

Lebanon



In March 2013, Lebanese Prime Minister Najib Mikati announced his resignation and consequently the resignation of his government, which had taken office in mid-July 2011. Member of Parliament, Tamam Salam, was designated as Prime Minister in April 2013 by an overwhelming majority in Parliament, but was unable to form a government. The Mikati cabinet assumed functions in a caretaker capacity until a new government could be appointed. The parliamentary elections, which were originally scheduled to take place in June 2013, were postponed until November 2014, following disagreements between the rival political parties on the electoral law. As the

president is elected by parliament, it is possible that there will either have to be an extension to President Suleiman's term, or a vacuum.

The Syria question

Such is Lebanon's geographical proximity to Syria, not to mention the myriad family and business connections between the two countries, that it would be surprising if Lebanon were to emerge unaffected by what has developed into a civil war in Syria. As reported by the McClatchyDC website, in October 2013 Lebanese military prosecutors charged seven men linked to a political party with strong ties to the Syrian government's intelligence

KEY FACTS

Official name: Jumhuriya al Lubnaniya (Republic of Lebanon)

Head of State: President Michel Suleiman (from 25 May 2008)

Head of government: Care-taker Prime Minister Najib Mikati (Prime Minister designate Tamam Salam (nominated 6 Apr 2013))

Ruling party: By October 2013 Tamam Salam had still to form a government

Area: 10,452 square km

Population: 4.01 million (2012)*

Capital: Beirut

Official language: Arabic

Currency: Lebanese pound (LL) = 100 piastres

Exchange rate: LL1,511.50 per US\$ (Jul 2013)

GDP per capita: US\$10,311 (2012)*

GDP real growth: 1.50% (2012)*

GDP: US\$41.34 billion (2012)*

Inflation: 6.57% (2012)*

Balance of trade: -US\$13.92 billion (2011)

* estimated figure

services with a double car bombing in August that had killed scores of Shi'a worshippers as they left mosques known to be sympathetic towards the Syrian regime. The men were charged with organising and directing the car bombing of the two Tripoli mosques that killed at least 57 people.

The Lebanese authorities claimed that all of the accused had personal ties to a pro-Syrian political party, the Arab Democratic Party. The party dominates life in the central Tripoli neighbourhood of Jabal Mohsen, whose residents are predominantly Alawites, the branch of Islam followed by Syrian President Bashar al Assad and much of the Syrian regime's military and political elite. Many Lebanese saw the mosque bombings as a response to two earlier car bombings in Hezbollah-dominated neighbourhoods in southern Beirut, where support for the Syrian regime was strong. The car bombings, which killed over 20 people and wounded hundreds more, shocked much of Lebanon for having dispelled the impenetrable image of the militant Islamist group's legendary security apparatus. The often unwritten political and sectarian agreements that keep Lebanon just about operating and functioning in a complex religious and political game of three dimensional chess had come under pressure as the Lebanese inevitably began to take sides in the Syrian conflict. Since Hezbollah's announcement that it had fighters in Syria, militant Sunni groups in Lebanon had threatened it, alongside Syrian rebels. For the first time since

Lebanon's own civil war ended in 1990, attacks on Shi'ite areas by rival factions had begun to break out.

Tit for tat bombings

In 2013 there were obvious analogies between the vulnerability of the refugee camps in 1985 (when Christian Phalangist militiamen, with Israeli compliance, massacred more than 1,000 Palestinian refugees in the Sabra and Shatila camps) and the current vulnerability of Lebanon as a country. That vulnerability had been symbolised in October 2012 by the violent death of General Wissam al Hassan, the head of the intelligence section of Lebanon's Internal Security Force (FSI). The bomb that murdered the General also killed 8 civilians, going about their daily business in Beirut's crowded Place Sassine. Wissam al Hassan was known to be close to the former Prime Minister Saad Hariri and at the time of his assassination he was engaged on an enquiry into the affairs of Michel Samaha, a former Lebanese minister known to be close to the Syrian regime of Bashar al Assad. Mr Samaha had been arrested in Beirut in August 2012 and later confessed to preparing a number of attacks on government figures. For many analysts, Mr Samaha's close links to Assad and his confession statement were enough to attribute the October bombing to the Syrian regime.

The 2012 bombing was the first such attack to take place in Beirut since January 2008, which had killed Wissam Eid, also an intelligence officer, who had been heading the enquiry into the series of

bomb attacks that had followed the assassination of another former prime minister, Rafiq Hariri, in February 2005. Rafiq Hariri's assassination had triggered not only the Cedar Revolution but also the humiliating withdrawal of Syrian troops from Lebanon after an extensive presence that had lasted 29 years. Seven years after the event, Hariri's killing remained something of a mystery. Suspicion had shifted away from Syria towards Hezbollah, which inevitably caused tensions within the Lebanese government. In mid-2011 two Hezbollah members had been indicted by a United Nations Tribunal. The indictment had done little to improve the stability of Lebanon's politics. The fact remained that even if Hezbollah had actually carried out the murder, it was generally assumed that the order to kill him originated in Syria.

Lebanon's inevitably close relationship with Syria has brought it few blessings. The ruling coalition is dominated by the pro-Assad, Shi'a Hezbollah. The opposition, roughly based around the former ruling March 14 coalition, has a strong Sunni component (estimates put the Lebanese Sunni population at around three quarters of the total), sitting alongside Lebanese Christian (although some Christians aligned themselves with Hezbollah) and Druze deputies. Some Sunni elements have given more than simply vocal support for the Syrian rebels: arms and cash have made their way from Lebanon into Syria. Lebanon's Shi'a population which almost without exception supports Hezbollah, is largely centred in the south. Were Syria's divisions to be reflected within Lebanon, the danger looms that Lebanon could find itself involved in a proxy civil war between Lebanese factions supporting Syria's warring parties. In northern Lebanon, Tripoli's small Alawite community, which for tribal reasons supports the Assad régime, found itself thrown into conflict with the surrounding Sunni population. Fortunately, by 2013 Lebanon's army had become an effective national security and police force. Quoted in the London *Economist*, an army spokesman warned that it would act decisively 'to prevent Lebanon being transformed again into a place for a settling of regional scores and to prevent the assassination of the martyr Wissam Hassan being used to assassinate a whole country.'

War games

On 29 July 2013, the independent *As-Safir* daily carried a report by Denise

KEY INDICATORS

Lebanon

	Unit	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
Population	m	*3.81	*3.86	*3.91	*3.96	*4.01
Gross domestic product (GDP)	US\$bn	29.40	33.60	39.20	39.00	*41.34
GDP per capita	US\$	7,708	8,707	10,044	9,862	*10,311
GDP real growth	%	9.3	3.5	7.0	1.5	*1.5
Inflation	%	10.8	1.2	4.5	5.0	*6.6
Industrial output	% change	2.0	6.7	3.0	–	–
Agricultural output	% change	2.5	-6.9	3.5	–	–
Exports (fob) (goods)	US\$m	5,251.0	4,716.0	5,466.0	5,385.5	–
Imports (fob) (goods)	US\$m	16,261.0	15,895.0	17,728.0	19,304.4	–
Balance of trade	US\$m	-11,010.0	-11,179.0	-12,263.0	-13,918.9	–
Current account	US\$m	-2,759.0	-3,397.0	-3,566.0	-4,887.0	*-6,637.0
Total reserves minus gold	US\$m	20,244.5	29,102.9	31,514.1	31,066.2	*37,158.6
Foreign exchange	US\$m	20,181.8	28,744.5	31,163.3	30,702.2	*36,836.6
Exchange rate	per US\$	1,512.00	1,512.00	1,507.50	1,507.50	*1,507.50

* estimated figure

Attallah Haddad which claimed that ‘The talk about war is increasing in the Lebanese political circles. There were those who feared an Israeli attack against Lebanon as considered likely by some Western diplomatic sources.’

The talk about war is lively both in the media and among several political, civil and even religious circles. The Syrian crisis and developments in the Arab world risks turning Lebanon into a military arena. Rumours abound that Israel has plans to launch a major offensive against Lebanon and that Israeli military training alerts were not mere exercises but in fact serious preparations for a putative military offensive.

The interests of Hezbollah and the Assad regime have for some time overlapped when it came to Lebanon, a fragmented society which larger international players regard as ‘a proxy arena for Western confrontation with Iran and Syria.’ After Syria’s military withdrawal from Lebanon in 2005, the Damascus government had little choice but to use Hezbollah to maintain some presence in Lebanon. Hezbollah forces are known to have received training and weapons systems from Syria. Western intelligence has also long been aware of the Hezbollah role as a bridge between Tehran and Beirut. The common bond of open hostility towards Israel of the three regional allies would be seriously weakened without Syria’s logistical support.

Lebanon’s Sunni population see the possible demise of the Assad regime as good news; Lebanese Forces (LF) leader Samir Geagea had announced in early 2012 that Lebanon would begin a process of state building following the collapse of President Assad’s government, which he had predicted would happen in 2012. ‘Following the fall of the Syrian regime, we will enter a complicated political process before we create another political system that is well defined and capable of building relations between Lebanon and Syria as two [separate] states,’ Mr Geagea advised. Mr Geagea had been a staunch critic of both of Bashar al Assad’s government and of Damascus’ relations with Beirut. The LF leader, with his allies in the 14 March Alliance, had repeatedly voiced support for the uprising in Syria. Well, how wrong can you get...

The economy suffers

According to the World Bank, after four years of robust annual growth averaging around 7.5 per cent, Lebanon’s macro-economic performance began to

deteriorate in 2011, due in some measure to the impact of regional turmoil, domestic political uncertainty and repeated security incidents. Growth in 2011 was estimated to have reached 3 per cent and to have decelerated further to 1.4 per cent in 2012. Growth was projected to remain muted in both 2013 and 2014 with gross domestic product (GDP) growing at 1.5 per cent, adding pressure on unemployment and migration, especially that of educated youth and skilled labour. The slowdown in investments and the decline in tourism has also negatively affected growth.

The major fiscal expansion that took place in 2012 was creating fiscal challenges for 2013, particularly in the context of the promised increase in public salaries. The fiscal expansion measured by the changes in the central government’s primary fiscal balance reached almost 3.2 percentage points of GDP in 2012 (from a 2.9 per cent of GDP primary surplus in 2011 to a deficit of 0.3 per cent of GDP in 2012). The overall fiscal deficit reached 8.7 per cent of GDP in 2012. The rising deficits were driven by a sharp rise in expenditure stemming from wages and salaries (following a large cost-of-living adjustment) and transfers to the national electricity company. Low growth and rising deficits combined in 2012 to reverse the downward trend in the public debt-to-GDP ratio that started in 2006 (the ratio rose to 134.4 per cent at end-2012).

The conflict in Syria has further impacted growth in Lebanon, reducing the GDP growth rate by 2.9 percentage points for each year of conflict. Insecurity and uncertainty spillovers have had a negative impact on investor and consumer confidence and the trade routes for exports and imports of goods have been disrupted. The Syrian conflict has also seriously disrupted the tourism sector, as well as the financial services sector. The resulting lower economic activity has been putting downward pressure on government revenues which, combined with rising demand for public services stemming from the large refugee influx, was further damaging Lebanon’s public finances. The combination of lower revenue and higher expenditure was widening Lebanon’s already large fiscal deficit by a cumulative US\$2.6 billion during 2012–14.

Risk assessment

Politics	Poor
Economy	Fair
Regional stability	Poor

COUNTRY PROFILE

Historical profile

1926 The constitution was approved and the Lebanese Republic declared.

1940 Lebanon came under the control of the Vichy French government.

1941 After occupation by Free French and British troops, independence was declared.

1943 France agreed to the transfer of power to the Lebanese government with effect from 1944.

1948 A major influx of Arab refugees from Palestine built tensions between Christian Maronites and Muslim Shi’as.

1958 The first civil war erupted between Muslim and Christian groups

1964 Yasser Arafat established a Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) stronghold in Lebanon.

1970 Anti-Israeli terrorist attacks from Lebanese bases increased after the PLO was expelled from Jordan. Israeli retaliations further alienated leftist Muslims from conservative Maronites (the largest Christian sect) and undermined governmental legitimacy, with nine changes in three years.

1975 Full-scale civil war erupted between Muslims (with PLO aid) and Christians. Southern Lebanon and the western half of Beirut became bases for the PLO and other Muslim militias, while the Christians controlled East Beirut and the Christian section of Mt Lebanon.

1976 A 30,000-strong Arab Deterrent Force was established to restore peace.

1978 In reprisal for an attack by Palestinians based in Lebanon, Israel invaded and occupied the south of the country; the UN called on Israel to withdraw its troops; it handed over the territory to the mainly Christian Lebanese militia.

1982 Hezbollah (Party of God) was formed by Muslim clerics, backed by Iran and Syria, to respond to the Israeli invasion of Lebanon and to advocate the establishment of an Islamic government (it became a political movement in 1985 and entered parliament in 1992). Israel launched a full-scale invasion after an assassination attempt on Shlomo Argov, its ambassador to the UK. Syria, which maintained a large army in Lebanon, unsuccessfully fought Israel. Christian Phalangist militiamen, with Israeli compliance, massacred more than 1,000 Palestinian refugees in the Sabra and Shatila camps. A Western multinational force monitored the evacuation of the PLO to Tunis.

1983 Hostilities between Israel and Lebanon ended. Syrian forces remained in Lebanon.

1985 Despite withdrawing from most of the territory, Israel maintained some troops in support of the mainly Christian

South Lebanon Army (SLA) (a militia set up and supported by Israel) in order to help secure its own northern border.

1986–90 Factional conflict worsened as various efforts at national reconciliation failed. Lebanon had two governments – one mainly Muslim in West Beirut, headed by Salim al Huss, the other, Christian, in East Beirut, led by the Maronite Commander-in-Chief of the Army, General Michel Aoun.

1989 Under the Ta'if Accord, a government of national reconciliation was formed with an equal number of Christian and Muslim members. Elias Hrawi was elected president.

1990 The civil war ended and General Aoun fled.

1992 President Hrawi appointed Rafik al Hariri as prime minister, heading a cabinet of technocrats. Al Hariri, a rich businessman, born in Sidon but with Saudi Arabian nationality, became the mastermind behind the reconstruction of Lebanon.

1993–97 The Oslo Peace Accords laid the basis for transfer of authority from the Israeli military administration to the PLO in the Gaza Strip and an undefined area around the town of Jericho in the West Bank. A follow-up treaty, Oslo II, envisaged Palestinian autonomy, with Israeli troop units withdrawing from the West Bank. Yasser Arafat was elected president of the Palestinian Legislative Council (PLC), the assembly of the Palestinian National Authority (PNA). Attacks and reprisals continued between Hezbollah and Palestinian guerrillas, and Israel.

1998 The National Assembly elected army chief of staff, General Émile Lahoud, as president, replacing Elias Hrawi. Following the resignation of Prime Minister al Hariri, Salim al Huss was appointed to the post.

2000 The Israeli army withdrew from southern Lebanon and the SLA disbanded. Sporadic clashes continued between Hezbollah and Israeli forces. Rafik al Hariri won convincingly at the elections and was re-appointed prime minister.

2003 Israeli warplanes and artillery attacked suspected Hezbollah positions in the disputed Shebaa Farms area in south Lebanon in retaliation for guerrilla attacks.

2004 Syria insisted that President Lahoud's term in office be extended until 2007, which was approved by parliament. UN Security Council resolution 1559 demanded that Syrian soldiers leave Lebanon and that Hezbollah disarm. Rafik al Hariri opposed the extension of Lahoud's term and stood down as prime minister; Omar Karami was nominated for the post.

2005 Former prime minister Rafik al Hariri was assassinated. Syria was accused of supporting the perpetrators. Thousands of protesters gathered in Beirut, demanding the withdrawal of Syrian troops; the pro-Syrian government resigned. Syria agreed to withdraw its troops to the Bekaa valley in eastern Lebanon. Najib Mikati became prime minister of a mixed pro- and anti-Syrian cabinet. Syrian troops pulled out of Lebanon. In parliamentary elections, Hariri-Jumblatt, the bloc led by Saad al Hariri (son of Rafik al Hariri), won 72 seats, the Shi'a Muslim bloc of Amal and Hezbollah won 35 seats and the anti-Syrian Michel Aoun and allies won 21 seats. Fouad Siniora became prime minister. He formed a cabinet which mostly included those opposed to Syrian involvement in Lebanon but also included – for the first time – ministers of the Hezbollah and Amal movements. Four pro-Syrian generals were charged with the assassination of Rafik al Hariri, following the findings of the UN's chief investigator.

2006 Israel bombed southern Lebanon after Hezbollah kidnapped two Israeli soldiers while raiding Israel. Israel invaded the south attempting to retrieve its soldiers but after 34 days of fighting without a conclusive victory and the death of approximately 1,000 Lebanese, the Israelis agreed to a truce. Israeli troops withdrew and the Lebanese army deployed along the border. Hezbollah claimed the war was 'a strategic and historical victory for Lebanon against the Israeli enemy'. Plans for a UN tribunal to prosecute the suspects in the Rafik al Hariri assassination led to the resignation of ministers of Hezbollah and the Amal.

2007 International donors pledged US\$7.4 billion in aid towards reconstruction and the repayment of war debt at a conference held in Paris. The anti-Syrian politician, Antoine Ghanim, was assassinated. Syria denied responsibility. The death of Ghanim plus several more assassinations of anti-Syrian members of parliament reduced the government's majority and with the lack of a quorum forced the first presidential vote in parliament to be postponed. A compromise candidate for president, Michel Suleiman, won backing from all political parties. However, as a serving military officer, the constitution had to be amended to allow his candidacy. In order to gain enough support Suleiman had to agree a shortened presidential term in office, to end in 2009 instead of 2013, and an appointed prime minister with neutral allegiances. Presidential elections were postponed several more times.

2008 The Lebanese National Dialogue Conference between religious blocs and political parties agreed to new electoral

laws, whereby the 128-seat Majlis al Nuwab (parliament) was allocated equally between Christians and Muslims with 64 seats each; while individual constituencies were elected by proportional representation among religious communities (confessionally distributed). Elections for president were again postponed until General Michel Suleiman was finally elected president; he received 118 votes out of 127 and was sworn in immediately. Prime Minister Siniora announced the formation of a national unity government with members from all political and religious blocs. An agreed common border was formally demarcated between Lebanon and Syria, in a move to improve diplomatic relations. Syria opened an embassy in Beirut.

2009 President Suleiman approved the appointment of Mr Ali Abdul Karim Ali as Syrian ambassador to Lebanon, thereby re-establishing full diplomatic relations for the first time since the 1940s. A former Syrian security officer suspected of assassinating Rafik al Hariri was detained in Dubai on an international arrest warrant. Before he could be extradited to Denmark to the Special Tribunal for Lebanon (STL) at the International Court of Justice (ICJ) he absconded. In parliamentary elections, within the 14 March Alliance (Christians), the Maronites won 34 seats, the Greek Orthodox 14; within the 8 March Alliance (Muslims) the Shi'a (Hezbollah) and Sunni each won 27 seats. Saad al Hariri was nominated as prime minister by President Suleiman; 86 members of parliament confirmed his appointment. Hezbollah agreed to join a unity government under Prime Minister Hariri, breaking a four month deadlock over the appointment of a government; 15 ministers were nominated from the 14 March Alliance and 10 from the 8 March Alliance; the president nominated five appointees for the remaining ministries.

2010 Prime Minister Hariri visited Syria to discuss bilateral relations and closer ties. Hariri said his accusation that Syria was responsible for the murder of his father was an error and that it was a 'political accusation'.

2011 In January, the Hezbollah group of 10 cabinet ministers resigned and therefore the whole cabinet was considered resigne; Saad Hariri remained care taker prime minister. In June, the chief prosecutor of the STL issued indictments for 14 senior members of Hezbollah – Assad Sabra, Hassan Issa, Salim Ayachhe and Moustaf Badredine accused of the assassination of former prime minister Rafiq Hariri in 2005. Hariri refused to reject the indictments and the president, with the agreement of 68 of 125 members of parliament, appointed Hezbollah-backed

candidate, Najib Mikati, as the new prime minister. The authorities asked Hezbollah to hand over the suspects for trial; failing which they would be tried *in absentia*. 2012 On 2 February, the STL proceeded with the prosecution of the four Hezbollah suspects in the assassination of Rafik al Hariri *in absentia*. The STL said that Lebanese authorities had tried to apprehend the accused and give notice of the charges against them. The leaders of Hezbollah have refused to surrender the accused and deny any role in the killing of Hariri and 21 others. On 19 October, chief security officer Wissam al Hassan was assassinated in a car bomb in central Beirut. He was a leading critic of the Syrian regime and the suspicion was that Syria was responsible for his death. 2013 A car bomb wounded many people in a stronghold of Lebanon's Shia militant group Hezbollah in Beirut. Prime Minister Najib Mikati submitted his resignation on 22 March. On 7 April Tamam Salam was nominated as prime minister; he was backed by parties across the political spectrum, including Hezbollah. On 22 July the EU agreed to list the military wing of militant group Hezbollah as a terrorist organisation. A fifth person, Hassan Habib Merhi, was indicted in August on charges related to the murder of Rafik Hariri. On 22 August rockets were fired from the Shi'a (Hezbollah) area of southern Lebanon into Israel. In retaliation Israel said an air strike targeted a 'terror site' the following day. By mid-October, interim Prime Minister Tamam Salam had still to form a government.

Political structure

Constitution

The constitution was enacted in May 1926, and has since been amended on five occasions. A key amendment agreed under the Ta'if Agreement of 1989 reduced the authority of the president by transferring executive power to the cabinet. The prime minister must be a Sunni Muslim, with the cabinet made up of equal numbers of Muslims and Christians. An amendment to the constitution was introduced in 2000, reducing the minimum age of a president from 40 to 34 years. Following the Lebanese National Dialogue Conference, in 2007, between religious blocs and political parties, an agreement was reached for new electoral laws, whereby the 128-seat parliament is allocated equally between Christians and Muslims at 64 seats each; while individual constituencies are elected by proportional representation among religious communities (confessionally distributed).

Independence date

22 November 1943.

Form of state

Republic

The executive

As head of state, the president is elected for a single six-year term by parliament and should be a Maronite Christian. Since 1990, however, Syria has effectively chosen the president and thereby alienated large parts of the Christian community. Under the constitution, the president chooses the prime minister upon recommendation from the parliament. In reality, Syria decides who is appointed to the position. The prime minister, who must be a Sunni Muslim, is responsible for choosing members of the 30-member Council of Ministers (cabinet). Ministers may be selected from inside or outside parliament. President General Émile Lahoud's six-year term of office, which was due to end in November 2004, was extended by parliament by three years.

National legislature

The Majlis al Nuwab (unicameral National Assembly) has 128 parliamentary members (MP), elected for a five-year term, by a religious community into allocated seats: Maronites (34), Sunnites (27), Shi'ites (27), Greek Orthodox (14), Greek Catholics (eight), Druzes (eight), Armenian Orthodox (five), Alaouites (two), Armenian Catholics (one), Protestants (one), Christian Minorities (one).

Parliament reduced the voting age from 21 to 18 on 19 March 2009; a national referendum must ratify the decision.

Legal system

The legal system is based on the 1926 constitution and the Commercial Code, the Civil Procedure Code, the Criminal Procedure Code and the Penal Code. French law has had a lasting impact on local legislation, while Ottoman law and Islamic law have also influenced Lebanon's legal system. Civil law is based on the Code of Obligations and Contracts and the Land Ownership Law. Various branches of the legal framework are being revised and updated. Lebanon has an independent judiciary.

Last elections

7 July 2009 (parliamentary); 25 May 2008 (presidential)

Results: Parliamentary: 14 March Alliance including Tayyar Al Mustaqbal (Future Movement) (Future) (Maronite), Hizb al Taqadummi al Ishtiraki (Progressive Socialists Party) (PSP) (Druze), Al Quwat al Lubnaniyya (Lebanese Forces) (LF) (Maronite), Hizb al-Kataeb (Kataeb Party) and others won 71 seats (out of 128). The 8 March Alliance, including Hezbollah (Shi'a); Harakat Amal (Amal Movement) (Sunni); Al Hizb al Qawmi al souri al ijtimai' (Syrian Social Nationalist Party), Ba'arth (Arab Socialist Ba'arth Party) and others won 29 seats. Change and Reform

alliance, including Tayyar Al Watani Al Horr (Free Patriotic Movement) (FPM) (Maronite), Marada Movement, Armenian Revolutionary Federation and Lebanese Democratic Party won 28 seats.

Presidential: Michel Suleiman was elected president by the National Assembly.

Next elections

2014 (parliamentary and presidential) (June 2013 elections were postponed)

Political parties

Ruling party

A coalition government led by 14 March Alliance

Population

4.01 million (2012)*

Last census: 3 March 2007: 3,759,134 (excluding Palestinian refugees in camps)

Population density: Urban population 87 per cent (2010 Unicef).

Annual growth rate: 1.8 per cent, 1990–2010 (Unicef).

Internally Displaced Persons (IDP)

300,000 (UNHCR 2004)

Ethnic make-up

The Lebanese belong to a single ethnic grouping, Levanto Arab, which encompasses the people of the Levant coast from northern Syria to southern Palestine. Armenians and Kurds have settled in Lebanon and there are Syrian troops and many Syrian workers.

Religions

There are 17 recognised religious groupings in Lebanon. Five predominate: Shi'a Muslims, Sunni Muslims, Maronite (Catholic) Christians, Greek Orthodox Christians and Druze.

Education

Education is mainly run by private enterprises and the religious sector. State schools exist and are free of charge. Primary education lasts for nine years.

The civil war severely disrupted state education at all levels and by the end of the civil war in 1990, 1,270 schools throughout the country needed rehabilitation at an estimated cost of US\$65 million. Public expenditure on education is equivalent to approximately 2.5 per cent of annual GNP.

There is a government-run Lebanese National University, but the major universities continue to be operated by the US, France and Egypt. There are over 10 universities in Beirut.

Literacy rate: 86.1 per cent total, 81.4 per cent female, adult rates (World Bank).

Compulsory years: None

Enrolment rate: 111 per cent total primary enrolment of the relevant age group (including repetition rates); 81 per cent total secondary enrolment (World Bank).

Health

A Social Security Fund covers the health expenses of workers.

HIV/Aids

HIV prevalence: 0.1 per cent aged 15–49 in 2003 (World Bank)

Life expectancy: 70 years, 2004 (WHO 2006)

Fertility rate/Maternal mortality rate:

1.8 births per woman, 2010 (Unicef); maternal mortality 100 per 100,000 live births (World Bank).

Child (under 5 years) mortality rate

(per 1,000): 9 per 1,000 live births (WHO 2012); 3 per cent of children aged under five are malnourished (World Bank).

Head of population per physician:

3.25 physicians per 1,000 people, 2001 (WHO 2006)

Welfare

Since 1963, Lebanon has operated a social insurance system offering lump sum benefits only. Social insurance covers employees in industry, commerce and agriculture, but excludes temporary agricultural employees and those previously entitled to special benefits under the labour code.

In 1999, old age pensions were available to men aged over 60, but compulsory for those aged over 64. The benefit included a lump sum amount equivalent to the average monthly earnings during the last 12 months or the final month. The rate for disability benefit is a lump sum equal to the final month's earnings multiplied by the number of years in service. Widows receive 25 per cent of their former spouse's benefit. There are no sickness or maternity benefits. Workers receive medical benefits for up to 26 weeks or 52 weeks in special cases. Family allowances are employment-related and are available to employees with a non-working wife or with one to five children. The maximum monthly allowance is equivalent to 75 per cent of the minimum wage.

Main cities

Beirut (capital, estimated population 2.1 million in 2012), Tripoli (195,932), Jounieh 102,221), Sidon (59,948), Zahlé (55,081).

Languages spoken

French and English are widely spoken in business circles.

Official language/s

Arabic

Media

Freedom of the press is practiced but there are laws forbidding defaming the president and other heads of states and inciting sectarian strife.

Press

Dailies: In Arabic *An Nahar* (www.annahar.com), *Al Safir* (www.assafir.com), *Al Anwar* (www.alanwar.com), *Al Diyar* (www.journaladdiyar.com), *Al Mustaqbal* (<http://almustaqbal.com>) with affiliation to the Future Movement. In Armenian *Aztag Daily* (www.aztagdaily.com). In French *L'Orient-Le Jour* (www.lorient-lejour.com.lb) is the country's fifth-largest newspaper. In English *The Daily Star* (www.dailystar.com.lb).

Weeklies: In Arabic, *Al Shiraa Magazine* (www.alshiraa.com) and *Al Afkar* (www.alafkar.net) for politics; *Al Noujoum* (www.alnoujoum.com) for celebrity news and *Al Jaras* (www.aljaras.com) for entertainment news. In French, *L'Hebdo Magazine* (www.magazine.com.lb) for news and current affairs and *La Revue du Liban* (www.rdl.com.lb) is a news review. In English *Monday Morning* (www.morning.com) for general news.

Business: In Arabic *Al Markazia* (www.immarwaiktissad.com) with articles on finance and current affairs and the monthly *Al Iktissad Wal Aamal* (www.iktissad.com) covers Arab business and economic news. In English, the UK-based monthly magazine *Executive* (<http://executive-magazine.com>) offers articles on Lebanese world of commerce in major sectors.

Periodicals: Monthly women's magazines include *Snob Magazine* (www.snobmagazine.com) in Arabic, is aimed at a young female audience and in French, *Femme* (www.femmemag.com.lb) is aimed at an older readership while *Noun* (www.noun.com.lb) is aimed at a sophisticated female market. In Arabic, *Al Mustaqbal Al Arabi* (www.caus.org.lb) is an academic publication on Arab matters.

Broadcasting

The Lebanese Broadcasting Company (LBCI) is privately owned. In 1996, Lebanon banned broadcasts of political programmes and news by about 50 private television stations and 150 radio stations and ordered them to close. Political broadcasting is restricted to four TV stations and three radio outlets controlled by the pro-government establishment.

Radio: The government gives permission to operators to broadcast and limits which station may broadcast the news. Radio Liban (www.96-2.com) is state-run with nationwide reception. There are many private, commercial stations including Mix FM (www.mixfm.com.lb), NBN (www.nbn.com.lb) and NRG Beirut (www.nrjlebanon.com). International broadcasts are relayed through local stations.

Television: Viewing of satellite and cable television is widespread.

Tele-Liban is the state-run channel. Other, private, commercial channels include the Lebanese Broadcasting Corporation (LBC) (www.lbcgroup.tv) the market leader with regional and international coverage through satellite transmissions. Its political stance is towards the Christian community. Future Television (www.future.com.lb) is affiliated to a Sunni Muslim political movement (Tayyar Al Mustaqbal (Future Movement)). Orange TV (www.otv.com.lb) is a publicly owned station which began broadcasting in 2007. Al Manar (www.almanar.com.lb) is a station affiliated to the Hezbollah. The Lebanon-based news station Al Jaheed (www.akjadeed.tv) broadcasts throughout the region.

Cable Vision (www.cablevision-leb.net) is the largest of the cable TV services.

National news agency: NNA (National News Agency): www.nna-leb.gov.lb

Other news agencies: Central News Agency: www.almarkazia.com

Economy

Lebanon has a strong tradition as an open market, trade-orientated economy. Coupled with strong banking rules and a high ratio of 50 per cent liquid assets to short-term loans its banking system has not been subject to the high level of toxic debts prevailing elsewhere. Thus, while the world experienced a global economic crisis and world trade fell, Lebanon experienced GDP growth of 0.6 per cent in 2006, rising to 7.5 per cent in 2007 as rebuilding after the Israeli invasion began. In 2008, GDP growth was at a decade-high 9.3 per cent before falling back to 8.5 per cent in 2009 and further still to 7.0 per cent in 2010. Growth in 2011 was estimated at 1.5 per cent, a drop largely as a result of the political turmoil of the Arab Spring in the Middle East.

Lebanon is one of the world's largest recipients of remittances, which in 2010 were US\$7.6 billion (19.6 per cent of GDP) and an estimated US\$7.68 billion in 2011. Over 50 per cent of all remittances originate in Gulf Co-operation Council (GCC) states. The service sector is by far the dominant component of the economy at 72.2 per cent of GDP in 2010, (mainly banking and tourism), industry provides 21.5 per cent, of which manufacturing accounted for 8.3 per cent, with the remainder provided by agriculture.

The main exports are manufactured goods, including jewellery, machinery, textiles and paper, plus chemicals and fruit and vegetables, such as citrus, grapes, tobacco and live animals. However Lebanon must import much of its

commodities and typically maintains a trade deficit (-US\$12.3 billion in 2010). A law allowing Palestinian refugees to work legally was passed by parliament in 2010; there are estimated to be some 400,000 Palestinians in Lebanon.

External trade

Lebanon belongs to the Greater Arab Free Trade Area (Gafta), which has 17 members, creating an Arab economic bloc. A customs union was established whereby tariffs within Gafta will be reduced by a percentage each year, until none remain. Lebanon is also a signatory of the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership agreement, which provides for the introduction of free trade between the EU and 10 Mediterranean countries by 2012. A new free-trade zone, including visa-free travel for their nationals, was agreed in June 2010, between Turkey, Lebanon, Jordan and Syria. A co-operation council will be established to 'develop a long-term strategic partnership' to encourage free movement of goods and persons.

In 2009 Lebanon was close to full membership of the WTO, having progressed to the outline phase for terms of membership.

Around 65 per cent of GDP is provided by foreign trade, with recent growth in the IT (information technology) sector, although financial services still provide the lion's share.

Imports

Major imports include petroleum products, vehicles, medicine, clothing, meat and live animals, consumer goods, paper, textiles, tobacco.

Main sources: US (11.2 per cent of total in 2012), Italy (8.6 per cent), China (8.2 per cent).

Exports

Commodity exports include gems and jewellery, electrical and electronic equipment, minerals such as salt and sulphur, iron and steel, consumer goods and construction materials.

Main destinations: South Africa (19.4 per cent of total in 2012), Switzerland (12.3 per cent), Saudi Arabia (7.9 per cent).

Agriculture

The agricultural sector has still not recovered from the effects of the civil war. While agricultural exports have shown signs of recovery, they earn only around US\$233 million compared with expenditure of US\$1.5 billion on imports of agricultural produce. Main goods for export are surplus products such as apples, citrus fruit and potatoes.

Agricultural and farming activities are in private hands. The land tenure system and difficult terrain have resulted in the

majority of farmland being divided into small relatively uneconomic units. This has acted as a disincentive to investment in irrigation and mechanisation. The government provides little aid to the sector, which has had to compete with heavily subsidized produce from other countries. Lebanon's membership of the Greater Arab Free Trade Agreement (Gafta), which came into effect in 2005, could expose the sector to further pressures. The relatively mild climate allows for diversified agricultural production. Main crops: wheat, barley, maize, vegetables, potatoes, fruit, olives, tobacco. Farmers have started the cultivation of advanced cash crops, such as avocados and flowers.

Goats, cattle and sheep are the main types of livestock raised in Lebanon.

One-third of Lebanon's land is cultivable with 400,000 hectares of arable land, of which 25 per cent is irrigated. The main agricultural areas are the Beka'a valley, the Akkar plain, the coastal plain and the foothills of the central mountain range.

Most of these areas were badly affected by war. Agriculture in the south and in the Beka'a valley was particularly affected. Agriculture remains an important source of income in rural areas, and although it is difficult to estimate the number of full-time farmers, most families conduct or participate in agriculture as a part-time activity.

Despite Lebanon's extensive coastline, commercial fishing remains a minor activity, contributing less than one per cent to GDP annually.

Forest cover amounts to less than 8 per cent of total land area.

Industry and manufacturing

Industry and manufacturing is small to medium scale. The sector accounts for around 12.6 per cent of GDP and employs 18 per cent of the workforce. The main products are building materials, textiles and clothing, food processing and furniture.

Construction employs about 6 per cent of the workforce. Industry provides more than 40 per cent of Lebanon's merchandised export earnings.

Tourism

Beirut was once called the Paris of the Middle East for its liberal-minded, open, commercial and café society, but, along with the rest of Lebanon, Beirut suffered from the conflicts and violence in the region. Lebanon offers many historical sites reaching back into antiquity, of which several are included on Unesco's World Heritage List. It also offers modern activities for a large expatriate population and luxury accommodation for wealthy visitors from the region.

The travel and tourism sector has become vital to the economy, contributing on average 32.8 per cent of GDP (2007–10), with a contribution of 35.1 per cent in 2011. Likewise it provided employment to, on average, 31.1 per cent (403,000 jobs) (2007–10), rising to 448,300 in 2011. The number of visitors rose from 1.7 million in 2007 to 2.2 million in 2010; but in 2011 the numbers fell by 24.4 per cent (January–October) to 1.4 million, due to the unrest in Syria. Lebanon is becoming a hub for health tourism, with services for dental, plastic surgery and other specialist medical and therapeutic treatments offered in dedicated spas and 'wellness' centres.

Mining

Lebanon has few natural resources. There are minor deposits of high-grade iron ore, asphalt, coal, lignite, phosphates and salt, all of which are exploited for internal consumption. There are also quarries for building-stone, and sand and lime suitable for use in construction.

Hydrocarbons

Lebanon relies on the import of refined oil to meet domestic demand. In 2007 it imported 94,000 barrels per day (bpd) of oil. Explorations for oil remain unsuccessful and in 2007 Lebanon agreed with Cyprus to a seabed demarcation of their boundary to what are considered to be potentially rich oil and natural gas fields. Lebanon does not produce natural gas. The 1,200km Arab Gas Pipeline (AGP) runs from Egypt to Jordan and Syria and by November 2008 had reached the border with Turkey; it has a spur to Lebanon, via Syria, which was completed in 2004, and able to deliver over 1.5 million cubic metres (cum) of gas per day to the Beddawi power station in northern Lebanon. However supplies have been subject to political and commercial problems and gas has never been delivered. Natural gas is expected to arrive by early-2009 although at 60 million cum it will be less than half the amount originally intended. Lebanon has no coal, but imports around 5.6 million tonnes per annum.

Energy

Total installed generating capacity is over 1.5 gigawatts (GW), which produces around 10 billion kilowatt hours (kWh) per annum. However demand at 2.5GW outstrips supplies; Lebanon signed an agreement in 2008 to buy Egyptian surplus energy, which will initially only deliver 125MW and 450MW in off-peak periods. Electricity rationing is widespread and power cuts common. The electricity supply is highly inefficient and expensive. Electricité du Liban (EDL), the state-owned electricity provider, operates at an annual

loss of US\$400 million a year. Electricity is produced using imported fuel oil, which accounts for around 70 per cent of EDL's total costs.

Lebanon is seeking to convert from fuel oil to natural gas for electricity generation. Like oil, natural gas has to be imported. A pipeline giving access to Egyptian gas, via Syrian, at preferential prices was completed in 2004. However supplies have been subject to political and commercial problems and gas was never delivered. Egyptian natural gas was scheduled to begin flowing to the Lebanese Beddawi gas-fired power plant in September 2009. When at full capacity around 850,000cum of natural gas will operate two turbines.

Financial markets

Stock exchange

Beirut Stock Exchange (BSE)

Banking and insurance

Before the civil war, Lebanon was the unrivalled financial centre in the Middle East. Lebanon's free exchange system, strict secrecy laws, and strong currency all served to attract regional and international institutions and customers. Favourable economic and financial conditions following the end of the civil war initially led to an improved monetary and banking situation. However, lack of dynamism in the sector has since discouraged most foreign investors.

Central bank

Banque du Liban (BDL) (Bank of Lebanon)

Main financial centre

Beirut

Time

GMT plus two hours (daylight saving GMT plus three hours)

Geography

Lebanon stretches approximately 140km along the eastern shore of the Mediterranean, bounded by Syria to the north and east and Israel to the south. Its terrain is mountainous, dominated by the parallel ranges of the Lebanon in the west and the Anti-Lebanon in the east, which run north-east to south-west. Between these ranges lies the Beka'a valley, broad in the north, narrowing in the south. The coastal plain is defined by the Lebanon range which in places plunges into the sea, dividing the coastal strip into segments. The major cities are: Tripoli in the north, Beirut on one of the wider segments halfway down the coast and Sidon and Tyre in the south.

Hemisphere

Northern

Climate

In the summer, temperatures range between 20–30 degrees Celsius (C); Beirut

averages 27 degrees C. The coastal region is humid in the summer months. In the winter, temperatures in the coastal region range between 10–16 degrees C and it becomes colder inland. Snow is usual on mountains. Most rain falls between November and March. Lebanon enjoys an essentially Mediterranean climate with mild, rainy winters and long warm summers. It almost never rains between June and October, and there is an average of 300 sunny days every year. In summer it is possible to escape the heat and humidity of the coast and go to the mountains. Average annual rainfall is 893mm in Beirut, mostly occurring in winter.

Dress codes

Formal clothing is required for business meetings. Women should dress modestly.

Entry requirements

Passports

Required by all and must have six months validity from date of visit.

Visa

Required by all, with a few exceptions for regional nationals. Contact the nearest consulate for confirmation. Those who apply for a business visa must submit a business letter from the visitor's company with a letter or fax from a local business contact stating the purpose of the trip.

Prohibited entry

Entry is refused to holders of Israeli and Palestinian passports, holders of passports containing a visa for Israel, valid or expired, used or unused, and passports with entry stamps to Israel.

Currency advice/regulations

There are no restrictions on the import and export of local or foreign currencies. Travellers cheques are not suitable for Lebanon as it takes two weeks for cheques to clear.

Customs

Duty-free allowances include amounts of alcohol, tobacco and perfume. Personal belonging may not exceed LL200,000. Antiques require export permits.

Prohibited imports

Firearms, ammunition, illegal drugs and pornography.

Health (for visitors)

Mandatory precautions

Vaccination certificates for yellow fever are required if travelling from an infected area. There are no other mandatory vaccinations required to enter Lebanon.

Advisable precautions

It is recommended that visitors have preventative vaccinations for polio, typhoid, tetanus and hepatitis A.

Lebanon's medical services are generally modern, with most doctors speaking French or English. The private hospitals

are the best, but more expensive, and it is recommended that insurance is taken out by all visitors.

Hotels

The ministry of tourism assesses the quality of hotels and publishes an annual report. A full range of hotels were available before the Lebanese/Israeli conflict of 2006.

A 15 per cent service charge is usually added to the bill, with additional tipping optional.

Credit cards

International credit cards are accepted throughout the capital, and in the more developed areas across the country. ATMs are plentiful

Public holidays (national)

Fixed dates

1 Jan (New Year's Day), ^ 9 Feb (Feast of St Maroun), 1 May (Labour Day), 6 May (Martyrs' Day), ^ 15 Aug (Assumption Day), ^ 1 Nov (All Saints' Day), 22 Nov (Independence Day), ^ 25 Dec (Christmas Day).

^ Observed by adherents only.

Holidays that fall at the weekend are taken on the Monday following.

Variable dates

Orthodox Christmas (Jan), Orthodox Easter (Mar/Apr, Fri–Mon), Eid al Adha (three days), Islamic New Year, Ashura (two days), Birth of the Prophet, Eid al Fitr (three days).

Islamic year 1435 (5 Nov 2013–24

Oct 2014):: The Islamic year contains 354 or 355 days, with the result that Muslim feasts advance by 10–12 days against the Gregorian calendar. Dates of feasts vary according to the sighting of the new moon, so cannot be forecast exactly.

Working hours

Banking

Mon–Fri: 0800–1230; Sat: 0800–1200.

Business

Mon–Fri: 0900–1600.

Government

Mon–Fri: 0800–1400; Sat: 0800–1300.

Shops

Mon–Sat: 0800–1900. Some shops open on Sundays.

Telecommunications

Mobile/cell phones

GSM 900 services cover the entire country.

Electricity supply

110V or 220V AC, 50 cycles. Supply is subject to fluctuations and blackouts. It is advisable to use a stabiliser when operating more advanced electronic equipment.

Weights and measures

Metric system

Social customs/useful tips

Punctuality is expected for business appointments but is less strictly observed for social engagements. The usual form of greeting is to shake hands. It is the custom to offer coffee or tea to visitors and it is considered rude to refuse. Muslim traditions are observed.

During Ramadan (the four weeks prior to the Eid al Fitr holiday) employees tend to work shorter hours. It is advisable to avoid business trips at this time.

Security

Visitors should keep in touch with developments in the Middle East as any increase in regional tension might affect travel advice.

Security in Lebanon is likely to remain hostage to the regional tensions over the Israeli-Palestinian and Iraqi conflicts. Visitors are advised to carry their passports.

Getting there**Air**

National airline: Middle East Airlines (MEA).

International airport/s: The Rafik Hariri International Airport (renamed in June 2006) (BEY), is 16km from Beirut, with duty-free shops, VIP lounge, post office, restaurant *bureau de change*, hotel reservation and car hire.

Airport tax: Departure tax: LL100,000 first class, LL75,000 business class, LL50,000 economy class passengers

Surface

Road: Road access is possible through Turkey via Aleppo and Syria via the Bekaa valley. No access is possible via Israel.

Water: A ferry operates between Larnaca in Cyprus and Beirut.

Main port/s: Beirut, Tripoli, Saida (Sidon), Jounieh, Tyre and Byblos.

Getting about**National transport**

Air: There are no domestic flights.

Road: Some 6,000km of roads and highways, excluding municipal roads. There are two international motorways with a total length of 570km. Some 40 per cent of the road network is in poor condition. New routes were under construction prior to the 2006 conflict with Israel.

Buses: Buses travel between Beirut and other major towns around the country. There are only limited daily departures.

Rail: There is no passenger railway network in Lebanon.

City transport

Taxis: There are taxis available throughout Beirut and most of the country. Service taxis usually follow established routes where one person will often share the taxi with up to four other passengers. Share taxis will stop on request. Ordinary taxis

are not restricted to a set route and will take passengers anywhere in the country. The government has fixed charges for airport taxis.

Buses, trams & metro: A few buses are available to certain destinations. Not recommended for foreign visitors.

Car hire

There are several international car hire companies in Beirut, usually offering competitive rates. Rental companies can also provide drivers with their cars.

BUSINESS DIRECTORY

The addresses listed below are a selection only. While World of Information makes every endeavour to check these addresses, we cannot guarantee that changes have not been made, especially to telephone numbers and area codes. We would welcome any corrections.

Telephone area codes

The international direct dialling (IDD) code for Lebanon is +961, followed by area code:

Grand Beirut	1	Tripoli	6
Kerswan / Jbeil	9	Tyre	7
Sidon	7	Zahle	8

Chambers of Commerce

American Lebanese Chamber of Commerce, 1153 Foch Street, PO Box 175093, Beirut (tel: 985-330; fax: 985-331; e-mail: amchamlb@cyberia.net.lb).

Beirut and Mount Lebanon Chamber of Commerce, Industry and Agriculture, Sanayeh, 1 Justinien Street, PO Box 11-1801, Beirut (tel: 353-390; fax: 353-395; e-mail: info@ccib.org.lb).

Federation of the Chambers of Commerce, Industry and Agriculture in Lebanon, Sanayeh, 1 Justinien Street, PO Box 11-1801, Beirut (tel: 745-288; fax: 341-328; e-mail: fccial@cci-fed.org.lb).

Sidon and South Lebanon Chamber of Commerce, Industry and Agriculture, Boulevard Maarouf Saad, PO Box 41, Sidon (tel: 720-123; fax: 722-986; e-mail: chamber@ccias.org.lb).

Tripoli and North Lebanon Chamber of Commerce, Industry and Agriculture, Bechara Khoury Street, PO Box 47, Tripoli (tel: 425-600; fax: 442-042; e-mail: comindeg@adm.net.lb).

Banking

ABN-AMRO Bank Lebanon, ABN AMRO Tower, Charles Malek Avenue, Achrafieh, Beirut (tel: 219-200; fax: 217-756/7).

Arab African International Bank, Riad El Solh, Beirut (tel: 980-162/3, 980-264/5; fax: 633-912).

Bank of Beirut; PO Box 11-7354, Bank of Beirut sal Bldg, Foch Street, Beirut Central

District, Beirut (tel: 738767/68; fax: 602166).

Banque Audi, Banque Audi Plaza, Bab Idriss, 2021 8102 Beirut (tel: 200-250, 331-600; fax: 339-220).

British Arab Commercial Bank Ltd, ARESCO Centre, Banque du Liban Street, PO Box 113-5495, Hamra, Beirut (tel: 602-437; fax: 602-438).

HSBC Bank Middle East Ltd, PO Box 11-1380, St Georges Bay, Minet el Hosn, Beirut (tel: 377-477, 369-900; fax: 372-362).

Banque Libano-Française, PO Box 11808, Beirut Liberty Plaza Bldg, Roma Street, Ras Beirut, Beirut (tel: 791332; fax: 340355).

BLOM Bank, BLOM Banks's Bldg, Rashid Karami St, Verdun, Beirut, Lebanon (tel: 743-300, 738-938; fax: 738-946).

Banque de la Méditerranée; Méditerranée Group Building, Clemenceau Street, Kantari Beirut, 2022 9302 Beirut (tel: 373-937; fax: 362-706).

Central bank

Banque du Liban, PO Box 11-5544, Masraf Loubane Street, Beirut (tel: 750-000; fax: 478-2740; e-mail: bdlit@bdl.gov.lb).

Stock exchange

Beirut Stock Exchange (BSE)
www.bse.com.lb

Travel information

Middle East Airlines, PO Box 206, Beirut International Airport.

Tourist Police (343-209).

Trans Mediterranean Airways, PO Box 11-3018, Beirut International Airport.

Ministry of tourism

Ministry of Tourism, Information Services, 550 Central Bank Street, PO Box 11-5344, Beirut (tel: 354-764; fax: 343-279; e-mail: mot@lebanon-tourism.gov.lb; internet: www.destinationlebanon.gov.lb).

Ministries

Ministry of Agriculture, Georges Jaber Building, Badaro Street, Beirut (tel: 455-613; fax: 455-475; e-mail: ministry@agriculture.gov.lb).

Ministry of Defence, Yarzé, Beirut (tel: 452-963; fax: 457-920).

Ministry of the Displaced, Old Sidon Road, Damour (tel: 840-474; fax: 840-476; e-mail: mod@dm.net.lb).

Ministry of Economy and Trade, Assaf Building, Rue Artois, Beirut (tel: 340-504; fax: 354-640; e-mail: postmaster@economy.gov.lb).

Nations of the World: A Political, Economic and Business Handbook

Ministry of Education and Higher Education, Rue Georges Piko, Beirut (tel: 744-251; fax: 371-079).

Ministry of Electricity and Water Resources, Shiah, Beirut (tel: 565-040; fax: 449-639).

Ministry of the Environment, 550 Central Bank Street, Beirut (tel: 524-999; fax: 524-555).

Ministry of Finance, MOF Building, Riyad el Solh Square, Beirut (tel: 981-001; fax: 642-762; e-mail: infocenter@finance.gov.lb).

Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Rue Surssock, Beirut (tel: 334-400; fax: 584-098).

Ministry of Health, Museum Street, Beirut (tel: 615-701; fax: 645-099).

Ministry of Industry, Rue Sami Solh, Beirut (tel: 427-247; fax: 427-112).

Ministry of Information, Rue Hamra, Beirut (tel: 351-032; fax: 423-189).

Ministry of the Interior, Rue des Arts et Métiers, Sanayeh, Beirut (tel: 981-270; fax: 751-622).

Ministry of Justice, Rue Sami Solh, Beirut (tel: 425-670; fax: 422-957).

Ministry of Labour, Shiah, Beirut (tel: 556-831; fax: 556-832).

Ministry of Posts and Telecommunications, Rue Sami Shoh, Beirut (tel: 888-100; fax: 423-005; e-mail: webmaster@mpt.gov.lb).

Ministry of Public Works and Transport, Fiyadieh, Hazmieh, Beirut (tel: 458-975; fax: 459-434).

Ministry of Social Affairs, Rue Badaro, Beirut (tel: 395-561; fax: 396-148).

Ministry of Sports and Youth, Campus of Unesco, Beirut (tel: 790-529; fax: 840-440).

Ministry of Tourism, 550 Central Bank Street, Beirut (fax: 340-940; e-mail: mot@lebanon-tourism.gov.lb).

Office of the President, Presidential Palace, Beirut (tel: 220-0000; fax: 425-395).

Office of the Prime Minister, Riyad el Solh Square, Beirut (tel: 862-001; fax: 869-630).

Other useful addresses

Association of Lebanese Industrialists, PO Box 1520, Chamber of Commerce and Industry Building, Justinian Street, Beirut (tel: 350-280; fax: 351-167).

Board for Foreign Economic Relations, PO Box 11-5344, Beirut (tel: 483-391/5).

British Embassy, Commercial Section, PO Box 60180, Coolrite Building, Autostrade, Jal El Dib, Beirut (tel: 406-330, 405-033, 402-035; fax: 402-033).

Council for Development and Reconstruction (CDR), Tallet El Serail, Beirut Central District (tel: 643-981; fax: 647-947, 864-494, 865-630).

Electricité du Liban, Nahr Street, Beirut (tel: 442-720; fax: 583-084).

Higher Council for Privatisation, Grand Serail, Beirut Central District, Beirut (tel: 987-500; fax: 983-061).

International Fairs and Promotions, SARL, PO Box 55576, Beirut.

Investment Development Authority of Lebanon, Presidency of the Council of Ministers, Liberty, Lyon Street, PO Box 113-7251, Sanayeh, Beirut (tel: 344-676, 344-403; fax: 344-463, 347-397).

Lebanese Embassy (USA), 2560 28th Street, NW, Washington DC 20008 (tel: (+1-202) 939-6300; fax: (+1-202) 939-6324; e-mail: info@lebanonembassy.org).

Solidère (development company for rebuilding Beirut), Industry and Labour Bank Building, Riyadh El-Solh Street, PO Box 11-9493, Beirut (tel: 346-891, 646-137/8/9; fax: 646-136).

National news agency: NNA (National News Agency): www.nna-leb.gov.lb

Other news agencies: Central News Agency: www.almarkazia.com

Internet sites

Investment Development Authority of Lebanon (IDAL): www.idal.com.lb

Lebanon Online: www.lebanon.com

Ministry of Economy and Trade: www.economy.gov.lb

Ministry of Tourism: www.lebanon-tourism.gov.lb