the Christians of the mountains provided food and provisions to the Muslims who chose to isolate themselves from the world. At that time, the valley used to echo the prayers of its inhabitants, each one in his own language: Greek, Arabic, Syriac and Ethiopian.

Source: Promenade published by SRI International and INMA funded by USAID.

Maronite Bishoprics in Lebanon

Table 2

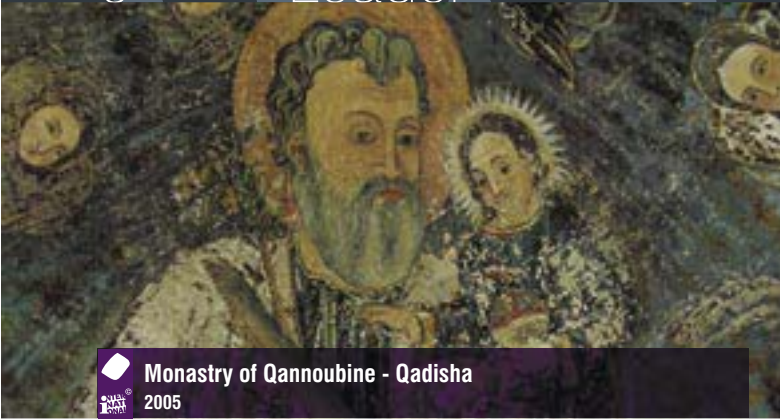
Bishopric	Bishop
Beirut Bishopric	Bishop Boulos Matar
Trablous Bishopric	Bishop George Abu Jawde
Saida Bishopric	Bishop Elias Nassar
Zgharta Bishopric	Bishop Samir Mazloum
Sarba Bishopric	Bishop Guy Boulos Njeim
Sour (Tyre) Bishopric	Bishop Chukrallah al-Hajj
Ba'albak and Deir al-Ahmar Bishopric	Bishop Sema'an Atallah
Jbeil Bishopric	Bishop Beshara al-Ra'i
Batroun Bishopric	Bishop Boulos Emile Sa'adeh
Antelias Bishopric	Bishop Youssef Beshara
Zahleh Bishopric	Bishop Mansour Hobeika
Jebbeh Bishopric	Bishop Francis al-Baisari
Jounieh Bishopric	Bishop Antoine Nabil al-Indari

Source: Information International

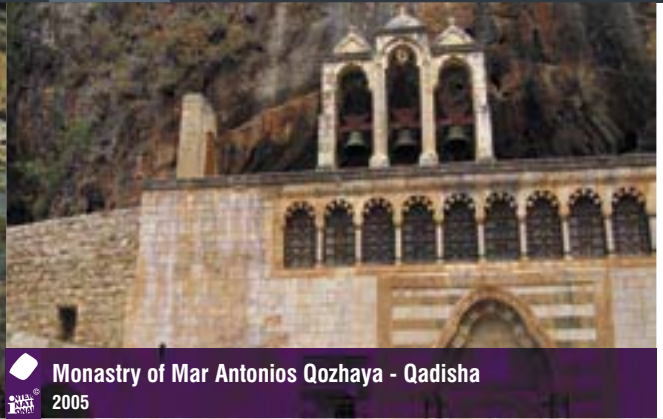
In addition to these bishoprics, there are 13 others abroad, mainly in areas of Maronite conglomerations:

- ⊙ Bishopric of Cyprus
- ⊙ Bishopric of Cairo
- ⊙ Bishopric of Latakia
- ⊙ Bishopric of Argentina
- ⊙ Bishopric of Brooklyn
- ⊙ Bishopric of Aleppo
- ⊙ Bishopric of Damascus
- ⊙ Bishopric of Mexico
- ⊙ Bishopric of Canada
- ⊙ Bishopric of Los Angeles
- ⊙ Bishopric of Brazil
- ⊙ Bishopric of Australia
- ⊙ Bishopric of Haifa





Monastery of Qannoubine - Qadisha
2005



Monastery of Mar Antonios Qozhaya - Qadisha
2005

Maronite Institutions

The Maronite Church, through its orders, owns many educational, health and social institutions, which include:

- ⦿ Holy Spirit University – Kaslik
- ⦿ Notre Dame University
- ⦿ La Sagesse University
- ⦿ Nursing and Physical Therapy Institute
- ⦿ Antonine University
- ⦿ Caritas Lebanon
- ⦿ Beit Shabeb Center for the Disabled
- ⦿ The Social Cooperative Fund

The Maronite Patriarchate, orders and monasteries, have many real estates and lands, on part of which low-rent residential buildings are being constructed for the Maronites with low-income.

Maronite Monastic Orders

There are seven monastic orders in the Maronite Church. Those include:

- ⦿ The Lebanese Maronite Order
- ⦿ The Maronite Mariamite Order
- ⦿ The Maronite Antonine Order
- ⦿ The Lebanese Maronite Missionaries Association
- ⦿ The Lebanese Maronite Nuns
- ⦿ The Maronite Saint Famille Order
- ⦿ The Lebanese Antonine Nuns
- ⦿ The Lebanese Christ Nuns Association

Figures

According to the first and only census of the Lebanese population in 1932, the Maronites formed the largest confession in Lebanon.

Based on the estimated numbers of 2005, the number of Maronites reached 938,000, or a population rate of 22%, against a rate of 26.5% for both the Shia'a and the Sunni.

The Maronites and the Power

The political system in Lebanon is based on power sharing between the Lebanese confessions. The Maronite confession controls the presidency and has 34 deputies in Parliament or the largest share (26.5% of the total number of seats).

The Maronites occupy 20.8% of ministerial seats, the same rate for both the Sunni and the Shia'a. As to the first-grade positions, they occupy 42 posts out of 141, or a rate of 30% of major positions, including the army commander, the central bank governor, the head of the central inspection department and the head of the higher judicial council.

Presidents of the Republic

Eleven Maronite leaders have served as presidents since the independence of Lebanon in 1943 as listed in Table no. 3.

Presidents of the Republic from 1943 to date		
President of the Republic	From	To
Sheikh Beshara al-Khoury	23-9-1943	23-9-1952
Kamil Chamoun	23-9-1952	23-9-1958
Fouad Chehab	23-9-1958	23-9-1964
Charles Helou	23-9-1964	23-9-1970
Suleiman Franjeh	23-9-1970	23-9-1976
Elias Sarkis	23-9-1976	23-9-1982
Bashir al-Gemayel (elected on 23-8-1982 and assassinated on September 14 before he took office)		
Amin al-Gemayel	23-9-1982	23-9-1988
Rene Moua'awad (assassinated)	5-11-1989	22-11-1989
Elias Hrawi	24-11-1989	24-11-1998
Emile Lahoud	24-11-1998	presumably until 24-11-2007

Source: Information International

The Maronites played a major role in the development of Lebanon's political, social and cultural institutions, and contributed to Lebanon's leading role in the Arab world. ●●

The Lebanese Follow Their Leaders

Prefer Peace but Are Ready to Fight for Their Families, Country and Religion

Information International, in collaboration with Dr. Charles Harb from the Department of Social and Behavioral Sciences at the American University of Beirut, conducted a survey to investigate some key aspects of the socio-political landscape in a representative sample of the Lebanese population.

The questionnaire consisted of several scales tapping into social identities, confessionalism, leadership affiliation, religiosity, perceived group threat, life satisfaction, and readiness for violence. The questionnaire was anonymous and confidential.

The field work took place during 18-27 November 2006. The sample consisted of 1,500 participants, distributed proportionally over the Lebanese Mohafazas, based on the number of registered voters in each.

55.1% of participants were males and 44.9% females. The distribution of participants by mohafaza and confession is detailed in Table no. 1.

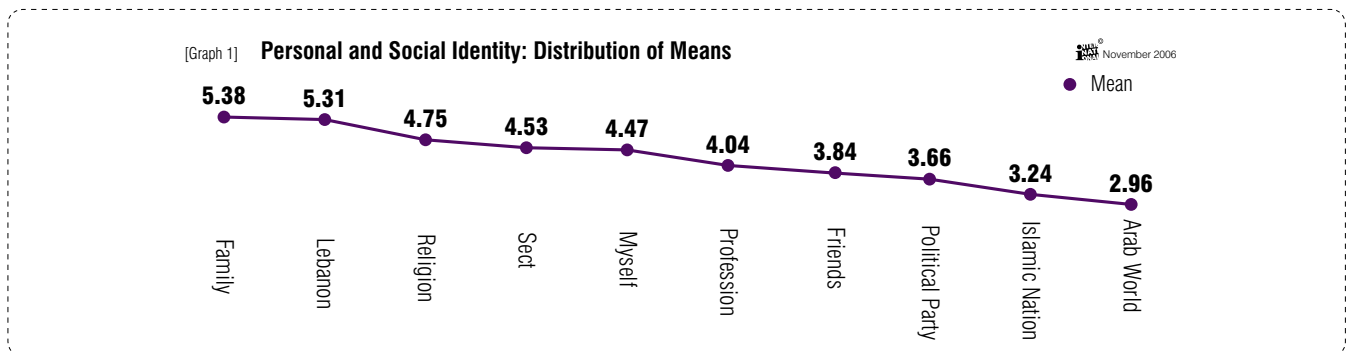
Confession	Mohafaza	Beirut	Beqa'a	Mount Lebanon	South	North	Total	Percent
Sunni		95	61	34	39	170	399	26.6%
Shia'a		42	106	32	235	0	415	27.7%
Druze		3	9	66	6	0	84	5.6%
Maronite		12	28	179	36	97	352	23.5%
Orthodox		21	16	26	8	41	112	7.5%
Other*		33	26	38	15	26	138	9.1%
Total		206	246	375	339	334	1500	100%

* The Category "Other" includes Catholics (63 respondents), Armenian Orthodox/Catholic (47), Alaoui (16) and Christian Minorities (12).

Personal and Social Identity

The first section of the questionnaire consisted of a series of questions that revolve around the participants' personal and social identity. Participants were asked to rate their endorsement of these identities using a 7 point scale that ranged from 0 (No, Not at All) to 6 (to a Very Large Extent).

Analyses of the data indicate that the most highly endorsed identities among the Lebanese participants are Family and Lebanon, followed by Religion and Confession. The least endorsed identities are the Arab and Islamic identities (Graph no. 1).



The statistical analysis of identity by confession showed the following:

- ⊙ There were significant differences between confessions on all identity dimensions except one: participants across confessions endorsed the Confessional Identity equally.
- ⊙ Maronite participants identified with their Family to a higher degree than both Sunni and Druze participants.
- ⊙ When it came to the Arab and Islamic Identity, both Sunni and Shia'a participants endorsed the Islamic Identity to a larger degree than the Arab Identity. However, an interesting Sunni by Shia'a interaction was found: Sunni participants scored significantly higher than Shia'a participants on the Arab Identity dimension, but scored lower than Shia'a participants on the Islamic Identity dimension (Graph no. 2).

Confessionalism, Leadership, Religiosity, Group Threat and Life Satisfaction

The second section of the questionnaire consisted of five different scales measuring confessionalism (degree to which one favors his/her own confession and thinks in confessional terms), religiosity (the role played by religion in one's life), perceived group threat (degree to which participants perceive their group to be threatened by others), leadership affiliation (degree to which participants are loyal to and follow their leader/or reference (Za'im/marja'a), and life satisfaction (cognitive evaluation of one's well being, and satisfaction with life).

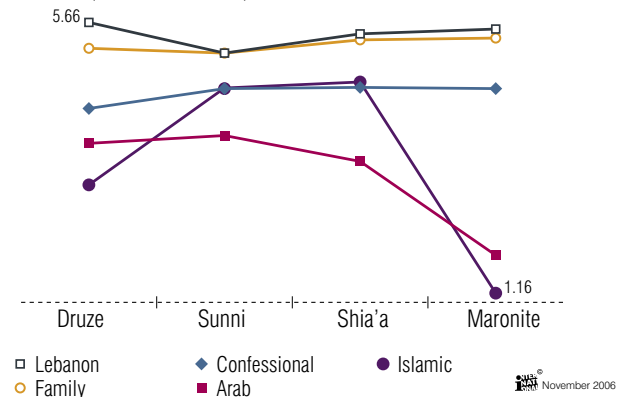
Overall, 12.5% (1/8) of participants said they have/follow no leader/reference whatsoever.

Analyses of the data related to this section reveal that Leadership ranks first, with a mean of 5.56, followed by Confessionalism (5.50), Religiosity (5.07), and Group Threat (5.02). These scores are above the scale midpoint, thus indicating that the Lebanese participants have strong leadership affiliation, are highly confessional, highly religious and perceive their group to be threatened by other groups. Furthermore, Life Satisfaction (3.99) was below the midpoint, indicating that the Lebanese participants expressed dissatisfaction with their lives. Graph no. 3 shows the mean distribution of these variables by confession.

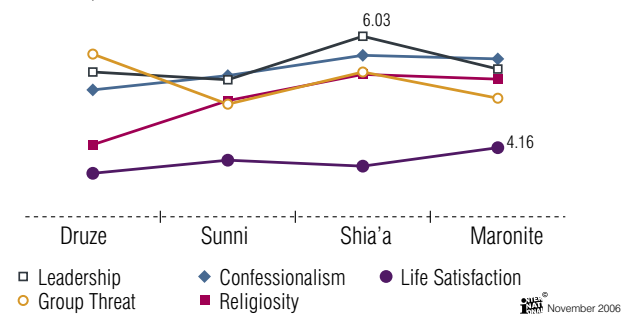
Willingness for Peaceful Defense vs. Willingness to Fight

The third section of the questionnaire tackled the issue of readiness to defend peacefully (through negotiations, demonstrations, etc.) a variety of causes, on a scale from

[Graph 2] **Personal and Social Identity: By Confession**
(Selected Confessions) Distribution of Means



[Graph 3] **Confessionalism, Leadership, Religiosity, Group Threat and Life Satisfaction by Confession**
(Selected Confessions) Distribution of Means



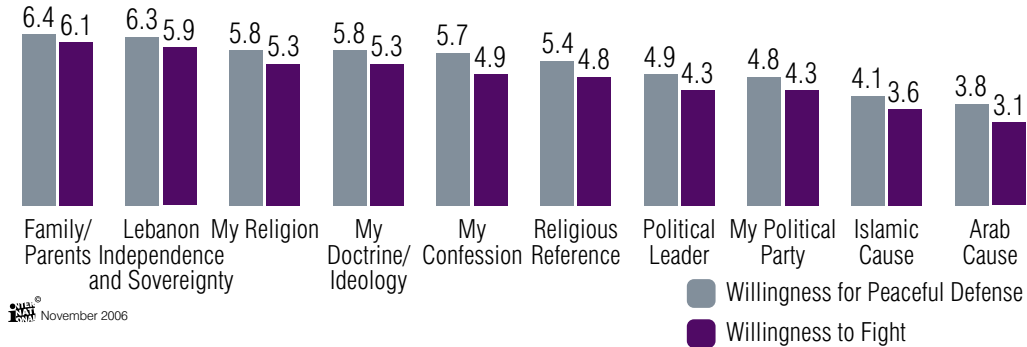
1 to 7, where 1 = (No, Not at All) to 7 (to a Very Large Extent).

The analysis of means reveals that participants are willing to peacefully defend their Families (6.42), followed by Lebanon's Independence and Sovereignty (6.27), Religion (5.80) and Doctrine/Ideology (5.79).

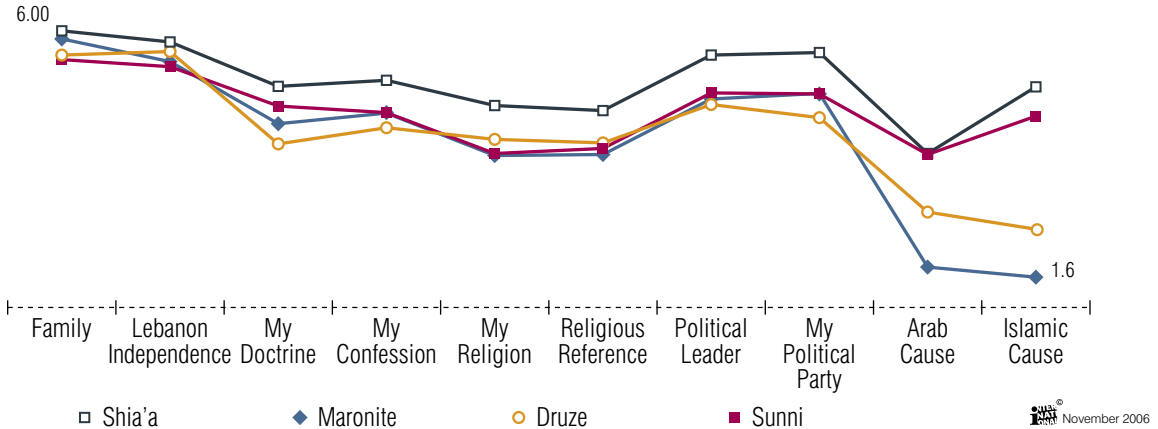
When asked whether they are willing to fight for the same causes, the same ranking was preserved with Family in the first place, followed by Lebanon's Independence and Sovereignty, Religion and Doctrine/Ideology, but at lower means.

This indicates that the willingness to defend peacefully any of the listed causes is higher than the willingness to fight for any of them (Graph no. 4).

[Graph 4] **Willingness for Peaceful Defense vs. Willingness to Fight**
Distribution of Means



[Graph 5] **Willingness to Fight by Confession (Selected Confessions)**
Distribution of Means



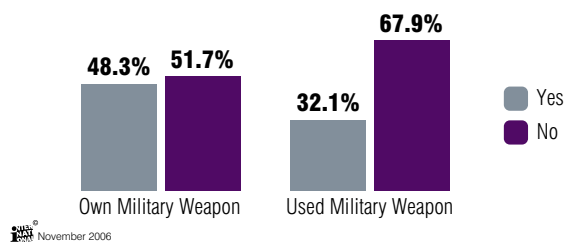
Furthermore, Lebanese participants were more willing to fight for religious/confessional causes than for their political leaders or parties.

Analysis of the Willingness to Fight by confession reveals that any Arab Cause and any Islamic Cause are highly endorsed by Sunni and Shia'a participants and not by Druze and Maronite. In addition, Islamic Cause seems to have greater appeal to both Sunni and Shia'a participants than the Arab Cause (Graph no. 5).

Ownership and Use of a Military Weapon

When asked whether they own a military weapon, 48.3% of participants reported to have access, personally or through relatives, to military weapons. On the other hand, 32.1% of participants reported to have used a military weapon before (Graph no. 6).

[Graph 6] **Ownership vs. Use of Military Weapons**



“48.3% of participants reported to have access to military weapons.”

Limiting the selection to male participants only, 80% of Druze male participants reported to have access to a military weapon, compared to 58.7% of Shia'a, 20.9% of Sunni and 50.8% of Maronite male participants.

Participants were also asked whether they are “willing to use military weapons if the situation gets worse in Lebanon”. On this issue, 40.6% of participants said yes, compared to 30.8% who said no, and 28.6% who said “Maybe”.

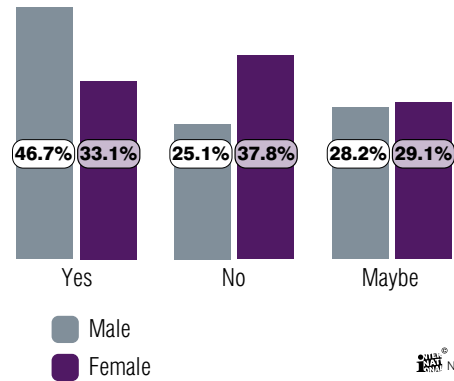
As to the readiness to use weapons by gender, 33.1% of female respondents said they are ready to use weapons in case the situation gets worse in Lebanon, while 46.7% of men said the same. (Graph no. 7)

The distribution of results by Mohafaza shows that 53.7% of participants in South Lebanon report to be ready to use a military weapon if things get worse in the country, compared to 42.7% in Beqa'a, 42.5% in North Lebanon, 38.4% in Beirut and 26.9% in Mount Lebanon (Graph no. 8).

Again, limiting the selection to males only, results are highest for Shia'a male participants, 64.6% of whom reported to be ready to use military weapons if things get worse in the country, with Sunni participants ranking second (51.3%) - (Graph no. 9).

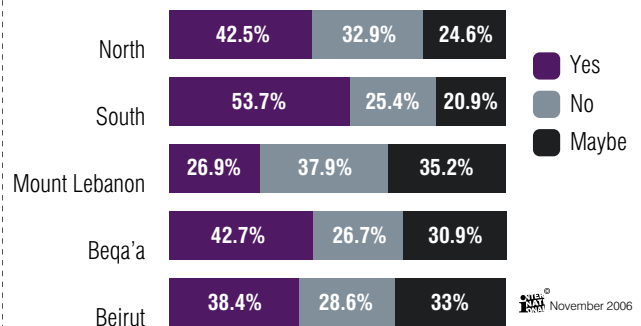
On the other hand, when asked whether they think that Others are willing to use military weapons if the situation gets worse in Lebanon, the percent of participants who agreed on this issue increased to 60.6%, compared to only 9.1% who said No, and 30.3% who replied Maybe.

[Graph 7] Willingness to Use Military Weapons by Gender



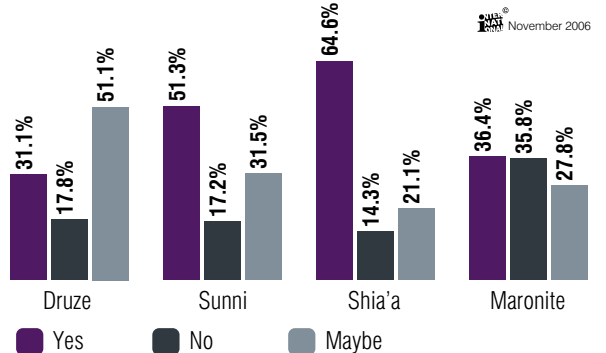
IPS November 2006

[Graph 8] Willingness to Use Military Weapons by Mohafaza



IPS November 2006

[Graph 9] Willingness to Use Military Weapons Among Males by Confession (Selected Confessions) %



IPS November 2006


Conclusion

Based on the previous findings, it is worthy to highlight the following results:

1. Family remains the most highly endorsed identity. Family Identity (5.38) was quickly followed by Lebanon (5.31), Religion (4.75) and Confession (4.53).
2. The Lebanese are strongly affiliated with their Leader Za'im/Marja'a; they are highly confessional, highly religious and also have a strong sense that the group they belong to is threatened. Furthermore, their life satisfaction levels are below the midpoint, a worrying trend when combined with the previous findings.
3. Lebanese are ready to fight for their Family in the first place, followed by Lebanon's Independence and Sovereignty, and their Religion and Doctrine. Interestingly, while the Lebanese express high Leadership Affiliation, they are also less likely to fight for them. Religion, Ideologies and Confessionalism are more prominently positioned on the list.
4. 48.3% of participants reported to have access, personally or through relatives, to military weapons. 32.1% of participants reported to have used a military weapon before.
5. Only 25.2% (1/4) of Lebanese males said they would not use a military weapon if things get worse in Lebanon.
6. Arab Identity and Fighting for Arab Causes have significantly less appeal than Islamic Identity and Fighting for Islamic Causes among both Sunni and Shia'a participants.
7. When the picture is viewed comprehensively, (i.e. identity profile, confessionalism, perceived threat, willingness to use weapons etc.), the situation in Lebanon seems to be dangerously polarized, and potentially explosive.

The Lebanese and Books

In a survey conducted by **Information International** in 2003 on a sample of 600 people in Greater Beirut:

- ◉ 36.7% of respondents read nothing and the core of regular readers was composed of university graduates and those between 15 and 24 years of age.
- ◉ 30.7% of readers said they read books, but estimates sizing up the number of serious readers of books reached a mere 14% of the population.
- ◉ 75.9% of the respondents use the internet for chatting while 41% use it for research. 

“32.1% of participants reported to have used a military weapon before.”

Description of the sample

The poll was conducted between November 18-27, 2006 on 1500 women and men in the different Lebanese areas respectively and according to the voters in each area, also respectively and the number of voters of each confession in these areas. Respondents were of different ages and different social levels and incomes.

Paris 3 Donor Conference

A Success or a Failure?

On January 25, 2007, world leaders met in the French capital to “voice their support to Lebanon’s reform efforts, in particular to Prime Minister Fouad Saniouira’s Cabinet”, the legitimacy of which is challenged by the country’s opposition forces.

The conference was held during a period of wide internal divisions never seen by the Lebanese since the adoption of the Taef Accord, which ended the 1975-1990 civil war.

While the opposition took to the streets, calling for early parliamentary elections and a “government of national unity”, Saniouira’s Cabinet was determined to continue its work, arguing that it enjoys Parliament’s support.

Pro-government forces maintain that the Lebanese democracy should be based on the rule of the majority, while the opposition declares that

the country’s political system has always been based on a consensual democracy.

The conference, held with support and enthusiasm from French President Jacques Chirac, was seen by some people as a backing to Saniouira’s Cabinet in the first place and then to the Lebanese people in general.

What has the conference achieved? What will its outcome be in Lebanon’s economic life?

Outcome

Thirty four governments and 14 regional and international organizations, which attended the conference, pledged to give Lebanon 7.6 billion USD to “help the government implement its financial and economic ‘reform plan’ and achieve stability and prosperity”. The amounts of money allocated to Lebanon are distributed by donor as shown in Table no. 1.

Distribution of Contributions by Donor

Table 1

Donor	Amount	Type
Kingdom of Saudi Arabia	1.1 billion USD	Grant: 100 million USD to support the budget Loan: 1 billion USD to implement development projects through the Saudi Development Fund
France	650 million USD	Loan: low-interest (the half paid this year)
European Commission	585 million USD	Unspecified: financing construction projects
United States	770 million USD	Loans: 250 million USD earmarked for ministerial reforms Grants: earmarked for the Lebanese Army and the UNIFIL, as well as for construction projects
Arab Monetary Fund	250 million USD	Loans: earmarked for the treasury
Arab Fund for Economic and Social Development	700 million USD	Loans: earmarked for construction projects
World Bank	1 billion USD	400 million USD will be paid this year earmarked for ministerial reforms. 300 million USD to finance the private sector in soft loans
International Monetary Fund	100 million USD	Unspecified: Support the implementation of economic reforms
Islamic Development Bank	250 million USD	Loans: earmarked for reconstruction projects
European Investment Bank	1183 million USD	Loans: earmarked for construction projects
Arab Development Fund	-	The Fund’s secretary general talked about his former contribution to projects in Lebanon (1.3 billion USD)
Belgium	26 million USD	10 million USD within the Belgian Cooperation Program 10 million USD in exportation and investments
Luxembourg	1.95 million USD	Grant
United Arab Emirates	300 million USD	Loans: earmarked for development projects through Abu Dhabi Development Fund
Italy	156 million USD	Loans: earmarked for construction projects
Spain	45 million USD	Grants: for a two-year period (2007-2008) for infrastructure maintenance projects
Brazil	1 million USD	Grant
Britain	150 million USD	40 million USD to finance UN relief projects, mainly those related to the Palestinian refugees
Germany	133.9 million USD	Unspecified
Malaysia	3 million USD	Grant
Finland	1.04 million USD	Financing reconstruction projects in cooperation with the United Nations
Austria	1.3 million USD	Grant: earmarked for war-stricken citizens (during the July-August 2006 war)
Sweden	5.8 million USD	Grant: earmarked for the United Nations Development Program (UNPD)
Slovenia	910 thousand USD	Grant: earmarked for the International Trust Fund for Demining (knowing that the fund is Slovenian)
Greece	6.5 million USD	Grant: earmarked for reconstruction projects

Cyprus	351 thousand USD	Grant: over five years which would make the total amount reach 1.755 million USD
Jordan	8 million USD	Grant: earmarked for rebuilding 2006 war-stricken towns
Egypt	44 million USD	Grant: earmarked for infrastructure maintenance projects
Canada	15 million USD	Unspecified
Ireland	20 million USD	Grant: paid within a two-year period
Denmark	6.5 million USD	Grant: earmarked for improving the living conditions of South Lebanon citizens, financing demining missions and supporting Palestinian refugees
Turkey	20 million USD	Loans: earmarked for construction projects
Sultanate of Oman	10 million USD	Grant
South Korea	1 million USD	Grant
China	4 million USD	Grant
Australia	2 million USD	Grant: earmarked for financing local civil society groups' projects
Norway	15 million USD	Unspecified
Japan	10.3 million USD	Grants: Clothes, food and demining projects

Source: Information International – The conference's minutes and the results published in local newspapers.

The following is noteworthy:

- ⊙ Lebanese newspapers said that the amount of money gathered at the Paris 3 Conference reached 7.62 billion USD; however, the total amount of the abovementioned numbers is 7,989.7 billion USD. The difference between the two numbers might have resulted from a mistake in Euro/Dollar exchange rate. In fact, France's contribution reached 500 million Euros and that of the European Commission 450 million Euros; but local newspapers said France's contribution was 650 million Euros and the European Union 585 million Euros instead of USD.
- ⊙ French President Jacques Chirac's insistence that donor countries specify the amount of their contribution brings back the results of the Paris 2 conference, where some countries did not honor their pledges. (Italy pledged to pay 200 million USD, Belgium 105 million USD and Bahrain 200 million USD. However, these amounts were never paid).
- ⊙ Some countries did not specify the nature of their contributions. Are they loans or grants? Are they soft loans to the Lebanese treasury bonds with low interests or loans to finance reconstruction and infrastructure maintenance projects?
- ⊙ Some donors' contributions were beggarly sums that hardly equal the end-of-service allowance of a high-ranked employee in some Lebanese public or military institutions. These donations seem trivial in a country that pays daily 8 million USD on the debt service.

The abovementioned facts made some observers ask about the purpose behind the presence of 34 different countries and 14 organizations in the conference, while the funding was mainly provided by only 7 to 10 parties.

Conclusion

Lebanon is in need for grants and soft loans (15-20 years) with low interests (3%) in order to limit the rise of the public debt, which reached, at the end of 2006, 61,215 billion LBP. In 2007, debt interests will increase by 4,350 billion LBP and the government will have to pay 11,149 billion LBP.

The outcome of the Paris 3 Conference does not help the government limit the increase in the public debt; in fact, a deeper look into the distribution of the contributions shows that the net liquid loans to the treasury do not exceed 900 million USD in 2007, or 12.1% of the money needed for this year.

Paris 3 was perhaps an important conference, but it did not fulfill the government's hopes and goals.

Loans and grants to finance reconstruction and infrastructure projects are not a priority for the government, as it has previously received 400 million USD as funding for projects which were never achieved. Consequently, a large number of these grants would be frozen until further notice.

Some people may disagree, but the truth will be revealed in the coming months, as the government would be forced to issue more treasury bonds whether in Lebanese Pounds or in foreign currencies to cover the treasury needs and pay the salaries of its employees.

A Success or a Failure?

- ⊙ If the amount of liquid money acquired is a measure of success, then Paris 2 was by far more successful.
- ⊙ If the level of political support to the person of Prime Minister Fouad Sanioura and "his government" is a measure, then Paris 3 was more successful.
- ⊙ If the measure of success is the quality of the "reform plan" and the level of the government's commitment to its implementation, then both Paris 2 and 3 were a failure.

A new measure ought to be considered; that of the capacity to plan and undertake major projects, which would be worthy of these pledges and to adjust to fiscal realities.

Analysts deduce that the Paris 3 Conference could have been a success had the government's priorities been focused on projects instead of debt payment.

The Year 2006 in Review

Increase in Deficit and Debt

The year 2006 turned out to be a year of upheaval, which had a negative impact on Lebanon's economic life. *Li Monthly* will dedicate an article of two parts to present some facts and figures in 2006. In Part 1, *Li Monthly* will focus on the public finance, the reserves of the Central Bank, the number of laws passed, the number of tourists and visitors and that of new cars sold.

Public Finance

For the second consecutive year, the budget law was not presented to Parliament within the constitutional deadline. Revenues were collected and expenditures were set on the basis of the provisional twelfth (provisional allocation of expenditure on monthly basis, based on the previous year's budget). The actual expenditures and revenues came as follows:

- ⊙ Expenditures reached 11,877 billion LBP compared with 10,203 billion LBP in 2005, with an increase by 1,674 billion LBP or a rate of 16.4%
- ⊙ Revenues reached 7,295 billion LBP compared with 7,405 billion LBP in 2005, with a decrease by 110 million LBP and a rate of 1.5%
- ⊙ Based on the abovementioned figures, the deficit reached 4,582 billion LBP or a rate of 38.6% compared with 27.4% in 2005
- ⊙ The public debt service reached 4,556.8 billion LBP, with an increase by 1,022.5 billion LBP compared with 2005 and a rate of 29%. The increase in the debt service represents 61% of the increase rate of the overall expenditures.
- ⊙ Customs revenues reached 1,074 billion LBP compared with 1,267.5 billion LBP last year. The revenues of the Value Added Tax (V.A.T.) reached 1,658.7 billion LBP against 1,693.4 billion LBP in 2005.

Central Bank Reserves

At the end of 2006, the Central Bank gold reserves reached 8,754 billion LBP compared to 7,140 billion LBP in 2005, or an increase by 1,614 billion LBP, which was due to a rise in the price of gold per ounce.

The bank reserves in foreign currencies amounted to 19,560 billion LBP (around 13 billion USD) against 17,573 billion LBP at the end of 2005, or an increase by 1,987 billion LBP. In fact, several Arab countries placed deposits in foreign currencies at the Central Bank to support the Lebanese Pound in the wake of the July-August 2006 war against Lebanon. Accordingly, the reserves of gold and foreign

currencies rose by 3,601 billion LBP in 2006. However, it is noteworthy that these numbers do not represent the amount of net reserves, which are never revealed by the Central Bank.

Passed Laws

Only seven parliamentary sessions were held during 2006, including 3 legislative sessions, during which 69 laws were passed, including:

- ⊙ Law no. 710, dated February 3, 2006: general budget law of 2005 and its annexes
- ⊙ Law no. 750, dated May 15, 2006: extended to December 31, 2006, the law regulating the rent of a real estate
- ⊙ Law no. 760, dated November 11, 2006: authorized the government to conclude a contract with the European Investment Bank to finance a waste water project worth 60 million Euros.
- ⊙ Law no. 764, dated November 11, 2006: authorized the government to sign the 2005 International Agreement on Olive Oil and Table Olives
- ⊙ Law passed on June 9, 2006: amended the law pertaining to the creation of the Constitutional Council
- ⊙ Law passed on June 9, 2006: organized the affairs of the Druze confession
- ⊙ Law passed on December 8, 2006: suspended legal, judicial and contractual deadlines.⁽¹⁾

Tourists and Visitors

The number of tourists and visitors reached 1,062,635 compared to 1,139,524 in 2005, with a decrease by 76,889 or 6.7%. This decrease was due to the July-August 2006 Israeli war, as it was estimated that around 1.3 million tourists and visitors would come to Lebanon during the summer.

New Cars

16,168 new cars were sold in 2006, compared with 16,210 in 2005, or a slight decrease by 42 cars. RYMCO (the exclusive agent of Nissan, GMC and Infinity) ranked first with 2,467 cars sold. BUMC (the exclusive agent of Toyota and Lexus) ranked second with 2,195 cars sold and Bassoul Hneineh (Renault, BMW and Alfa Romeo) came in the third position with 1,753 cars sold. ●●

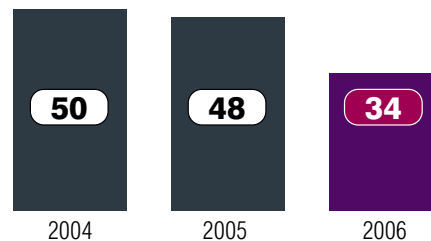
⁽¹⁾ *The last three laws do not have numbers as they were not signed by President Emile Lahoud.*

Foreign Companies in Lebanon: A Decrease in Number due to War

The second half of 2006 witnessed a decrease in the number of new Arab and foreign companies in Lebanon. Eleven new Arab and foreign companies were registered in the country during the second half of 2006, compared to 23 companies during the first half of the year, while the number reached 48 in 2005 and 50 in 2004 (Graph no. 1). This decrease is perhaps due to Lebanon's political and security instability, in particular the July-August 2006 Israeli war and internal tensions. These companies are distributed by country of origin, capital and domain as shown in the following Table no.1.

[Graph 1] **Number of Registered Foreign Companies in Lebanon 2004-2006**

Source: Lebanese Official Gazette



Distribution of Arab and Foreign Companies by Country of Origin, Capital and Domain

Table 1

Company Name	Country of Origin	Factual Certificate No. and Issuance Date	Capital	Domain	Company Representative in Lebanon
W.I. International S.A.	Japan	2393 July 6, 2006	10,000 USD	Buying, selling, exporting, importing trademarks	Samir Idris
Health Invest Co W.L.H	Bahrain	2394 August 1, 2006	20,000 BHD (52,000 USD)	Health services	Salma Ali Alisir Katili
Arevat&DSA	France	2395 August 19, 2006	74,488 thousand Euro		Jerome Barth
Melody Artist Management	Egypt	2396 September 14, 2006	5.000.000 EGP (866.000 USD)	Organizing events and weddings, management of artist affairs	Habib Rahhal
Bridgestone Middle East and Africa FZE	United Arab Emirates	2397 September 23, 2006	1.000.000 AED (272.000 USD)	General Trade (representative office in Lebanon)	Keisuki Goto
Al Mataf for Contracting	Iraq	2398 October 6, 2006	500.000.000 IQD (339.000 USD)	Construction contracting and water and irrigation projects	Mazen Salman Taleb
Gulf Scientific Corporation	England	2399 November 9, 2006	500,000 USD	General trade (representative office in Lebanon)	Wahib Afiouni
Ayna Corporation	United States	2400 November 11, 2006	5,000 USD	Developing Internet programs and services	Adonis al-Faqih
Whirlpool Europe	Italy	2401 December 11, 2006	78.000.000 Euro	Home Appliances (representative office in Lebanon)	Raji al-Mawla
Degrémont S.P.A.	Italy	2402 December 11, 2006	1.3 million Euro	Water and waste treatment, energy production	Bruno Hochard
Gafo LTD	England	2403 December 23, 2006	1.000.000 GBP	Production of canned and frozen food	Jaqueline Jamil Awad

Source: The Lebanese official gazette

Value Added Tax

“The Fifth Anniversary”

23% of Budget Revenues

Since 1993, Lebanon has been witnessing a wide increase in expenditures against low revenues resulting a deficit in the general budget, which in turn is leading to an ever-rising public debt.

At the end of 2000, Prime Minister Rafik Hariri and his team announced the adoption of a new strategy to “reduce the budget deficit and the public debt”.

Accordingly, Parliament approved a ministerial decree to impose the Value Added Tax (V.A.T.) in an attempt to increase revenues. The V.A.T. was considered one of the achievements of Fouad Sanioura, who was the minister of finance at that time (although it was under preparation during Salim Hoss government).

After five years since the adoption of the V.A.T., did the country’s financial situation improve?

The V.A.T. Law

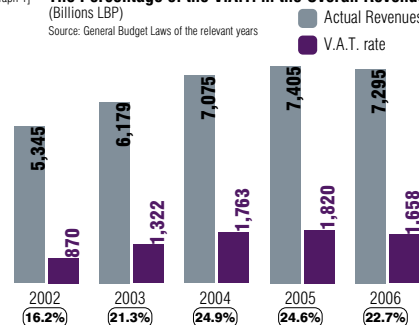
The Cabinet adopted the Value Added Tax Law and referred it to Parliament according to decree no. 5745 of June 21, 2001. The specialized parliamentary committees discussed the law during several sessions from October 11, 2001 to November 27, 2001, without making any important amendments. The law was then referred to Parliament’s general committee, which met for two consecutive days on December 4 and 5 and passed the law under article no. 379 of December 14, 2001 and effective February 1, 2002.

The V.A.T. rate was set at 10% and was imposed on any company or person with a turnover of 500 million LBP annually, i.e. for four consecutive quarters. (The ceiling was later decreased by article 22 of the 2003 General Budget Law to 300 million LBP, effective May 1, 2003 and 150 million LBP, effective January 1, 2004. However, the ceiling was modified again by virtue of article 20 of the 2004 General Budget Law dated April 23, 2004 to 225 million LBP, effective January 1, 2004 and 150 million LBP, effective January 1, 2005).

The government has explained the adoption of the V.A.T. by the following:

- ⊙ Reducing the budget deficit
- ⊙ Ensuring continuous economic growth and financial and monetary stability
- ⊙ Introducing an alternative broad base tax on consumption which would play an important role in generating revenues

[Graph 1] **The Percentage of the V.A.T. in the Overall Revenues**
(Billions LBP)
Source: General Budget Laws of the relevant years



The law was met by strong criticism and rejection and was challenged by 12 deputies before the Constitutional Council. The latter announced in its decision no.1 of January 31, 2002, the annulment of some minor articles; thus, the law became effective.

What has the V.A.T. Achieved?

Five years have passed since the adoption of the V.A.T. and its percentage in the overall revenues has increased, as shown in Graph no. 1.

General Budget Deficit from 2002 until 2006 (amounts in billions LBP)						Table 1
Year	Budget revenues (est.)	Budget revenues (actual)	Expenditures (est.)	Expenditures (actual)	Deficit (est.)	Deficit (actual)
2002	5499	5345	9375	9234	41%	42%
2003	6475	6179	8600	9434	24.7%	34.5%
2004	6400	7075	9400	10540	31.9%	32.8%
2005	6917	7405	10000	10203	30.8%	25.4%
2006	-	7295	-	11877	-	38.5%

The 2006 General Budget was not passed by Parliament and these numbers are the effective results.

Source: General Budget Laws of the relevant years

Based on Graph no.1 and Table no.1, the following is noteworthy:

- ⊙ The V.A.T. has reached almost a quarter of the actual revenues, compared with 16.2% in 2002.
- ⊙ The adoption of the V.A.T. did not lead to a major decrease in the deficit.

The Lebanese people lost 10% of their income and prices increased by 5 to 6% as a result of the adoption of the V.A.T.

According to the “reform plan” presented to the Paris 3 Donor Conference, the government is seeking to increase the V.A.T rate to 12% in 2008 and 15% in 2010.

Amnesty Laws: Enforcing Justice or Encouraging Crime?

With a certain degree of regularity, Lebanon is facing an increase in the rate of criminal behavior. Opinions vary on the reason behind the resurgence of violence, given that the country's most recent and longest civil war ended in 1990, over fifteen years ago. Some argue that it was something expected, due to the global spread of criminal behavior. Others say that it is the result of fifteen years of internecine fighting in Lebanon, while many maintain that it is due to Lebanon's lack of law enforcement, and in particular, to the adoption of what are known as amnesty laws.

Amnesty Laws after the Civil War

Lebanese Amnesty Law no. 84 was issued on August 27, 1991, after the end of the civil war, granting general amnesty for all crimes committed before March 28, 1991. The following crimes, among others, were exempted from the legislation:

- 1- Crimes committed against the external state security, as stipulated in Articles no. 273 to no. 300 in the Lebanese penal code.
- 2- Crimes transferred to the judicial council prior to the enforcement of this law.
- 3- Assassinations and attempted assassinations on political, diplomatic, and religious figures, Arabs and non-Arabs.

At that time, the Lebanese considered this law as a necessity for ending the war and promoting coexistence. Some people also believed that the amnesty law should cover all crimes, with no exemptions at all.

Later, Law no. 666 was issued on December 30, 1997, extending the general amnesty to all drug-related crimes committed before December 31, 1995.

This law provoked two reactions. Some thought it would allow the state to close the open drug files and offer a second chance to drug dealers and users. Others thought it would encourage drug dealers to continue their trade, since the law granted amnesty to crimes committed after the civil war and until the beginning of 1996.

Based on Article 53 of the Lebanese Constitution, President Elias Hrawi issued around 160 amnesty decrees for the benefit of numerous criminals and assassins. These decrees raised also serious doubts about President Hrawi's motives, as well as the motives of those working closely with him, considering that such actions were being implemented for the first time in Lebanon, and that they could very well have resulted in the annulment of the role of the Judiciary.

Amnesty Laws Well Into the Postwar Era

Fifteen years after the end of the civil war, Parliament adopted two additional amnesty laws.

General Amnesty and its Beneficiaries since the End of the War
Table 1

Amnesty Law	Beneficiaries
Law No 84 August 1991	All those who committed war crimes except for those who committed crimes against prominent personalities
Law No 666 December 1997	Drug users and dealers
Article No 53 of the Lebanese Constitution 1989-1998 (Elias Hrawi Presidential Term)	160 amnesty decrees that involved numerous people
Law No 677 & 678 July 2005	Samir Geagea – those involved in the Majdel A'anjar and Dennyeh crimes

Source: Compiled by Information International based on amnesty laws and decrees

The first, Law no. 677, was issued on July 19, 2005, stipulating the release of Samir Geagea, the Lebanese Forces leader who had been convicted by the Judicial Council for the assassination of Dany Chamoun and his family, as well as for the assassination of former Prime Minister Rashid Karamé.

It is worth examining the ways in which the general amnesty in Lebanon benefits only a few selected people. Looking deeper into the issue, one realizes that it was indeed possible to issue private decrees instead of general amnesty laws. However, private decrees would not have allowed exempted criminals to return to positions of political power, while general amnesty laws would.

Regardless of the choice of the judicial text, what remains most dangerous about Samir Geagea's amnesty was that it would not have been possible without granting additional amnesty for those responsible for the crimes committed in Majdel A'anjar and Dennyeh, as the precarious nature of Lebanon's confessional system demands such constant recalibration to maintain its equilibrium.

As a result, Law no. 678 was also adopted on July 19, 2005, granting general amnesty to the Majdel A'anjar and Dennyeh crimes and to all related files, including those previously called before the military courts in accordance with Accusative Decision no. 1, dated January 3, 2005, because the new amnesty law was issued before sentencing took place. Table no. 1 details the dates of amnesty laws and decrees issued from 1991 – 2005 and the beneficiaries.

Some people believe that general amnesty laws will encourage the resurgence of violent attacks and insurgencies by extremist groups. Furthermore, many observers maintain that the passing of the laws hampers the process of truth and reconciliation.

However, other analysts say that without these amnesty laws, Lebanon would remain mired in never-ending, tribal-sectarian strife, a situation that would only lead to more wars and deeper crises, and for that reason, the laws are necessary to ensure continuity and the functioning of the state.

Civil Servants Exams: Many Candidates, Only Few Accepted

Unemployment rate in Lebanon is gradually rising with the increase in the number of graduate students (who reached in 2005, 25,607 graduates). Few are the job opportunities in the private sector (estimated 8,000 opportunities in 2005), while those in the public sector are difficult to access, since they are subject to confessional arrangements.

While confessional considerations have a say in state employment contests, the candidates' competence remains the criterion for passing the exams.

As soon as state administrations announce, through the Civil Service Council, the holding of contests and exams to choose permanent employees, thousands of applications start to flow but the results are always disastrous: either nobody passes or very few succeed. In other cases, a small number of people apply for the job, either for a lack of graduates in the required specialization or for the unattractive salary the position offers. This highlights the erosion of the Lebanese educational system.

2005 Exams

In 2005, the Civil Service Council held several exams for posts in public institutions and administrations. The number of applicants reached 11,313 people, 10,644 of whom were allowed to join the contests. 8,274 candidates participated in the exams and only 1,930 passed, or a passing rate of 23.3% (Graph no.1). The passing rate varied according to each position, as it reached 100% in some fields and 3% in others.

Positions with No Applicants

Table 1

Administration	Position
Sir al-Dinnieh Public Hospital	Head of the Anesthetization, Reanimation and Emergency Room
	Head of Medical Affairs Department
Trablous Public Hospital	Archives employee
	Assistant Nurse
Bint Jbeil Public Hospital	
Trablous Public Hospital	
General Administration of Beirut Public Hospital/ Karantina	Assistant Laboratory Technician
General Administration of Orange-Nassau Hospital	
Halba Public Hospital	
General Administration of General-Nassau Hospital	
Sir al-Dinnieh Public Hospital	Head of Laboratory (Physician or pharmacist)
Trablous Public Hospital	Head of Radiation Department
General Administration of Ba'abda Public Hospital	
Halba Public Hospital	
Trablous Public Hospital	Medical secretary
General Administration of Beirut Public Hospital/ Karantina	
Mais al-Jabal Public Hospital	
Bint Jbeil Public Hospital	Head of Nursing Department
Trablous Public Hospital	
Sir al-Dinnieh Public Hospital	
Bint Jbeil Public Hospital	Head of Administrative and Financial Department
Mais al-Jabal Public Hospital	
Trablous Public Hospital	
General Administration of Ba'abda Public Hospital	Head of Administrative Department
Halba Public Hospital	

Source: Civil Service Council Report 2005

Note: *li Monthly* listed briefly some of the vacant positions in public hospitals that nobody applied for. There are many other positions not mentioned in this table.

“8,274 candidates participated in the exams and only 1,930 passed, or a passing rate of 23.3%”

Many Candidates and Few Passing					Table 2
Administration	Position	Number of Accepted Applicants	Number of Candidates	Number of Passing Candidates	
National Institute of Administration	Accountant- Auditor	118	76	7	
	Data entry	44	40	8	
	Maintenance Technician	14	14	3	
	Treasurer	24	21	5	
Trablous Public Hospital	Data entry	44	40	8	
	I.T. personnel	56	48	5	
Ministry of Agriculture	Second-grade ranger	181	173	2	
	Third-grade ranger	1,103	929	86	
Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Emigrants	Third-grade positions in the foreign corps	14	12	2	
Central Administration of Statistics	Economic Sciences specialist	32	22	3	
	Statistics specialist	18	13	2	
	Geography expert	79	60	1	
	Programmer	95	76	12	
	Business Management specialist	94	53	-	
Electricité du Liban (EDL)	Measurer	170	143	10	
	Specialized technician- Electricity	292	241	20	
	Specialized technician- Air Conditioning	48	40	3	
	Specialized technician- Industrial Mechanics	107	77	3	
	Specialized technician- Electronics	364	282	20	
	Specialized technician- Accounting system programmer	351	249	19	
	Architect	60	48	5	
	Accountant	1,499	1,026	17	
Ministry of Public Works and Transportation	Trainer	149	116	4	
	Cad-drawer	68	54	2	
Lebanese Institution for Standards and Specifications	Biochemistry specialist	72	42	3	
Lebanese Customs	First Controller	54	49	8	
	Controller	84	74	11	
Regie Tobacco Factory/ Trablous	Technician/ Industrial Mechanics	15	14	1	
	Technician/ Industrial mechanics	26	19	2	
	Technician/ Electricity or Industrial mechanics	20	17	-	
	Office employee	168	84	12	
Beirut Public University Hospital	Driver	87	35	6	
	Legal consultant	13	13	-	

Source: Civil Service Council Report 2005



Few candidates and many passing

Table 3

Administration	Position	Number of Accepted Applicants	Number of Candidates	Number of Passing Candidates
Municipality of Beirut	Medical examiner	27	27	15
Sir al-Dinnieh Public Hospital	Registered nurse	7	6	6
Directorate General of Antiquities	Restoration architect	12	11	8
	Archeologist responsible for inventories of transferred archeological properties	3	3	3
Sibline Public Hospital	Assistant legal nurse	7	7	5
Regie Tobacco Factory/ Trablous	Architect- head of facility- head of factory	5	5	5
State Employees Cooperative	Pharmacist	8	8	6
General Administration of Orange-Nassau Hospital	Laboratory technician	13	10	7
Car and Traffic Association	Telecom engineer	4	4	2
	Traffic Control specialist	3	3	3

Source: Civil Service Council Report 2005

The following tables no. 1, 2 and 3 show some results of state exams.

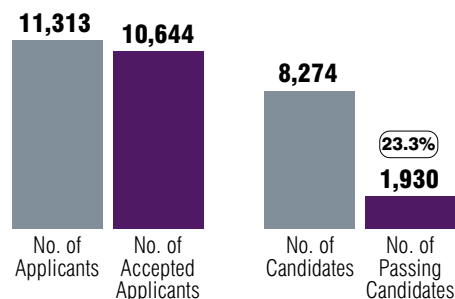
Many Graduates with Low Educational Level

The Lebanese civil war had a negative impact on the educational sector in Lebanon, which recently saw an increase in the number of graduates against a decrease in the quality of education.

In his book entitled "Lebanon's Reality: Cases and Opinions," resigned Minister of Foreign Affairs Fawzi Salloukh presented some examples about the cultural and educational level of some candidates participating in a contest for third-grade positions at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in 1998. Salloukh was then a member of the jury. The following are some examples of the candidates' answers in an oral exam:

- ⊙ A candidate with a degree in Arab Literature did not know the name of the Arab writer who won a Nobel Prize in Literature (Egyptian writer Nagib Mahfouz).
- ⊙ A candidate with a degree in Arabic Language did not know the author of the Prophet (Gebran Khalil Gebran).
- ⊙ A candidate with a Law Degree said that the Lebanese Constitution was set in 1948 (it was set in 1926).
- ⊙ Many candidates with a Law Degree did not know how to categorize companies (Offshore, Holding, etc.).
- ⊙ A candidate with a degree in Political Science said that Henry Kissinger was a former president of the United States and that he died. (Kissinger was a Secretary of

[Graph 1] State Employment Exams in 2005 (in thousands)
Source: Civil Service Council Report 2005



State and is still alive).

- ⊙ A candidate with a Law Degree said that the legislative decree is issued by Parliament. (It is issued by the Council of Ministers in line with a law passed by Parliament).
- ⊙ Candidates with a degree in journalism did not know any Lebanese prominent journalist.

Many specialists in education point out that in order to improve the quality of education in Lebanon, a comprehensive plan ought to be adopted starting from public and private elementary schools and reaching

Free Higher Education: A Past Service

A government's main tasks include drafting laws and legislations and providing the citizens with basic services such as health, housing and education. Since the creation of the state, these services were granted for free. However, with the development and division of the government's duties, nominal fees were imposed and these services were completely privatized in several countries.

Some countries have completely eliminated the free education, while others preserved the right for a free and compulsory education in the elementary phase and imposed nominal tuitions in other phases. Today, most countries, especially European and American countries, are starting to impose high tuitions in public higher education institutions, similar to those imposed in private institutions. *li Monthly* made a comparison between education tuitions in different public universities in several countries, according to the following Table no. 1.

Comparison between Fees in Different Public Universities by Country			Table 1
Country	Number of Public Universities	Tuition (USD)	
Kingdom of Saudi Arabia	11	Free	
United Arab Emirates	6	Free for UAE students, while fees in private universities reach 6,500	
Jordan	8	428-857 for the Jordanian students	
Egypt	14	5.2-26.2 for the Egyptian students while fees in private universities range between 2,600-4,400	
Tunisia	1	Free	
Morocco	68	Free	
Syria	5	6	
Algeria	27	Free	
Libya	9	Free	
Iran	52 public universities+ 28 public medical universities	Free	
Germany	350	Free for the scholarly year for each specialization but the student should pay 400 USD each semester after the end of the specialization. A new law was passed in 2006 stipulating that students should pay 500 Euros every semester.	
Russia	685	Free, but in private universities fees range between 5,000 and 19,000	
France	All universities are public	200-528	
Italy	58	1,140-1,340	
Spain	52	Nominal fees, but in private universities they reach around 5,860	
Britain	All universities are public except for one private university	1,940-5,820, in the private university they reach 15,000	
Australia	36	2,750-6,650	
New Zealand	All universities are public	7,800-13,860	
Angola	1	Free	
Ivory Coast	3	Nominal fees	
China	1,000	Students pay a percentage of the fee	
Canada	90	2,515-7,400	
Sudan	27	Free for Sudanese students, fees for foreign students range between 500-800	
Senegal	2	Nominal fees	
Japan	135	12,000	
United States			
Alaska	5	8,000-10,000	
Arizona	4	4,000-9,000	
Kansas	13	8,000-10,000	
California	2	10,000-14,000	
Florida	16	3,000-4,000	
Texas	15	5,000-7,000	
Washington	6	5,000-7,000	
Minnesota	10	8,000	
Maryland	8	7,500	

Source: Official websites of the relevant countries

While Arab public universities are still adopting the free higher education, US public universities impose high fees. European countries are offering free higher education but are aiming to impose higher fees in the few coming years. ●●

A University for Each Confession

Confessionalism is one of the main structural attributes of the Lebanese society. The Lebanese law recognizes the existence of eighteen different religious confessions, each with its own hierarchy, its own independent council, its own personal status laws, and its own institutions related to medical, social, and educational affairs.

Concerning the country's confessional educational institutions, Article 10 of the Lebanese Constitution states:

“Education is free insofar as it is not contrary to public order and morals and does not interfere with the dignity of any of the religions or creeds. There shall be no violation of the right of religious communities to have their own schools provided they follow the general rules issued by the state regulating public instruction”.

More than one hundred years ago, a number of Lebanese confessions established private schools to provide secondary-level instruction. University-level instruction at the time was limited to the Lebanese University, three Christian universities and four other universities, which were relatively and mildly distinct from the confessional system.

However, starting the mid 1980s, this situation began to change. The Lebanese government started licensing private universities and higher education institutions which were directly connected to religious bodies.

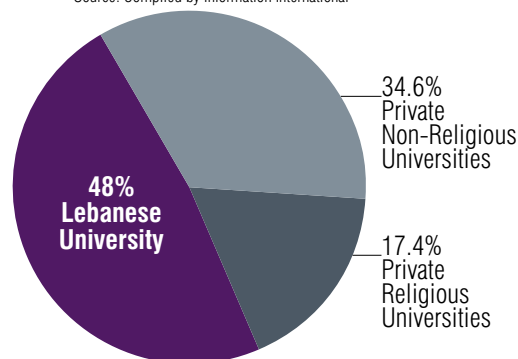
The government continued to do this throughout 1999, 2000, and 2001. It also began giving permits to commercial institutions, raising the current number of higher education institutions in Lebanon to 38. Each of these institutions belongs to one of five categories:

1. Old, prestigious universities that offer an advanced level of instruction and have become highly reputable among Lebanese and foreign students.
2. New institutions that have been established by commercial companies and have proven themselves capable of offering an advanced level of instruction, which allows them to compete with the old, prestigious institutions.

[Graph 1]

Distribution of Students in Higher Educational Institutions

Source: Compiled by Information International



3. New institutions that have been established by commercial companies and are motivated by profit over the quality of the education they offer, and which have collectively damaged the reputation of educational institutions in Lebanon.
4. Institutions that have been established by religious and confessional associations and committees and have proven themselves capable of offering an advanced level of instruction.
5. New institutions that have been established by religious and confessional associations and committees but have not proven an advanced level of instruction.

What follows is a list of the 16 higher education institutions in Lebanon that are connected to religious associations and committees:

Holy Spirit University, Kaslik (USEK):

The University of the Holy Spirit, a member of the Lebanese Maronite Order, was licensed according to Article 17 of the Higher Education Planning Law for the year 1961. In 2005, 5,949 students were enrolled at USEK.

Trablous University Institute for Islamic Studies:

The Institute is affiliated with the Islamic Reform Association in Trablous and was licensed according to Decree no. 3484 on October 15, 1986. Around 214 students are enrolled at the Institute.

Al-Imam al-Ouza'i Islamic College:

The college is affiliated with the Islamic al-Waqf in Beirut. It was licensed according to Decree no. 3484 on October 15, 1986. Around 3,039 students are enrolled at the college.

Haigazian University:

Haigazian University, a member of the Union of Armenian Evangelical Churches, was licensed according to Article 17 of the Higher Education Planning Law for the year 1961. It was first established as a faculty and became a full-fledged university in 1996. Around 700 students are enrolled at Haigazian.

Antonine University:

Antonine University, a member of the Lebanese Maronite Order, was licensed according to Decree no. 3358 on August 12, 1986. It was first established as a technical institute and became a full-fledged university according to Decree no. 9278 on October 8, 1996. Around 1,120 students are enrolled at Antonine.

Beirut Islamic University (BIU):

The Beirut Islamic University, a member of Dar al-Fatwa (the highest Sunni Muslim religious authority in Lebanon), was licensed according to Decree no. 3484 on October 15, 1986. It was first established as a faculty, called the Islamic Da'awa Faculty, and later became a full-fledged university. Around 448 students are enrolled at BIU.

La Sagesse University:

La Sagesse University, a member of the Maronite Archdiocese of Beirut, was licensed according to Article 17 of the Higher Education Planning Law. It was first established as a higher institute of law and became a full-fledged university in 1999. Around 1,893 students are enrolled at La Sagesse.

Maqassed University of Beirut:

Maqassed University, a member of the Maqassed Philanthropic Islamic Association of Beirut, was licensed according to Decree no. 3485 on October 15, 1986. In 2000, it was renamed the Maqassed University of Beirut. Around 131 students are enrolled at Maqassed.

University of Balamand:

Balamand University was licensed according to Decree no. 9764 on February 26, 1975 as a higher institute of theology located within the Saydet al-Balamand Convent. On June 16, 1988, Decree no. 4885 licensed the Orthodox Patriarchate of Antioch and the East to expand the theology school into an institution for higher education, which was given

the name Balamand University. Around 2,813 students are enrolled at Balamand.

Notre Dame University of Louayze (NDU)

Notre Dame University of Louayze, a member of the Mariamite Maronite Order, was licensed according to Decree no. 4116 on August 27, 1987. Around 4,677 students are enrolled at NDU.

Islamic University in Lebanon (IUL):

The Islamic University in Lebanon, a member of the Higher Islamic Shia'a Council, was licensed according to Decree no. 8600 on June 12, 1996. Around 2,699 students are enrolled at IUL.

Al-Jinan University:

Al-Jinan University, part of the Al-Jinan Association (The Islamic Association), was licensed according to Decree no. 1998 on December 21, 1999. Around 1,167 students are enrolled at Al-Jinan.

Sainte Famille Higher Institute for Nursing and Physiotherapy Sciences:

The institute is affiliated with the Sainte Famille Maronite Order. It was licensed according to Decree no. 3584 on August 7, 2000. It gathers around 239 students.

Al-Da'awa University Institute for Islamic Studies:

It was licensed according to Decree no. 1947 on December 21, 1999. Around 290 students are enrolled at the institute.

Saint Paul Institute for Philosophy and Theology: with 158 students.

Near-East Theology Institute: with 17 students.

Conclusion

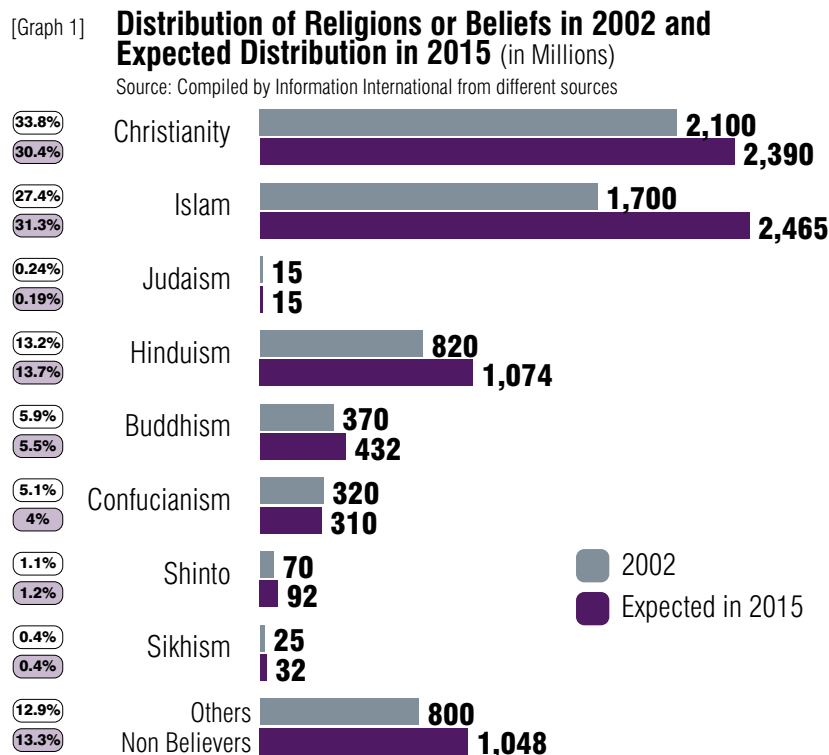
From this list it is possible to conclude that students enrolled at higher education institutions affiliated with religious bodies reach 25,554 students and constitute 17.4% of the entire university student population in Lebanon, who reach 146,961 students (Graph no. 1). It is worth noting that at each of these institutions, most of the enrolled students belong to the same confession that established the institution. This also holds true for the members of the faculty.

Note: The number of students in the listed universities is valid for the 2005- 2006 academic year.

Year 2015

Number of Muslims = Number of Christians In the World

How are the followers of religions and beliefs distributed in the world?
Will the number of Muslims exceed that of the Christians and when?



Distribution of Followers

The numbers of Christians come in the first place and they are succeeded by the Muslims and then the Hindus and the Buddhists.

Graph no. 1 shows the distribution of people according to their beliefs.

Muslims and Christians

In 2010, it is expected that the number of Christians would reach 2,274 million against 2,137 million Muslims. In 2015, Muslims will exceed the Christians by 75 million people (2,390 Christians against 2,465 Muslims). The

difference between the two religions will increase in the coming years.

Muslims' Non-Arab Majority

It is true that the language of the Quran is Arabic and the Islam was born in the Arab Jazeera in 610; it is also true that the Arabs were the first followers of this religion, but they became a minority after Islam began to spread across the world. Today, Arab Muslims only represent 18% of the total number of Muslims, while 82% are non-Arabs.

Islam is widely spread in several western countries and has become the second religion in the United States, Britain, France, Germany and Canada. ●●

The United Nations Interim Forces in Lebanon (UNIFIL)

Mission, Role, Figures, Nationalities and Deployment

The July-August 2006 Israeli war on Lebanon ended with UN Security Council Resolution 1701, which called for the “cessation of hostilities” and the deployment of 15,000 United Nations peacekeepers to help the Lebanese Army take control of the South.

In addition to carrying out its mandate under Resolutions 425 and 426, the UNIFIL was assigned other missions, mainly including the “assistance” of the Lebanese Government and Army in line with 1701.

UNIFIL Mission

According to Security Council Resolution 1701, UNIFIL shall:

- ⊙ Implement the missions stipulated in Resolutions 425 and 426 of 1978 (Ensuring the withdrawal of Israeli forces from the Lebanese territories and assisting the Lebanese forces as they deploy along the borders);
- ⊙ Monitor the cessation of hostilities;
- ⊙ Accompany and support the Lebanese Army in its deployment throughout the South, and along the Blue Line, as Israel withdraws its armed forces from Lebanon;
- ⊙ Extend its assistance to help ensure humanitarian access to civilians and the voluntary and safe return of the displaced;
- ⊙ Assist the Lebanese armed forces in taking steps towards the establishment between the Blue Line and the Litani River of an area free of any armed personnel, assets and weapons, other than those of the Lebanese Government and of UNIFIL deployed in the area;
- ⊙ Assists the Lebanese Government, at its request, in securing its borders and other entry points to prevent the entry of arms without its consent.

Observers believe that the mission assigned to the UNIFIL is large and can extend over all the Lebanese territories upon a request from the Lebanese government.

Figures

Resolution 1701 said the number of the UNIFIL will be increased to around 2,000 troops at the end of Israel’s war and will reach a maximum of 15,000 troops. International forces started to arrive in the South in September. Today, there are 12,401 international troops of different nationalities deployed in the South.

The following Table no.1 shows the number of troops by country.

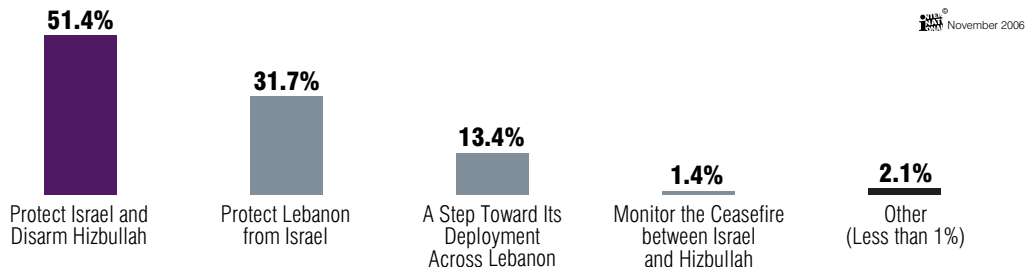
Number of Troops by Country		Table 1
Nationality	Current Number	
Italy	2,411	
France	1,697	
Spain	1,108	
Germany	914 (naval troops)	
India	885	
Ghana	850	
Indonesia	853	
Turkey	522 (including 232 naval troops)	
Belgium	460	
Finland	213	
China	343	
Poland	319	
Nepal	235	
Ireland	161	
Sweden	68 (naval troops)	
Portugal	146	
Norway	130 (naval troops)	
Greece	191 (naval troops)	
Denmark	48 (naval troops)	
Qatar	213	
Malaysia	363	
Others	271	
Total	12,401	

Note: 130 naval troops pledged by Bulgaria have not been deployed.

Source: UNIFIL



[Graph 1] **Opinions of the Lebanese People about the UNIFIL and Its Role in the South of Lebanon (%)**



UNIFIL Deployment

UNIFIL troops are deployed in the area located between southern Litani River and the borders with Israel (the Blue Line) Map no. 1. The area extends over 11 square kilometers and includes 156 towns and villages. The region was divided into two western and eastern sectors. (It was formerly divided into an eastern, middle and western sectors).

- ⊙ The eastern sector extends from Sheba'a to Mais al-Jabal and is under the control of the Spanish troops, which are based in Blat, near Marjayoun. The Indian, Nepalese, Irish, Finnish, Malaysian and Indonesian troops follow the authority of the Spanish commander.
- ⊙ The western sector extends from Blida to Naqoura and is under the authority of the French contingent, who is based in Bayada near Sour (Tyre). The Italian, Polish, Belgium, Ghanaian, Portuguese and Chinese troops follow its authority.

What do the Lebanese People Think?

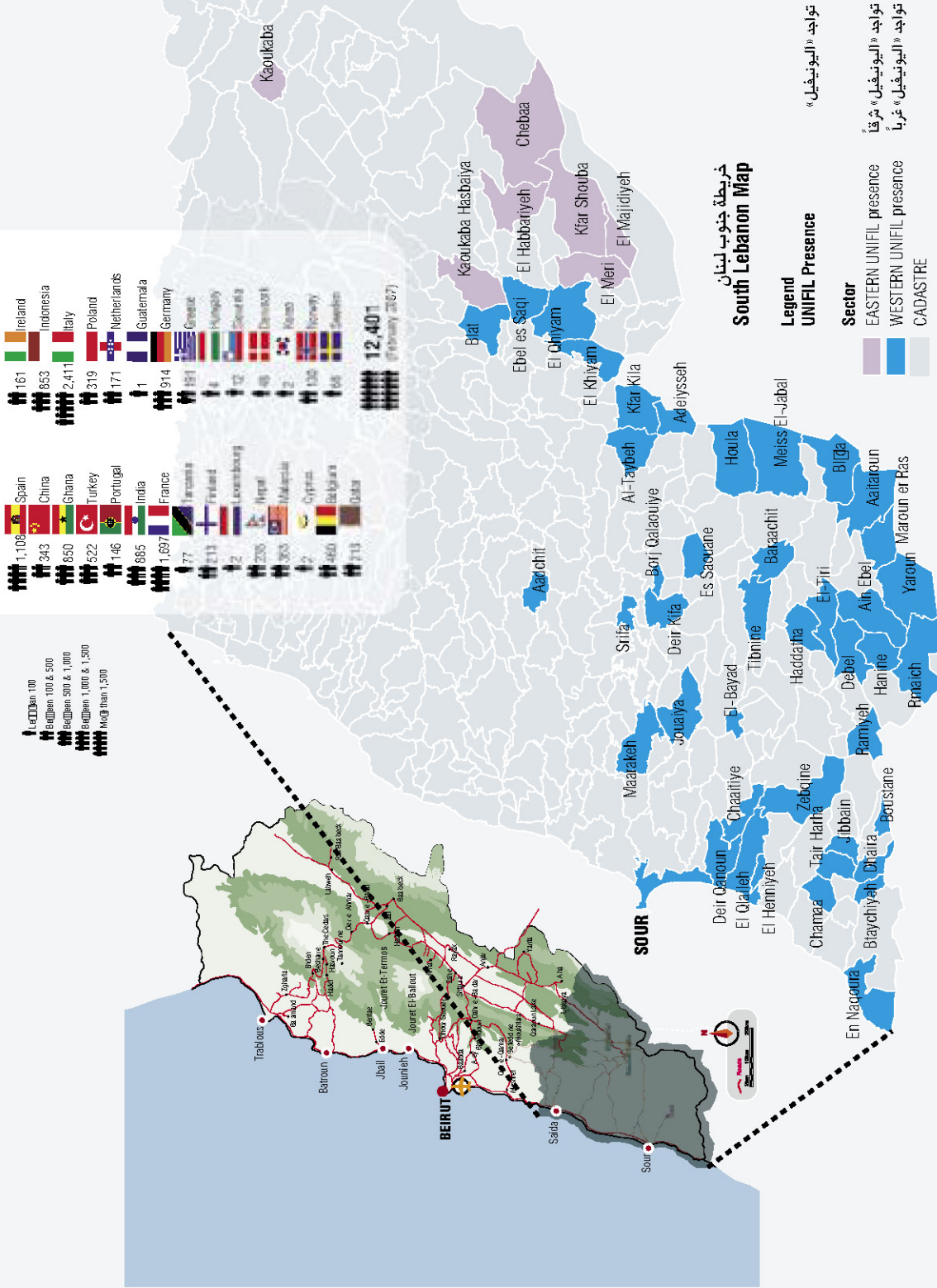
A poll conducted by *Information International* (in various Lebanese areas, including the South) in November 2006 showed that 51.4% of respondents believe that the presence of the international troops aims to protect Israel and disarm Hizbullah. 31.7% said UNIFIL's role was to protect Lebanon from Israel, while 13.4% said the troops' presence in the South was a first step toward their deployment across Lebanon. Others said UNIFIL's role was to monitor the cessation of hostilities between Israel and Hizbullah (1.4%), to meet the contributor countries' interests (0.8%), to interfere in Lebanon's internal affairs (0.5%), to support foreign policies that harm Lebanon's interests (0.4%), and to protect Lebanon from internal conflicts (0.3%). – (see Graph no. 1)

The international forces have, in a short period of time, restored peace in the South, despite their failure to end Israel's continuous air and land violations of the Lebanese territories. Nonetheless, the Lebanese have some concerns about whether those troops would overstep their mission and be confronted by Hizbullah or any other party, which would ignite clashes in the South.

Some questions linger: will Resolution 1701, which calls for creating a zone free of arms and ending Israeli violations be implemented through dialogue or by force? What is the Lebanese Army's future role in the South and what about Hizbullah's arms? ●●

Map no. 1: Deployment of UNIFIL Troops in the South of Lebanon

Source: Information International and UNIFIL



Arab Business Council/ Zogby International Poll: Arabs Less Optimistic About the Future

Survey of Arabs in six countries probes how Middle East conflicts impact economic development across the region. Many Arabs have a less optimistic outlook for the future this year than they did a year ago and many believe recent conflicts in the Middle East have had a negative impact on economic development, a recent Arab Business Council of the World Economic Forum/Zogby International poll in six Arab countries shows.

Compared with last year's survey and according to graph no. 1, fewer respondents in all six countries expressed optimism that they will be better off four years from now. Those surveyed this year in Saudi Arabia were most likely to believe they would be better off in four years (56%) while those in Egypt were most likely to believe their situation would be worse in the future (48%). The poll comes at the end of a year marked with turmoil in the Middle East, including conflicts between Israel and Lebanon and Israel and the Palestinians, as well as the war in Iraq.

Better Or Worse Off In Four Years?

The majority of those polled in four of the six countries surveyed – Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon and the UAE – said the Arab-Israeli conflict had a significant negative impact on economic development. Those in Morocco (20%) and Saudi Arabia (44%) were least likely to feel this way. The war in Iraq was blamed for having a significant negative impact on economic development by the majority of those polled in Egypt, Jordan, Saudi Arabia and the UAE – only those in Lebanon (38%) and Morocco (34%) were significantly less likely to blame the Iraq war for hurting economic development. A majority in three of the countries polled – 92% in Lebanon – said the Israeli-Lebanon conflict hurt economic development. Half (50%) in Saudi Arabia said they felt this way, compared with 45% in Egypt and only 17% in Morocco.

Arabs in all six countries polled listed according to table no. 1 financial well-being as their top issue. Social values ranked second-highest for those in Morocco, Saudi Arabia and the UAE, while those in Jordan and Egypt listed losing their job as another issue of high concern.

The Arab Business Council of the World Economic Forum has called for an initiative by leading Arab nations, working with the quartet of the United States, Russia, the United Nations and the European Union to craft a comprehensive peace agreement throughout the region, leading to a regional security pact which brings stability by balancing the vital interests of all powers.

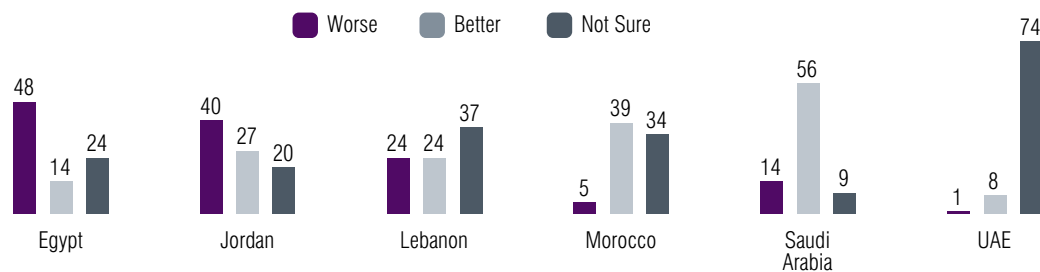
The Arab Business Council (ABC) was formed at the World Economic Forum's Extraordinary Annual Meeting in Jordan, in June 2003, in response to the growing development gap between MENA countries and the developed world as well as many developing countries. It is currently composed of 80 Arab business leaders who are committed to the mission of "enhancing competitiveness of the Arab world" and to help equip their societies to compete effectively in the global economy and contribute to the development of equitable regional and global society.

“Arabs in all six countries polled financial well-being as their top issue.”

Today, in its fourth year of existence, the Council has become firmly established as an effective representative of the Arab business community, regionally and globally. It works closely with regional governments and those from G8 countries, India and China, as well as international organizations and civil society groups, on priority policy reform issues in areas such as investment, trade, education and media, and on promoting cultural exchange. *Zogby International*

[Graph 1] **Responses of Respondents Concerning Their Situation in Four Years (%)**

Source: Zogby International - November 2006



The Listing by Priority of the Top Issues of Concerns of Arabs in the Six Countries

Table 1

	UAE	KSA	MOROCCO	LEBANON	JORDAN	EGYPT
Financial Well-Being	1	1	1	1	1	1
Social Values	2	2	2	4	3	3
Losing Job	3	3	4	3	2	2
National Instability	5	5	3	2	4	4
Regional Instability	4	4	5	5	5	5

Source: Zogby International - November 2006

Note: The scale of 1 – 5 with 1 being the top priority of concern and 5 being the least priority of concern.

Description of the sample

The poll was conducted with face-to-face interviews of 3,850 adults from six Arab countries – the United Arab Emirates, Saudi Arabia, Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon and Morocco. The survey took place from Nov. 11-28 and contains a margin of error of between +/- 3.5 and 4.7 percentage points, depending on the country. Zogby International conducts this tracking poll in six countries each year.

Government Buildings: High Rental Fees

Deficit in the general budget is increasing year after year. As a result, the government seeks to raise or impose new taxes in an attempt to collect more revenues and pay the growing expenses. It is also trying, but rarely succeeds, to cut its expenditures. The high costs of renting buildings for state administrations or public schools constitute a major part of the government's expenses. Several measures can be adopted to decrease these costs, including:

- 1- Canceling high-cost rental agreements and moving state offices to other buildings.
- 2- Merging institutions.
- 3- Constructing new buildings instead of renting.

Rental fees

The amount of money dedicated for renting and maintaining government buildings in the 2005 budget reached around 68.5 billion LBP. It is distributed by ministry and administration as follows:

Prime Minister's Office: 3,705.5 million LBP

○ Cabinet:	50 million LBP
○ Court of Audit:	839 million LBP
○ Civil Service Council:	350 million LBP
○ Central Inspection:	1,088 billion LBP
○ Sunni Ifta Departments:	50 million LBP
○ Sunni Religious Courts:	415 million LBP
○ Higher Islamic Shia'a Council:	83 million LBP
○ Al-Ifta al-Ja'afari:	41 million LBP
○ Ja'afari Religious Courts:	288 million LBP
○ Druze Spiritual Leadership (Sheikh Ak):	15 million LBP
○ Druze Religious Courts:	64 million LBP
○ A'alawi Islamic Council:	48 million LBP
○ Higher Disciplinary Council:	21.5 million LBP
○ Central Administration of Statistics:	385 million LBP
○ Directorate General of State Security:	315 million LBP

Constitutional Council: 355 million LBP

Ministry of Justice: 300 million LBP

Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Emigrants: 27,065 billion LBP

including 14,360 billion LBP for the rental fee of the UN house building in Riad Solh square in Beirut, 11,750 billion LBP for delegations abroad

and 505 million LBP for the Directorate General of Emigrants, which is still using a building owned by the son of a political leader despite the canceling of the Ministry of Emigrants.

Ministry of Interior and Municipalities: 2,385 million LBP

○ Directorate General of Political and Refugees Affairs:	250 million LBP
○ Internal Security Forces:	952 million LBP
○ General Security:	1,045 million LBP
○ Directorate General for Personal Affairs:	55 million LBP
○ Governorate of Mount Lebanon:	25 million LBP
○ Governorate of North Lebanon:	50 million LBP
○ Governorate of Beqa'a:	3 million LBP
○ Governorate of Nabatiyeh:	5 million LBP

Ministry of Finance: 4,582 million LBP

○ Directorate General:	2.5 billion LBP
○ Customs Directorate:	1,205 billion LBP
○ Real Estate Directorate:	550 million LBP
○ Survey Department:	327 million LBP

Ministry of Public Works and Transportation: 14,305 million LBP

○ Directorate General of Roads and Buildings:	606 million LBP
○ Directorate General of Civil Organization:	330 million LBP
○ Directorate General of Civil Aviation:	4.5 million LBP
○ Directorate General of Land and Maritime Transport:	490 million LBP

Ministry of National Defense: 1,000 million LBP

○ Army:	1 billion LBP
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Ministry of Education and Higher Education: 22,149 million LBP

○ Directorate General of Education:	1,149 billion LBP
○ Schools:	21 billion LBP

Ministry of Public Health: 865 million LBP

○ Public Health Directorate:	853 million LBP
○ Central Laboratory:	12 million LBP

Ministry of Economy and Trade: 405 million LBP

Ministry of Agriculture: 538 million LBP

○ Directorate General of Agriculture:	378 million LBP
○ Directorate General of Cooperatives:	160 million LBP

Ministry of Telecommunications:	300 million LBP	Ministry of Labor:	595 million LBP
Ministry of Information:	105 million LBP	Ministry of Energy and Water:	105 million LBP
Ministry of Tourism:	35 million LBP	Ministry of Culture:	560 million LBP
Ministry of Environment:	260 million LBP	Ministry for the Displaced:	600 million LBP
Ministry of Youth and Sports:	250 million LBP	Ministry of Social Affairs:	140 million LBP
Ministry of Industry:	235 million LBP		

Building State Establishments

In light of these high rental fees, the government is discussing the possibility to start building state establishments in Beirut on state-owned lands and canceling rental agreements. According to a study conducted by the Civil Service Council, it would be less expensive for the government to build its own establishments rather than renting them. The following table no. 1 shows a comparison between rental and building expenses.

Comparison between Rental and Building Expenses						Table 1
Ministry	Area Currently Rented	Annual Rental Fees	Area of the Building to be Established	Real Estate Number and Area	Estimated Construction Costs	
Ministry of Culture and the National House of Publications	2,918 m ²	560 million LBP	3,500 m ²	64/ Ras Beirut 16,000 m ²	1.4 million USD	
Ministry of Public Works and Transportation	10,000 m ²	1,707 million LBP	10,000 m ²	3582/ Achrafieh 15,000 m ²	4 million USD	
Ministry of Environment	2,399 m ²	232 million LBP	3,000 m ²	3582/ Achrafieh 3,000 m ²	1.2 million USD	
Ministry of Economy and Trade	3,700 m ²	405 million LBP	5,000 m ²	3016/ Shiyah 5,600 m ²	2 million USD	
Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Emigrants	9,000 m ²	711 million LBP	10,000 m ²	-	4 million USD	
Center for State Inspection Bodies	13,476 m ²	1,835 million LBP	22,000 m ²	3016/ Shiyah 28,000 m ²	8.8 million USD	

Source: Study conducted by the Civil Service Council

Promoting an Expenditure-Cutting Strategy

While it is necessary to cancel some rental agreements to cut the expenditure, several ministerial decrees have stipulated the canceling of old rents and transferring some administrations to other government buildings for political and personal interests, without taking compensations from the real estate owner.

Consequently, the government loses money while real estate owners make profits.

For example, the Faculty of Journalism at the Lebanese University was transferred from its original building in the Cola area and which is owned by the Union of Engineers to the Lebanese University in Hadath, without asking the union for compensations, as stipulated in the rental law.

Such measures are selective in the absence of a comprehensive strategy.

Observers believe that finding solutions to high rental fees should not be limited to establishments located in Beirut, but should reach all state administrations in other areas. Lebanese embassies abroad should also be included in this expenditure-cutting strategy by encouraging people of the Lebanese Diaspora to donate money for building Lebanese embassies and consulates.

Even if cutting rental costs would not resolve Lebanon's economic problems, it can at least contribute to decreasing the squandering of public money. ●●

Habchit:

Archeological Sites and a High Rate of Population Growth

Etymology

There are three possible roots for the name "Habchit." The first refers to a name comprised of two parts: hab, which means "fire" in Arabic, and chit, in reference to Adam's third son, which adds up to "The Fire of Chit." The second possible root refers to the state of imprisonment. The third has its origins in the Syriac language and refers to a monk's rosary. The third root seems to be the most plausible, as the village of Habchit was reputed to be a center of activity for many Maronite and Syriac monks in the region.

Location

Habchit is located 120 kilometers east of Beirut and covers an area of 900 hectares in the Qada'a of A'akkar in the Mohafaza of the North. It is situated on an altitude of 580 meters above sea level and can be reached by two different routes:

Miniyé - Bebnine - Berqayel, Bzal - Beit Yassine - Al-Kafroun - Habchit
or Fnyadeq road - Michmich - Hrar - Habchit

Population

There are 1,200 people registered in Habchit, 95% of whom are Shia'a and 5% of whom are Sunni females married to Shia'a. There are approximately 130 houses in the village.

Voters

There were 758 registered voters in Habchit in 2004, compared to 584 in 2003. This spike in the number of voters (174, or 30%) indicates a considerable increase in the growth rate of the population.

Habchit voters belong primarily to the following families:

Kanj: 94 voters	Asa'ad: 75 voters	Nasreddine: 63 voters	Hamad: 58 voters
Sa'addedine: 50 voters	Mohammad: 45 voters	Hasan: 40 voters	Abbas: 37 voters
Alaeddine: 32 voters	Ismael: 30 voters	Ali: 30 voters	Yousef: 27 voters
Fayyad: 22 voters			

Other families living in the village include: Hussein, Melhem, Ibrahim, Kasem, and Othman.

Local Authorities

Habchit has an elected council with three members and one mayor.

Educational and Social Institutions

There is only one educational institution in Habchit. The Habchit Elementary School is co-educational and public. There were 120 students registered for the 2003-2004 academic year.

Archeological and Cultural Sites

Habchit boasts numerous archeological sites, such as the remains of an old edifice with walls inscribed with different writings. There is also a sanctuary of the Virgin Mary in the village, known as "Saydet al-Dorra."

The sanctuary is located in a cave tucked into the mountain. Other ruins and sites of historical significance can be found throughout the village.

Economic Activities

The economic life of Habchit is generally rooted in the public sector and specifically rooted in the military. There are also six businesses of various types in the village, along with a number of grocery stores that provide basic food supplies and other goods to area residents.

The population of Habchit relies heavily on agriculture and cultivates grains, olives and almonds.

Habchit is also the site of many springs -- such as Al-Sindiyanah, Al-Nafir, Al-Chalef, Nasereddine, Kamal, and Ain Fayyad -- all of which provide necessary water to irrigate agricultural land.



Zgharta al-Matawleh:

All Shia'a and a Church Built on a Temple

Etymology

The first part of the name, "Zgharta," means a place surrounded by a fence, as the village looks like it is bounded by a fence. The second part of the name, "Al-Matawleh" means Shia'a to distinguish it from Zgharta al-Zawveh.

Location

Zgharta al-Matawleh is situated in the Qada'a of Koura in the Mohafaza of the North and extends over 163 hectares. The village is 85 kilometers away from Beirut and has an altitude of 730 meters above sea level. It can be reached via the following road:

Amioun- Deir Blala- Zgharta al-Matawleh.

Zgharta al-Matawleh is one of the five smallest villages in Koura but has one of the highest altitudes.

Population

There are around 500 residents registered in Zgharta al-Matawleh, with a majority of Muslim Shia'a. The village has around 35 houses. Many of its residents started to emigrate since the independence and during the civil war and left toward Argentina and North America. Other residents settled in Trablous, a nearby city.

Voters

The number of voters registered in 2004 was 166, distributed among the following families:

Deeb: 40 voters

Ibrahim: 13 voters

Tamer: 21 voters

Rshaid: 12 voters

Hajj: 20 voters

Asa'ad: 11 voters

Melhem: 17 voters

Hamad: 9 voters

Mohammad: 17 voters

There are also six people from other families.

Local Authorities

In□

Educational and Social Institutions

There are no schools in the village and students go to schools in nearby towns.

Archeological and Cultural Sites

Zgharta al-Matawleh has few archeological sites, including the historical Saydeh Church which was built on the remains of a pagan temple. A water grotto, known as the cascade grotto, was recently discovered under Al-Ousfour riverbed. However, the grotto was not well explored due to the high costs of the project.

Economic Activities

In the past, residents used to cultivate olive trees and tobacco. However, today, and following the large movements of emigration, residents work as employees in the public and private sectors. Residents also depend on trade in the cities and on the money sent from abroad by their children or relatives. The village has some shops and stores, which provide food and basic needs. 🍷

Part 2: The situation in Lebanon in 1860 which paved the way for the creation of the Mutasarifia system.

Inclosure in No. 6. Consul Brant⁽¹⁾ to Sir H. Bulwer.⁽²⁾ June 30, 1860.

Sir,

In reviewing the events of the last quarter, I feel hesitation in giving your Excellency details. They are in themselves most painful, and it is extremely difficult to arrive at the truth, on account of the exaggeration occasioned by the sufferings and excited feelings of the Christians, and on account of the plausible excuses advanced to explain the very questionable conduct of the soldiers.

I will endeavour to relate only what appears highly probable, according to the best information I have been able to obtain, although at present it may not be capable of proof.

The enmity between the Druses and Christians of the Lebanon is not of recent origin, and for a year or two past there has existed a feeling of distrust on both sides. A general outbreak, however, was not supposed to be imminent, and it seems to have taken everybody by surprise.

There have been garrisons in Hasbeya and Rasheya for some time past, and though small they were considered sufficient to defend those strong positions against an irruption of the neighbouring Druses, an attack from those of the Hauran never having been contemplated.

Although the military force of the Pashalic was supposed to be barely sufficient to maintain order, some months ago the greater portion of it was withdrawn by an order of the Porte. The Mushir declares that this was done against his protest, and his Excellency told me that in consequence he has demanded his recall, feeling that with such inadequate means he could not answer for the public security. When the outbreak occurred his Excellency could not respond to calls for assistance; on one side the Arabs were, as usual, insolent and insubordinate, and in consequence the main portion of the entire force was stationed in the neighbourhood of the Hauran to protect the crops of grain on which Damascus depends for its supplies.

This division was ordered to Hasbeya on the first attack of the Druses, but the order was not obeyed; and as a justification the Commander Mustapha Pasha sent in a Memorial from the cultivators, stating that if the troops were withdrawn, they, too, would retire and abandon their crops. This excuse was considered satisfactory, and a battalion of rifles only was recalled to Damascus, the garrison of which was insufficient to maintain the tranquillity in the town; so that Hasbeya and Rasheya were left to their own resources, aided by their small garrisons. Their danger was represented to the Pasha, but nothing was done; inability to detach troops being urged.

Next came the attack of the Druses, and the murder of many of the Christians, as well as the distress of the rest, pressed by their enemies, and in want of food. It was proposed to the Mushir to send out a sufficient guard to withdraw all the surviving male Christians, with the women and children. This was promised, but was not performed, when the catastrophe was announced, and then it was declared to be too late. Still there were some male survivors, and all the women and children, who were nearly starving. Again the Pasha was pressed to apply means to bring

them away, and his Excellency declared that he had already done so: mules having been sent to Hasbeya for that purpose. The number was only sufficient for the troops, and the Commander, Osman Bey, refused to allow the Christians to accompany him. Some, in disguise, did so, however, and some bribed Druses to protect them on the road. The bulk of those saved under the protection of the Lady Naïfeh, retired to Mokhtara, the residence of her brother, the Druse Chief Said Bey Jumblat. All the women and children had come in from Rasheya; the troops even had returned.

I have obtained, through the kindness of the Rev. Smylie Robson, an account of what passed at Hasbeya, given by a Protestant of the place who was present during the whole affair, and miraculously escaped from the massacre.

After the Druses had attacked several neighbouring villages, from which most of the Christians managed to escape to the town, they surrounded Hasbeya itself on Sunday, the 3rd of June. The Christians applied to Osman Bey, the Commander of the troops, for protection, reminding him of his promise that he would assist whichever party maintained the peace against that which broke it. He replied, that he had already tried, in vain, to induce the Druses to leave the Christians unmolested, but he would make another attempt, and he sent an officer to them with that object. The Druses returned for answer that they were determined to assault the town.

The Christians, seeing they could get no help from Osman Bey, took up a position near their quarter, where the Druses attacked them, and, after some fighting, the Christians being overpowered by numbers, fled to the Serai, where Osman Bey was with the troops.

On the 4th of June, Osman Bey went to the Lady Naïfeh, and returned with her to the Serai. He then desired the Christians to deliver up their arms, giving, with the consent of the lady, a written guarantee, pledging the faith of the Government for their personal safety. They, finding they could not resist the Druses, consented to this arrangement, and the arms were collected in the Court of the Serai; the best among them were selected by the Druses, and the remainder, about 500, were sent off with Druse carriers and two soldiers, Osman Bey telling the Christians that he was sending them to Damascus.

The Christians remained undisturbed in the Serai until the 11th, but they were starving; water was very scarce, and bread so dear that few had the means of purchasing it, the price being 50 piastres per rotol (8s. 4d. for 5½ lbs.), about twenty times the ordinary price. The poorer people were obliged to live on bran, barley, and mulberry and vine-leaves.

On the 11th, Osman Bey went to the residence of the Lady Naïfeh⁽³⁾, where was Allee Bey Hamâdee, Kiahia of Said Bey Jumblât, who had come with 300 men.

About midday, Sheikh Kenj-el-Amâad, an employé of the Turkish Government, arrived, accompanied by an Aide-de-camp, the bearer of a letter from the Mushir to Osman Bey, in which it was stated that Sheikh Kenj had given a guarantee to bring the Emirs and Christians in safety to Damascus, and Osman Bey was ordered to accompany them with his troops. When this order had been read in the Serai, all the people offered up a prayer for

the Sultan, and prepared for their journey. After this, a meeting was held at the Serai, at which were present the Lady Naïfeh, Allee Bey Hamâdee, Sheikh Kenj, Osman Bey, and the Pasha's Aide-de-camp. One of the principal Christians, named Jerjis-er-Rais, was demanded of Osman Bey; he had been Chief Scribe to the Emir Saad-ed-Din, and was particularly obnoxious to the Druses: he was delivered up, and immediately murdered. The gate of the Serai was then thrown open, and the Druses who had come with Allee Bey Hamâdee and Kenj-el-Amâad, with those of the town, entered, and murdered the people within, the soldiers preventing any from escaping or concealing themselves, pushing them forward to be massacred. When those on the ground-floor were dispatched, the Druses mounted to the second floor, murdered the people there, and then ascending to the third floor, where the Emirs and their families remained, disarmed and stripped them, cut off the head of Emir Saad-ed-Din, and threw his body into the garden; they then killed several of the Emir's family. When the butchery was completed, the Lady Naïfeh took to her residence the women and children, and those of the Emirs who had escaped, as well as the soldiers. The Druses stripped the bodies of the slain, took possession of everything they found in the Serai, and set it on fire. The soldiers had previously taken many valuables from the Emirs and their women.

The number massacred belonging to Hasbeya was supposed to be 900, and about 70 refugees from the neighbouring villages.

Some of the Christians had taken refuge at the residence of the Lady Naïfeh previous to the massacre. The surviving Emirs, while in her house, were plundered of what they had been able to secrete before leaving the Serai.

The person who related the above account of the massacre is an intelligent man, one of the few surviving Protestants, he has told the same story, at different times and to different people, and in the same consistent manner; and, from what others have related to me, I think it may be taken to be as exact as it is reasonable to expect under such horrible circumstances. The man saved himself by stripping and feigning to be dead, lying among the corpses until the whole tragedy was completed, when he escaped from the Serai to the house of Lady Naïfeh, and ultimately reached Damascus in a sad state of exhaustion and excitement.

Damascus has been the scene of great alarm, particularly among the Christians and Jews: the Mussulmans even have participated in it. The military force was small, and the Pasha seemed to have lost all confidence in the troops, in the inhabitants, and in himself. His Excellency was always consulting with the Council, but deciding on no course of action. The Consuls frequently waited on him to propose measures for the public tranquility, many of which he approved and promised to carry out: still he did nothing. An irruption of the Druses was feared, and a rising of the vagabonds of the city, for the sake of plunder. The Pasha was afraid to detach soldiers to secure the neighbouring villages; and it was more than a fortnight after it had been suggested to raise irregular troops, under well-known partisan leaders, to patrol the country and insure the safety of the villages and roads, and the men were enrolled and dispatched on the service.

Troops have come in, in small numbers, from Rasheya, Hasbeya, Homs, Hamah, and from the division in the Hauran, and the Pasha now appears to have regained confidence. Some Druses have been killed in attempting to carry off cattle and

plunder from villages, both Christian and Mussulman, close to the city. This energy has encouraged the timid; and it is hoped, therefore, that the worst is passed, and I trust that confidence will be restored when the Feast of the Bairam is over, - a time when the Mussulmans are more than usually abusive and overbearing. Meantime, Zahleh has been evacuated and burned, and Baalbek has been attacked by the Matwalehs under some of the Emirs of the Harfoosh. Military have been since sent to strengthen the garrison, and Baalbek may now be considered safe. The Harfoosh, with their followers, are laying villages under contribution, Some Druses of the Hauran are said to have been recalled to join in an attack on the Kesrouan, in aid of the Druses of the Mountain; but this is not certain. The arrival of troops at Beyrout, under the command of Ismail Pasha (General Kmety), had given a little confidence, and when they reach Damascus I trust that matters will be restored to order, and the excitement subside.

From the alarm of the peasantry, I fear a great part of the crops may be injured or lost, and scarcity and dearth of grain may be anticipated. The consequences of this revolt, as it may be called, will long be felt in the diminution of property by plunder and destruction, thereby restricting the means of paying taxes. This will be less sensible on this side of the Lebanon than in the villages of the Mountain itself.

The Turkish Government should be induced to assist the women and children left beggars, without male relations to help them. It should take warning that Syria cannot be left without a sufficient army to keep in check the wild races which form its population, as Druses, Metwalehs, Anserians, and Arabs, all ready to avail themselves of the weakness of the Government, to plunder - an occupation so natural and so congenial to their habits. It should be persuaded that the frequent change of Governors, strangers to the feelings and wants of the people they have to govern, is not conducive to the introduction of such a system of administration as will inspire confidence and respect; that the country requires a lenient and paternal treatment in fact, and not in profession only, if it be expected to yield any revenue to the Imperial Treasury, or to lend stability to the Sultan's Empire. The Druses may be made useful subjects by being kept in proper restraint. The Arabs should be curbed, and not allowed to enter the settled parts of the country for the sake of plunder. The Harfoosh family, with their Metwaleh followers, must be obliged to give a sufficient guarantee for their peaceable behavior, or, in default, be banished the country. In short, order must be maintained by an energetic but impartial Governor, supported by an adequate and well-organized military force, regularly paid. By adopting such a course in good faith, the Sultan's authority will be respected and his name revered; while the province, by the development of its resources, will contribute largely to the State revenue, and, by its loyalty, lend an effective support to the Throne.

I have, &c.

(Signed) JAS. BRANT.

⁽¹⁾ *Brant: Council General of Great Britain in Beirut*

⁽²⁾ *Sir Henry Bulwer: Born in 1801, Sir Henry was an English diplomat and author. His father was William Earle Bulwer. Sir Henry was married to Charlotte Mary Wellesley, niece of Duke of Wellington who defeated Napoleon in Waterloo. During the writing of those letters, Sir Henry was ambassador extraordinary to the Ottoman Porte at Constantinople. He retired from his post in 1865.*

⁽³⁾ *There are different stories about the role of Naïfeh Jumblat in the Hasbeya massacre, as many English diplomats said that she ordered the massacre, while others stated that she protected some Christians.*

In its previous issue, *li Monthly* published the first part of an article addressing “The Hadath University Complex”, “The Fanar Faculties” and “Logistic Problems”. In this issue, *li Monthly* will present “The Educational Problems” and “The Students and the Merge of Branches”

Students of the Lebanese University:

Merging Branches Is Not the Only Pressing Problem

Educational Problems

1— Students criticized the lack of specialized staff, especially in the fields of marketing, advertising, media, public relations and business. Moreover, the students have reported that there are not enough full-time professors especially in the Second Branch of the Faculty of Journalism and Documentation, the Second Branch of the Faculty of Literature and Human Sciences and the First Branch of the Faculty of Fine Arts. In addition, they believe that there are not enough young professors with knowledge of new technologies and modern ways of teaching. The main problem is the fact that the majority of the professors will be retiring soon, which will lead to a real crisis in the number of teachers in the near future.

The students in the First Branch of the Faculty of Engineering, the Second Branch of the Faculty of Journalism and Documentation and in the First Branch of the Faculty of Fine Arts complained that professors were not up to the task. However, the students in the Second Branches of the Faculty of Sciences and the Faculty of Literature and Human Sciences were more satisfied with the performance of their teachers.

2— The Lebanese University administrations are ruled, according to the students, by bureaucracy, as they are too slow and too inefficient. This reality puts more pressure on the student committees which have been assisting the administrations. There is also a lack in the number of trained employees who work in the administrations as well as in other departments of the Lebanese University.

3— Some faculties of the Lebanese University, such as the Second Branches of the Faculty of Sciences, the Faculty of Journalism and Documentation and the First Branch of the Faculty of Fine Arts, have adopted a new LMD (License Master Doctorate) system based on credits. The students have reported difficulty in understanding

this new system because no experts have been assigned to follow up on the implementation process.

4— Students in the Second Branches of the Faculty of Journalism and Documentation and the Faculty of Literature and Human Sciences, as well as in the First Branches of the Faculty of Fine Arts, the Faculty of Law, Political and Administrative Sciences, the Faculty of Business Administration and Economical Sciences, have complained that the results of the second session of their final exams have not been released yet, even though the new academic year has started.

5— According to the students, the deans of the Faculty of Literature and Human Sciences and the Faculty of Journalism and Documentation are only delegates; they have no actual decision-making powers within their faculties.

Students and the Merge of Branches

The students of the Lebanese University have divergent opinions concerning the merge of the First and Second Branches. In general, the students of the First Branches do not seem to mind this operation while the students of the Second Branches strongly object to it.

On one hand, the students of the First Branches believe that the merge can be a source of positive change. There would be more interaction between students of different cultural backgrounds. The students explained that their previous experience in this field (when they had to move to the Hadath University Complex) has helped them build strong and healthy social relationships with the students of other faculties.

However, the students of the First Branches have preoccupations concerning the large number of people enrolling in the Hadath University Complex if the merge



occurs. Some said they did not mind the merge, but they added that it would lead to political conflicts between the students of the First and Second Branches; they explained that originally, it was the students of the Second Branches who refused the merge because they thought that it would lead to the dissolution of some student committees. The students of the First Branches added that the merge would undoubtedly alter the results of the student committees' elections because the "Muslim vote", mostly present in the First Branches, will prevail over the "Christian vote" of the Second Branches.

On the other hand, the students of the Second Branches objected to the merge, backing their position with the following arguments:

1- The Lebanese Constitution highlights the importance of the administrative decentralization, which indeed contradicts the idea of merging. The students said that the merge was aimed at "oppressing the voice of the Second Branches".

2- The students criticized the fact that it is the Council of Ministers which is taking the decision of the merge, for it is the farthest away from the affairs and problems of the Lebanese University. They said that there should be representative councils, including students and teachers of the Lebanese University, which would have the right to decide a merge.

3- Students of the Second Branches doubted that the decision of the merge has been taken to reinforce national unity, adding that it is mostly political. They declare that under the current political circumstances, it is impossible for the students of the First and Second Branches to coexist peacefully. The students of the Second Branches had some concerns about the ability to practice their democratic rights within the Hadath University Complex because they are persuaded that any attempt to oppress them will cause a national conflict.



4- The students suggested that the merge will cause further transportation and residency problems to those who live in North Lebanon.

5- Finally, the students of the Second Branches stressed their objection to the merge because of the negative impact this operation would have on the economic environment of each faculty; many businesses (photocopy centers, stationeries, dorms and, restaurants) rely on the presence of the students in order to operate and would be forced to close if the merge occurred.

The problems facing the Lebanese University are diverse and numerous. The students in the Second Branches have suggested that a complex should be established in each Lebanese Governorate, which, according to them, would be the best solution to this controversial issue.

Nevertheless, this will not solve other problems emerging in the different faculties and branches today, which can only be remedied through a genuine administrative reform that would increase the efficiency of the Lebanese University. ●



Shoes and Leather Products

A Fading Industry



Shoe factory - Beirut southern suburbs
December - 2006

Leather tanning, along with the manufacture of shoes and other leather products, is considered an ancient and traditional industry that was famous in some Lebanese areas and was part of the residents' social and economic traditions. This industry, like all Lebanese industries, was hit by many crises that led to its deterioration. The following article focuses on leather tanning and the shoe industry in the past and the present.

A Prosperous Past

Leather tanning and the manufacture of leather products started as a Lebanese craft at the beginning of the last century and developed into an industry after the import of necessary machines and tools. This industry was characterized by its good quality and durability, which made it attractive to European and Arab markets. In addition to this industry, complementary businesses were born, such as the manufacture of rubber soles and heels, as well as paper and carton for packaging. The number of tanneries reached 90 and that of factories and ateliers reached around 1,200. The number of employees reached 12,000 at the beginning of the 1970s.

The Lebanese civil war that broke out in 1975 squashed this flourishing sector.

Today

After the reestablishment of peace in the country, the shoe and leather industry was re-launched but several obstacles prevented it from restoring its past glory.

The number of tanneries decreased from 90 to only 10 and that of factories and ateliers declined to around 800. Consequently, the number of employees decreased to around 7,000. Production decreased from 15 million pairs of shoes per year to less than 3 million pairs. As for exports, they were limited to a certain quality of shoes and to one destination, namely the Gulf countries, where Lebanese shoes are regarded the same way as Italian products.

Problems

The problems burdening this sector are the following:

- ⊙ The export of raw leather to foreign countries, which deprives tanneries of necessary primary materials and forces them to cut their production and resort to importation, thus increasing production costs.
- ⊙ Customs tariffs and taxes imposed on raw materials.
- ⊙ The migration of the skilled workforce which increases the cost of the available workforce.
- ⊙ The increase of costs of energy, rents and salaries, which raises the production costs and limits the ability to export. Such increase also generates competition between the national production and imported products, especially those coming from China, due to their low prices. An estimated number of 10 million pairs of shoes are imported per year.



Leather trade - Matn
2006



Shoe factory - Beirut southern suburbs
December - 2006

“Production decreased from 15 million pairs of shoes per year to less than 3 million pairs.”

- ⊙ The lack of trust in the local production due to the lack of marketing. Consequently, the Lebanese manufacturers are forced to label their products with a “made in Italy” tag, to facilitate the selling and marketing process despite the illegitimacy of such acts and the risks of being prosecuted by the Italian authorities through their embassy in Lebanon.

Solutions

Business leaders in the leather tanning industry submitted several proposals to preserve and develop the sector:

- ⊙ Increasing by a minimum of 20,000 LBP customs tariffs on every pair of shoes, which would protect the national production. (However, raising this tariff would contradict international attempts to free world trade and might be counter-productive).
- ⊙ Decreasing electricity costs.
- ⊙ Decreasing customs tariffs on some imported products that are necessary to the manufacture of shoes and leather tanning and which are unavailable in the local market.
- ⊙ Establishing institutes or including a new curricular in the Lebanese Vocational Institute to teach this profession and put it out of the framework of handicrafts which raises its cost, since the shoe industry became a mechanized profession and introducing machines would decrease its costs.
- ⊙ Granting owners of shoe industries bank loans to buy modern machines. ●

Mashghara and Bint Jbeil

The towns of Mashghara (western Beqa'a) and Bint Jbeil (South) were famous for leather tanning and the manufacture of shoes and other leather products. In fact, Mashghara used to receive leather from various Lebanese areas to be tanned and manufactured in its eighty tanneries. The town's residents also opened shops in the Lebanese cities to sell their products. Today, this industry or craft faded away, and only one tannery survived.

In Bint Jbeil, the shoe and leather industry started in 1840 and was a source of income for most families there. There were more than 400 ateliers in the town, the flourishing of which was closely linked to the commercial activity in Haifa before Israel was created. Today, only 12 tanneries were left, as emigration became the residents' main source of income.



liMonthly Meets Timur Goksel: UNIFIL spokesperson from 1979 till 2003

Timur Goksel served as UNIFIL spokesperson from 1979 till 2003. He came to Lebanon in 1979 on a six-month contract but he then decided to remain in this country. In 1995, he was appointed as a senior political advisor for the United Nations and retired in 2003. Today, Goksel teaches at the American University of Beirut and follows-up closely on the developments in the South. li Monthly met with Goksel to ask him about the role of the UNIFIL and the situation in the South following the July-August 2006 Israeli war against Lebanon.

What are the points of difference and resemblance between the UNIFIL role before and after UN Security Council Resolution 1701?

The UNIFIL mission was harder before Resolution 1701. Having the Lebanese Army is the best thing you can do for a peacekeeping force. Also, when we were in trouble we had nobody to call. The presence of the Lebanese Army is a luxury. 'The original' UNIFIL was facing militias and armed groups, which were spread all across the South. In that unfriendly environment, the UNIFIL troops, with their small arms and with a smile, were setting checkpoints, checking cars and confiscating weapons. The new UNIFIL does not do all this; it does not operate checkpoints, the Lebanese army is doing that. The situation is very different and it is very hard to compare actually, because the whole environment has changed. Now, the South is very crowded with the troops.

Is there any ulterior motive for the presence of the UNIFIL?

The United Nations has done a lousy and miserable job in public diplomacy; it did not explain anything to the people about the role of the UNIFIL in Lebanon.

The 'old' UNIFIL had never been subject to such a debate. It grew very fast and the public diplomacy did not follow this growth.

It is not true that UNIFIL has ulterior motives but atmospheres of doubt and suspicion were created. Not a single country in the UNIFIL is ready to take up arms no matter what the motives are.

The UNIFIL now is not a unified command; it is a group of countries with national interests as their priority. They are acting independently from each other; so if trouble starts, this would destroy the forces. The interests and the approaches of these countries might clash. It is an unmanageable mess.

Article 8 of Resolution 1701 stipulated the establishment of an area free of armed personnel and weapons (except those of the Lebanese government and the UNIFIL) between the Blue Line and the Litani River. Is it possible to achieve this goal? In case it was not achieved, how will the situation in the South be in the future?

It is impossible to establish such an area in Lebanon, as there is no weapon-free zone in any place. This is an unrealistic goal. We cannot force Hizbullah out of the South; because the people who fight for Hizbullah live in the towns located in this area. A man, who fights for Hizbullah in the night, is the farmer, the teacher, the baker in the day. UNIFIL cannot force the citizens out.

However, Israel is not going to engage soon in a war with Lebanon; because for Israel, the presence of UNIFIL is the major success of its war. Israel will not say to the UNIFIL, you're useless, get out of here. It is not in a situation to start a war now. Furthermore, Hizbullah is being very careful not to offend the Lebanese Army.

Has UN Security Council Resolution 425 been fully implemented?

The United Nations considers that the resolution has been implemented

but with some reservations from Lebanon about the identity of the Sheba'a Farms. The Syrian authorities hate the idea of seeing peace between Lebanon and Israel before they make a deal with Israel because they would be ignored. That's why they are not taking any official position or presenting official documents about the identity of this land.

If the Sheba'a Farms were placed under the authority of the United Nations, would it be a first step toward the full implementation of Resolution 1701?

No. Hizbullah has very strong fears and anger against Israel; it would take years and years to overcome those feelings. The issue of the Sheba'a Farms gives a pretext to the existence of the resistance group.

That's why the international community and the government of Lebanon would like to solve the Sheba'a Farms because it will remove a very serious political weapon from the hands of Hizbullah.

Do you think that the international forces would be in danger and targeted by violent attacks in an attempt to force them to leave? Would they leave if they were targeted by such attacks?

There are small groups which have ideological affiliations with Al-Qa'eda, and which might want to harm the UNIFIL. But I don't think that such thing would happen because the Lebanese Army has strong intelligence in the South. Moreover, all claims that Hizbullah was conspiring with such groups against the UNIFIL are false. As long as Hizbullah is on a friendly basis with UNIFIL, it will definitely represent a protection for the troops. In case such attacks do happen, the reaction would depend on each country and if its willingness to make sacrifices.

Do you think that the international forces would face a problem in the future with the citizens of the South? With the Israeli forces?

UNIFIL always had good relations with Southern citizens. But today the situation is different, as the UNIFIL is deployed in new areas. There is also an atmosphere of doubt, which I think is affecting the people. So now the citizens are watching the UNIFIL conduct very carefully. The United Nations has to explain to the Lebanese what are these forces doing here. As to the Israeli forces, I don't think that they are going to have problems with the international troops any time soon, because UNIFIL is Israel's success story.

In general, how do you see the future of Lebanon?

I am now convinced that you cannot change Lebanon. The Lebanese should live together peacefully because no party would be able to control the other. I believe that unless they stop these disputes by launching dialogue, Lebanon will continue to witness a state of tension but not an outbreak of violence. It all depends on the Lebanese Army. Its unity is crucial for this country. I still have confidence that the Lebanese would overcome this crisis. ●●

Unemployment in Jordan

Unemployment rate reaches 95.5% for Jordanian women between 20-39 years old!

Jordan is facing a serious unemployment problem. Like other neighboring Arab countries, this phenomenon is spreading throughout Jordan and affects mainly graduates searching for a good job opportunity.

Population

According to 2004 estimates, the population stands at around 5.35 million with a growth rate of 2.6% per year. The majority of people (56.6%) live in the regions surrounding the capital, Amman, and Irbid, the second largest city in Jordan.

With 37% of the population under the age of 15, the Jordanian populace is considered young.

Labor Force

In 2004, the number of active individuals in Jordan reached 1,250,274 (23.4% of the total Jordanian population), 171,287 of whom are women against 1,078,987 men.

Of the active population, the actual labor force counted 1,094,693 individuals against 155,581 unemployed. Thus, the unemployment rate in 2004 reached 12.4% compared with 14.5% in 2003.

Two facts are noteworthy: First, there is a low participation rate among Jordanian women in the job market. They represent only 13.7% of the total labor force in Jordan.

Second, there are more unemployed women (16.5%) in Jordan than unemployed men (11.8%). The main reason behind these two facts is the structure of the Jordanian society.

Although the unemployment rate has decreased by 2.1% between 2003 and 2004, the indicators for unemployment in Jordan cannot be considered stable.

In 1999, the unemployment rate reached 13.4% compared with 15.3% in 2002. The preliminary results issued by the Statistics Department of Jordan show that the unemployment rate reached 14.8% in 2005 which means that it had increased by 2.4% compared with 2004.

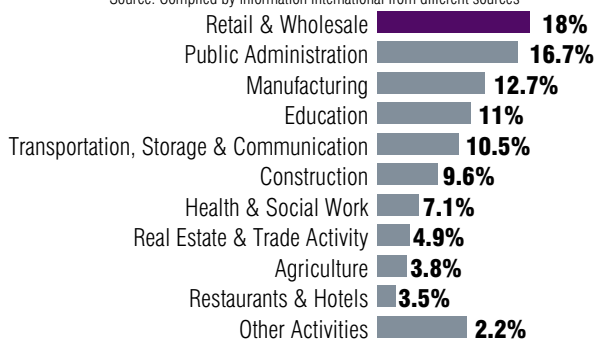
Consequently, it cannot be confirmed that the problem of unemployment is being contained.

Distribution of the Labor force

The Jordanian labor force is distributed according to the following sectors in graph No. 1.

[Graph 1] **Distribution of Jordan Labor Force by Sector**

Source: Compiled by Information International from different sources



Youth Unemployment

The results of the 2004 Annual Report issued by the Jordanian Ministry of Labor show that 75.3% of the unemployed are individuals between 20 and 39 years old. 95.5% of women of this age category are unemployed against 70.8% of men.

Furthermore, 203,642 individuals were registered in higher educational institutions in 2004 which indicates a high education rate among Jordanians compared with the weak chances of finding appropriate job opportunities.

Foreign Labor Force

The unemployment problem is further aggravated by the inflow of foreign labor force.

In 2004, the number of foreign workers registered with the Ministry of Labor reached 218,756, compared with 148,551 individuals in 2003. The illegal foreign labor force, mainly Iraqi, also contributes to the unemployment problem.

Men constitute 84.6% of the foreign labor force in Jordan compared with 15.4% for women. Egyptian nationals constitute a 69.6% majority of foreign workers. The foreign labor force works mainly in production (50.37%) and agriculture (20.4%).

The youth and women of the Jordanian society have a great difficulty in finding job opportunities especially that the preliminary indicators of 2005 show that 20.9% of the unemployed have been inactive for over a year.

Some take the presence of a competitive foreign labor force as a pretext to justify the unemployment phenomenon. Others say that Jordanians do not easily accept job offers and tend to emigrate, looking for better opportunities.

Unemployment in Iraq

More than 50% of Women and 30% of Men are Unemployed

Iraq is facing today several problems resulting from security instability and affecting the country's political and socioeconomic life. This instability has contributed largely to raising the level of unemployment.

Population

The population in Iraq in 2006 was estimated at 23 million people. Population growth has decreased from 3.2% in the 1990s to 2.9% over the past few years. The Iraqi society is young with 39% of the population under 15 years of age. Iraqis are concentrated in the main cities like Baghdad (7 million), in the north (Moussel) and the South (Basrah).

Labor Force

A 2004 UNDP survey about the living conditions of the Iraqi population showed that the labor force (between 15 and 65 years old) is around 6.7 million workers, 83.6% of them are men while 16.4% are women. The active labor force totals almost 5.3 million workers, with nearly 1.4 million unemployed. The resulting unemployment rate stands at 20%. However, the Ministry of Planning stated in 2005 that the annual unemployment rate stands at 30%, while the Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs had estimated the rate at 48%.

Due to the lack of accurate statistics, the unemployment rate in Iraq ranges between 20% and 48%. In both cases, the rate is very high and indicates a severe deterioration of the Iraqi economy.

Distribution of the Labor Force

The labor force in Iraq is distributed by sector as follows: 30% in the public sector, 49% in the private sector, 3% in corporations and the joint sector, 1% in the Iraqi Army, 12% in family owned businesses, 4% in NGOs, and 1% in domestic work.

Unemployment of University Graduates and Women

Unemployment among the youth and women (especially the educated categories) represents a major problem in Iraq today.

In fact, 33.4% of the Iraqi youth are unemployed, 37.2% of whom have at least a high school or a university degree. Many graduates choose to emigrate in search of better job opportunities.


Unemployment rate reaches 58% for women with a high school or a university degree and 90% for women with an intermediate degree or less.

Women in Iraq face many difficulties and have little chance to find

work related to their field of study, which forces them to accept any job provided that they maintain acceptable living conditions.

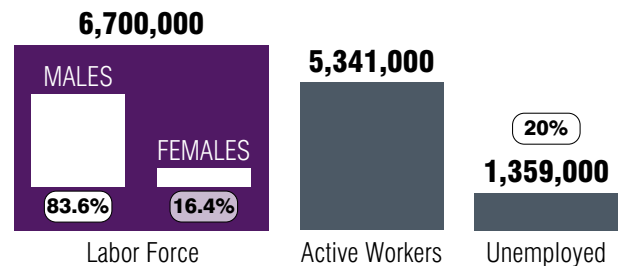
A survey conducted by the Independent Institute for Iraqi Administration and Society Studies shows that 55% of unemployed men and women in Iraq are the sole breadwinner in their families. This indicates a severe spread of poverty among the Iraqi population.

It seems that Iraq is trapped in a vicious cycle where lack of security causes unemployment which in turn increases theft and violence leading to more insecurity.

Is the Iraqi government aware of the gravity of this situation? 

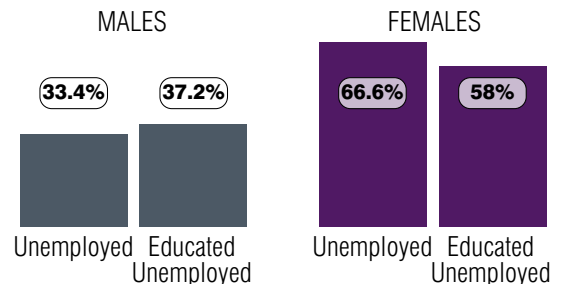
[Graph 1] **Iraqi Labor Force between 15 and 65 years-old in 2004 (%)**

Source: UNDP 2004



[Graph 2] **Percentage of Unemployed in Iraq (%)**

Source: UNDP 2004



Stats & Numbers

issue 56 - February/March 2007

16,168 new cars and trucks were sold in Lebanon in 2006 compared with 16,210 vehicles in 2005. RYMCO, the exclusive agent of Nissan, ranked first with 2,467 cars sold.

16.5 billion LBP is the amount of compensations paid by the Higher Relief Commission to the families of 864 killed during the July-August 2006 Israeli war on Lebanon. 20 million LBP were paid for every adult person dead and 10 million LBP for every child. Other families are yet to apply for compensations.

13.6 billion LBP is the total amount of compensations paid by the Higher Relief Commission for the injured or disabled during the last war. The compensations were distributed among 2,125 injured and ranged between 750,000 LBP and 15 million LBP.

2,790 million USD is the amount pledged by Arab and foreign countries following the July-August 2006 Israeli war. However, the money received by the end of 2006 reached 1,110 million USD, or only 40% of the total amount.

178.2 billion LBP is the amount paid in 2006 by the Higher Relief Committee on relief works following the July-August war and until the end of the year. 92.2 billion LBP was dedicated to removing wreckage and building temporary roads.

No Comment!
2006



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Other publications by Information International and INMA (in Arabic):

- 1- Salaries and Remunerations in the Public Sector
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- 3- Lebanon's Parliamentary History 1920-2000
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- 5- Lebanon in Figures 1992-2002
- 6- Lebanon in Figures 2003-2004
- 7- "I am Responsible, All of Us are Responsible"
- 8- "Our Environment is Our Home"
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The Bee Series Means and Ways Towards State Building

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