

# Lebanon 2018 **Parliamentary Elections**

Final Report

National  
Democratic  
Institute



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Final Report

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## | About NDI

The National Democratic Institute for International Affairs (NDI or the Institute) is a nonprofit, non-partisan, nongovernmental organization that has supported democratic institutions and practices in every region of the world for more than three decades. Since its founding in 1983, NDI and its local partners have worked to establish and strengthen political and civic organizations, safeguard elections, and promote citizen participation, openness and accountability in government. With staff members and volunteer political practitioners from more than 100 nations, NDI brings together individuals and groups to share ideas, knowledge, experiences, and expertise. Partners receive broad exposure to best practices in international democratic development that can be adapted to the needs of their own countries. NDI's multinational approach reinforces the message that while there is no single democratic model, certain core principles are shared by all democracies. The Institute's work upholds the principles enshrined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. It also promotes the development of institutionalized channels of communications among citizens, political institutions, and elected officials, and strengthens their ability to improve the quality of life for all citizens. For more information about NDI, please visit [www.ndi.org](http://www.ndi.org).

# I Acknowledgements

To enhance the credibility of the 2018 election in Lebanon, NDI conducted a long-term analysis of election preparations, fielded a pre-election mission, and deployed an election day mission to monitor the electoral process.

NDI expresses deep appreciation to Lebanese political and civic leaders with whom it met, including government officials, candidates, election commissioners, nonpartisan citizen observers and poll workers for their insights that facilitated the work of its observers and staff. Most importantly, NDI is grateful to the Lebanese people for their cooperation and hospitality during these activities.

The Institute would also like to thank the Supervisory Commission on Elections (SCE) of Lebanon for the timely accreditation of NDI's observers and for its cooperation through all phases of the electoral process.

NDI extends its gratitude to the short and long-term observers and pre-election assessment mission delegates for their time, expertise, and leadership on the various missions.

The Institute would like to thank the National Endowment for Democracy (NED) for funding the mission and supporting NDI's democracy assistance programs in Lebanon.

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# I Acronyms

|             |   |
|-------------|---|
| <b>DRI</b>  | Democracy Reporting International             |
| <b>FPM</b>  | Free Patriotic Movement                       |
| <b>HRC</b>  | Higher Registration Committee                 |
| <b>ISF</b>  | Internal Security Forces                      |
| <b>LADE</b> | Lebanese Association For Democratic Elections |
| <b>LAF</b>  | Lebanese Armed Forces                         |
| <b>LF</b>   | Lebanese Forces                               |
| <b>LTA</b>  | Lebanese Transparency Association             |
| <b>MFA</b>  | Ministry of Foreign Affairs                   |
| <b>MMD</b>  | Multi-Member District                         |
| <b>MOIM</b> | Ministry of Interior and Municipalities       |
| <b>MOJ</b>  | Ministry of Justice                           |
| <b>NDI</b>  | National Democratic Institute                 |
| <b>OCV</b>  | Out of Country Voting                         |
| <b>PEAM</b> | Pre-Election Assessment Mission               |
| <b>PR</b>   | Proportional Representation                   |
| <b>SCE</b>  | Supervisory Commission on Elections           |
| <b>SSNP</b> | Syrian Social Nationalist Party               |

# Executive Summary

Lebanon's 2018 elections marked the first time in nine years that its citizens voted for a new parliament. In order to support the Lebanese people and their government in this process, NDI conducted an observation mission through in-country assessments beginning in March 2018 through election day on May 6, 2018. Since then, the Institute has monitored press and reports covering the post-election adjudication process and the findings of other observation missions.

The election was administered under a new law that featured, for the first time, proportional representation and pre-printed ballots. Although voters and poll workers alike had to adapt to a new electoral system, voting went smoothly for the most part, and the atmosphere was generally calm. NDI's mission observed poll workers and security forces performing their duties with dedication and professionalism. Political parties were well-organized, with representatives present in virtually all polling places.

There were, of course, areas for improvement. Most polling places were inaccessible to individuals with disabilities, and measures for assisting such voters were inadequate. Campaigning and campaign materials were observed at voting centers, and candidate agents wore party insignias and carried items with party branding into polling stations — all in violation of election law. Poll workers demonstrated varying degrees of understanding of the procedures, especially during the opening and closing of voting centers and during the count. The delegation also received multiple reports of vote buying.

While none of the shortcomings would appear to have a significant effect on the outcome of the election, there was a palpable sense of voter apathy which translated into lower voter turnout than in 2009, dropping from 53.37 percent to 48.02 percent. Although election campaigning was highly visible on television, across social media, and in the streets, voters did not turn out in large numbers. On election day, a number of voters expressed a desire for change, but seemed resigned to the continuation of the status quo. Others expressed their frustration with the political system and their intent to stay away. This civic apathy creates a challenge for Lebanese leaders to prove their ability to be responsive to the needs of citizens, and also provides an opportunity for political actors to find new ways to engage potential voters going forward.

NDI recognizes that, ultimately, the success of Lebanon's 2018 parliamentary election is judged by the Lebanese people, who carry the collective responsibility of ensuring faith in future elections as a safeguard for democracy. Based on observations drawn by its delegations throughout the electoral process and in the spirit of international cooperation, the Institute offers this report and its subsequent recommendations to enhance future elections.

## Mission Overview

NDI's international election observation mission aimed to support Lebanon's efforts to conduct peaceful, credible polls; impartially and accurately assess the electoral process; and offer recommendations to improve future elections. NDI launched its observation effort in March 2018, with a pre-election assessment mission (PEAM). In addition to the PEAM, NDI's comprehensive mission included findings and contributions of the missions' in-country analyst, an election day delegation for the May 6, 2018 parliamentary election, and observation of the post-election complaints process, which resulted in a by-election for one disqualified seat in Tripoli in April 2019.

The Institute conducted its international election observation mission activities in accordance with the Lebanese law and the Declaration of Principles for International Election Observation,<sup>1</sup> endorsed by 55 intergovernmental and international organizations. NDI has organized over 200 international observer delegations to 85 countries over the past 32 years. NDI is grateful for the cooperation the mission received from voters, election officials, candidates, political party leaders and supporters, government officials, and representatives of civil society and media.

A summary of the NDI mission's main components is included below. Links to all public reports and statements issued by the mission are included in Annex 1, and the full list of delegates and observers for each aspect of the mission is in Annex 2.

- **Pre-election assessment mission from March 11 - 15, 2018:** The delegation focused on electoral preparations, voter information and education, election day administration and security, candidate campaigns, and campaign finance. The four-person delegation included Daniel Mitov, Former Minister of Foreign Affairs of Bulgaria, Chafik Sarsar, Former President of the High Authority for Elections of Tunisia, Shari Bryan, Vice-President of NDI, and Nicole Rowsell, Senior Advisor for the Middle East and North Africa at NDI.
- **Core team** of mission director and one long-term analyst focused on election administration and legal framework; supported by three local staff and two DC headquarters staff.
- **Election day delegation for the May 6, 2018 election:** NDI's delegation included 31 political leaders, civic activists, and election experts from 13 countries across the Middle East, Africa, Europe, and North America. On May 5, observers deployed in 15 teams to all 15 electoral districts across Lebanon, and on election day, the delegation observed the opening of the polls and voting and counting processes in more than 150 polling stations.

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<sup>1</sup> Declaration of Principles for International Election Observation, [www.ndi.org/DoP](http://www.ndi.org/DoP)

**Post-election complaints monitoring:** NDI resident staff in Beirut monitored the complaints process following the May elections, including interviewing candidates who submitted files to the Constitutional Council.

While the mission concluded its work in 2018, NDI continues to implement programming and has had a continual presence in Lebanon since 2000. Its ongoing programming involves political parties and policy development, with a particular focus on women and youth participation in political processes.

## Part One Political Context and Legal Framework

### 1.1 Political Context

Lebanon has held periodic elections since it won independence in 1943. The “National Pact,” an unwritten agreement that balanced representation among Lebanon’s diverse religious groups, codified Lebanon’s confessional system, which had been in place since 1860. This system guarantees representation in the Parliament for the nation’s religious “confessions” and reserves certain political posts for specific groups. Under the confessional system, the country’s President must be a Maronite Christian, the Prime Minister a Sunni Muslim, and the Parliament’s Speaker a Shi’a Muslim. Lebanon’s unique history and system have resulted in a political landscape characterized by shifting alliances in which former foes often become allies in defense of either their sectarian group or personal interests. Lebanon’s politics are also heavily influenced by the existence of armed groups whose weapons are outside the control of the state but which are also political parties competing for power. This volatile political scene is exacerbated by the fact that Lebanon has traditionally been a theater in which regional competitions have been pursued.

Lebanon last held parliamentary elections in 2009, which produced a legislature split between the “March 8” and “March 14” alliances, and brought Saad Al Hariri to the prime ministry. Less than two years later, his government was toppled when Hezbollah and allies withdrew in the midst of the United Nations-backed Special Tribunal for Lebanon. Shortly thereafter, Hariri left the country, citing threats on his life. The Syrian crisis which erupted in 2011 pitted Lebanon’s two main political coalitions against one another yet again. As tensions between political figures escalated, hundreds of thousands of Syrian refugees flooded across the porous border to escape the violence next door.

Over the following three years, these tensions ground governance to a halt. In March 2013, Prime Minister Najib Mikati resigned, bringing another government collapse. Parliament’s next designated Prime Minister Tamam Salam was unable to form a government for almost a year. Just three months after a government was finally formed, the six-year term of President Michel Suleiman ended in May 2014. Deadlock which had plagued the cabinet then shifted to the nomination of a president, leaving Lebanon without a president for more than two years.

It was with this backdrop that in 2013, weeks before legislative elections were to be held, the parliament extended its own mandate by 17 months for the first time since the civil war, citing insufficient security. At the time of the extension, clashes were occurring on the Lebanese border between

Syrian President Bashar al-Assad's troops and armed opposition groups. Hezbollah's involvement sparked violent clashes in the northern city of Tripoli between supporters and opponents of the Assad regime. Still without a president in November 2014, lawmakers once again extended their mandates by three years. The extension was met once again with both domestic and international condemnation. Lebanon's remaining governing institutions limped forward, with little to no policy making or legislation. This paralysis was frustrated further in the summer of 2015, when the main landfill servicing Beirut and Mount Lebanon was closed and the city's trash collection company suspended services due to government inaction. Tens of thousands of citizens took to the streets to protest the health crisis and underlying root political causes. Protests represented a diverse cross-section of citizens from across political, sectarian, and socioeconomic divides, coalescing around the need to revitalize Lebanon's strained infrastructure and improve service delivery. A variety of loosely-linked citizen movements emerged, calling for a range of reforms and pressing political leaders to break the grinding deadlock which had gripped the country.

This pressure from citizen groups and municipal officials — who were drawn into the debate about how to address the waste management crisis — forced Lebanon's political leaders to go forward with local elections on schedule in May 2016. Building on the protest movement from the previous summer, lists were formed in areas as diverse as Beirut and Baalbeck to run against established political lists, calling for clear policy solutions and transparency around governing processes. While none of the lists secured seats in these elections, they did raise voter expectations for change. Elections were conducted over the course of four weekends in different regions throughout the country under close scrutiny of Lebanese security institutions. The relatively smooth administration of these elections demonstrated that the government was capable of organizing polls, despite instability in neighboring Syria, and gave political parties the opportunity to test alliances and campaign machinery with low risk.

Local elections renewed appetite for addressing the presidential vacuum and opening the door for parliamentary elections. Following months of negotiations on the sidelines of parliament, quorum was finally reached in October 2016 to elect General Michel Aoun as president. In the same month, the parliament passed a budget for the first time since 2005, and in December a government was formed, with Future Movement head Saad Al Hariri, recently returned from his self-imposed exile, in the prime ministership. Prime Minister Hariri committed to reforming the election law and holding parliamentary elections as the government's top priority.

On June 17, 2017, after more than a decade of thwarted attempts, dozens of drafts, and two extensions of the current parliament's mandate, the Lebanese Parliament endorsed an election law just three days before the parliament's mandate was set to expire. At the time of the law's passage, politicians also called for a "technical postponement" of elections until May 2018 to allow election administrators, candidates and voters to understand the law and prepare for the changes it would introduce. The process of creating this new law had been ongoing for several years, but it was rushed in the days preceding its passage, as political leaders scrambled to avoid a legislative vacuum.

## 1.2 Legal Framework and Electoral System

Decree-law no. 44, dated June 17, 2017, provided a significantly reformed framework for parliamentary elections in Lebanon. For the first time in Lebanese history, the country employed proportional representation (while maintaining confessional quotas specific to each of the 15 electoral districts), a preferential vote for candidates on open lists, out-of-country voting, and pre-printed ballots. These reforms resulted in significant changes to the campaigning, voting, and tabulation processes. The law maintained the existing number of seats at 128, but reduced the number of districts from 26 to 15. Seats were apportioned by sect accordingly: 27 Shia, 27 Sunni, 34 Maronite, 14 Greek Orthodox, 8 Druze, 8 Greek Catholic, 5 Armenian Orthodox, 2 Alawite, 2 Christian Minorities, and 1 Protestant.

Voting age in Lebanon is 21, and the minimum candidacy age is 25. Voters are automatically registered in their family's historic residence of record. Upon registering a marriage, a woman's residency is automatically changed to that of her husband's family. While the new law introduced the possibility for voting via biometric card in mega centers<sup>2</sup> (thus removing the need to return to one's historic residence), cost and time needed to establish these procedures in advance of elections were deemed unrealistic and were set aside for the 2018 polls.

Under the new election law, voters may select a single list running in their major district, and then cast a "preferential vote" for one individual candidate running on that list in the sub-district (if applicable). An electoral district could have up to four sub-districts, or *caza*, within its boundaries. While countries like Indonesia and Brazil have multi-member district (MMD) proportional representation (PR) and Nepal's proportional list accommodates ethnic and religious minorities, Lebanon incorporates all of those elements. In order to win a seat, lists have to meet the "electoral quotient," which is the number of eligible voters in the district divided by the number of seats assigned. Each list that meets or exceeds that quotient in the number of votes received is guaranteed a proportionate number of seats. Individual seats are then assigned based on the proportion of the preferential vote each candidate on the winning lists has taken, and according to which sect they belong to.

The newly drawn districts are more representative of the population voting in each of them than they ever have been. The districts used in elections held under Syrian occupation — in 1992, 1996, and 2000 — were drawn by Syrian authorities explicitly to marginalize their opponents in Lebanon. Lebanese authorities used these same district boundaries in the 2005 elections that were held just after Syrian forces withdrew from the country, to avoid entering into the complex negotiations that would have been required to redraw them. The 2009 parliamentary elections were conducted using district lines that reflected the agreement made by the major parties at the 2008 Doha Conference, which essentially allowed each party to control districts in order to prevent the sectarian clashes that had been plaguing the country. The new law opened the door for new challengers to compete against established political parties, and for election coalitions to be formed at the district rather than the national level.

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**2 Mega centers — specifically referenced in the law — would have been organized in large urban areas with ballots for all 15 districts, allowing voters to cast their votes near their homes, rather than having to return to their families' historic villages where they were registered. Despite being referenced in the law, the MOIM did not implement this aspect, citing lack of timing/resources.**

However, critics of the new law suggest that boundaries have been gerrymandered to ensure the election of certain individuals, and analysis suggests that, in opposition to the “one voter, one vote” principle, the new law creates large disparities in voting power between districts. Seat allocation does not always correlate equally with the number of registered voters in the district. For example, voters are drastically overrepresented in Beirut 1, the Mount Lebanon districts (Jbeil/Keserouan, Metn, Baabda, Chouf/Aley), Bekaa 1 (Zahle) and 2 (West Bekaa/Rashaya), North Lebanon 3 (Bsharri/Zgharta/Batroun/Koura), and South Lebanon 1 (Saida/Jezzine), while voters are drastically underrepresented in Beirut 2 (Ras Beirut/Mina El Hosn/Ain El Mreisseh/Mazraa/Mseitbeh/Zkak El Blat/Bashoura/Marfaa), South Lebanon 2 (Zahrani/Tyre) and 3 (Nabatieh/Marjayoun/Bint Jbeil/Hasbaya), and North Lebanon 1 (Akkar).

The new electoral law is viewed by most political parties and electoral reform advocacy groups as a compromise that enabled these elections to take place after multiple postponements, but a problematic solution that contains errors, loopholes, and provisions that could not be fully implemented for these elections. It has reduced the number of votes needed to win a seat, which has the potential to increase the inclusiveness and competitiveness of the electoral process, and created space for newcomers both inside political parties and on lists composed of independent candidates. However, the size of constituencies remains unequal, creating significant differences across districts in the number of votes needed to secure a seat, and violating key election principles and international standards and commitments.

### **1.2.1 Legal Framework for Candidate Registration**

Candidates first submit their applications individually to the SCE, and then negotiate positions on lists for campaigning purposes. The number of candidates on a list cannot exceed the number of eligible seats in the given electoral district, and each list must have a minimum of 40 percent of eligible seats to be registered. In addition to established political parties, one newly formed political party and numerous independent lists put forward their candidacies for the 2018 elections.

### **1.2.2 Legal Framework of Election Campaign and Campaign Finance**

The new electoral law increased the campaign spending ceiling significantly. In addition to LL150 million (\$100,000) that each candidate could spend, lists were allowed to spend up to LL150 million for each of their candidates as well as LL5,000 (\$3.30) for each registered voter in the major constituency in which they were running. The new law increased the candidate nomination fee from LL 2 million to LL 8 million. The Lebanese Transparency Association (LTA), which monitored campaign spending during the election, estimated that registered candidates and lists could spend up to \$672 million cumulatively, within the parameters of the law.

## Part Two Pre-Election Period

### 2.1 Election Administration

#### 2.1.1 Structure and Operation

According to the law, the Ministry of Interior and Municipalities (MOIM) is the primary body responsible for administering elections, in coordination with other officials at the Ministries of Justice, Foreign Affairs, Information, Education and Finance. The MOIM prepares the voter list (through an annual passive registration process conducted in February), produces national ID cards, trains poll workers, produces and distributes election materials, organizes polling stations, and coordinates security on election day. Nouhad Machnouk, a member of Prime Minister Hariri's Future Movement bloc, sitting Member of Parliament (MP) and a candidate, also served as Minister of Interior and Municipalities, and was tasked with administering the elections. The mayors and district commissioners who were responsible for managing polling stations were experienced, and some 90 percent of the 1,880 polling centers (containing 6,793 polling stations)<sup>3</sup> that the MOIM set up were located in the same places as in previous elections. A minimum of two officials were assigned to administer each polling station, for a total of 14,000 people.<sup>4</sup> The recruitment and training processes were, as they have been in the past, highly decentralized, with governors and district commissioners managing them according to local requirements.

The SCE is a regulatory body that falls under the authority of the MOIM. The Minister has the right to supervise the work of the SCE and chair all meetings, but cannot vote. The eleven-member Commission is primarily responsible for development of media and campaign finance regulations, as well as oversight of candidate registration and campaign compliance. However, the SCE was understaffed and under resourced for this broad mandate: its budget was limited and release of funding from the MOIM was severely delayed, with the budget only being approved in early April and the actual transfer occurring later in the month. As a result, its involvement in election administration was relatively limited, and it provided little guidance to candidates or media about their role. The SCE identified and documented a number of violations, particularly on the part of the media. However, an unclear legal framework, insufficiently detailed provisions, as well as lack of power and resources to investigate complaints, made monitoring candidate and list compliance with campaign and expenditure regulations extremely difficult.

Voters were only allowed to cast preferential votes for candidates in their sub-district (indicated by white boxes), and preferential votes cast for candidates from other sub-districts (indicated by black boxes) were not counted. The tabulation and results management system was done digitally, with paper copies as a backup. Since the data was only entered once, the process relied on the presence of agents and observers to identify any human errors or deliberate mis-inputs, as well as on the Higher Registration Committees (HRCs) to properly review the reports for accuracy. Although

**3** Polling stations and centers in Lebanon for 2018 the Legislative elections (مراكز وأقلام الاقتراع في لبنان المعتمدة لانتخاب) (مجلس النواب ٢٠١٨), Ministry of Interior and Municipalities, April 16, 2018, [www.elections.gov.lb](http://www.elections.gov.lb)

**4** Staff procedures in the polling stations (الاجراءات المعتمدة لعمليات إقتراع الموظفين وتوزيع الأقسام), Ministry of Interior and Municipalities, April 26, 2018, [www.elections.gov.lb](http://www.elections.gov.lb)

the company providing the counting software was a reputable one with experience in elections, there were concerns related to hardware and connectivity that could have impacted the contestants' and public's confidence in the process.

Minister of Foreign Affairs (MFA) Gibran Bassil, who is also president of the Free Patriotic Movement (FPM) and was a candidate for election himself, was tasked with overseeing out-of-country voting (OCV), which was instituted for the first time in this election. Polling was conducted in 11 countries on April 27th and in 29 countries on April 29th. Out of country voting saw 46,799 actual voters, and 36,166 voters who registered but did not vote. Two-thirds of OCV voters were male. 40 countries participated, with most participants hailing from Canada, Australia, the United States, France, and Germany.<sup>5</sup>

### 2.1.2 Recruitment and Training of Polling Staff

On election day, polling staff demonstrated varying degrees of understanding of their responsibilities and duties. In total, 14,816<sup>6</sup> people staffed polling stations throughout the country. Training of polling staff, especially on the opening and closing procedures, the counting of ballots, and the official forms appeared inadequate to ensure efficient and uniform conduct of these key stages of the election process. In particular, observers noted that the counting of ballots, filling out of official results protocols and packing of materials was poorly managed and polling staff struggled to reconcile the numbers or correctly and completely fill out forms and prepare materials for transfer to the registration committees.

## 2.2 Voter Registration

In February, the MOIM launched a media campaign to raise awareness about the annual passive voter registration period, in which citizens were asked to check that the information on the voter rolls was up-to-date and correct. The MOIM used their website and an SMS-based application for citizens to register changes. Out of country Lebanese voters actively registered to vote before November 20th.

### 2.2.1 Legal Framework

Two provisions of the Lebanese Constitution apply to voter registration: Article 7, "All Lebanese are equal before the law. They equally enjoy civil and political rights and equally are bound by public obligations and duties without any distinction," and Article 21, "Every Lebanese citizen who has completed his twenty-first year is an elector provided he fulfills the conditions laid down in the electoral law."

The main law governing elections in general, and voter registration in particular, is Law No. 25, passed in 2008. In addition to not allowing anyone under the age of 21 to vote (the more usual age

<sup>5</sup> 2018 Lebanese Parliamentary Elections: Results and Figures, UNDP, p. 5.

<sup>6</sup> Staff procedures in the polling stations (الاجراءات المعتمدة لعمليات إقتراع الموظفين وتوزيع الأقسام), Ministry of Interior and Municipalities, April 26, 2018, [www.elections.gov.lb](http://www.elections.gov.lb)

globally is 18), the Lebanese election law excludes from registration and voting a great number of groups of citizens, including persons convicted of various transgressions. These include “burglary, fraud, issuing of uncovered checks, breach of trust, misappropriation of funds, bribery, perjury, rape, intimidation, falsification, forgery, false testimony, immoral crimes as stated in the seventh chapter of the penal code, and crimes related to the planting, production and/or trade in illicit drugs.” It also includes persons who are bankrupt.

Under Article 5, “Naturalized Lebanese individuals may not vote before ten years after the naturalization decree is issued.” It is more common internationally for naturalized citizens to become eligible to register and vote immediately upon naturalization, and as will be discussed below, this is contemplated by international treaties to which Lebanon is a party. In another unusual twist, the provision relating to naturalized citizens does not apply to a noncitizen woman who attains Lebanese citizenship through marriage. The law is silent with respect to a foreign man who marries a Lebanese woman.

Also excluded from voting are military personnel, including members of the army, Internal Security Forces, Public Security, State Security, and Customs Police. This could potentially amount to a great number of citizens, as Parliament has increased the Internal Security Forces (ISF) from 30,000 to 40,000 soldiers,<sup>7</sup> and the Lebanese Armed Forces is estimated at 96,000 active personnel and 20,000 reserve personnel.<sup>8</sup>

The 2008 law created the Supervisory Commission on the Electoral Campaign, comprised of Lebanese citizens from various professional backgrounds — such as the media and bar associations — but overseen by the MOIM. This commission does not oversee or implement the voter registration process, but rather primarily media issues and campaign financing.<sup>9</sup> Indeed, under the law the MOIM is responsible for implementing registration and elections, with the Directorate General of Political Affairs and Refugees responsible for operational and logistical preparations.

Voter registration is mandatory, but the system is passive — the government maintains the list, updating it annually, though citizens are responsible for checking that their information is accurate. The Directorate General compiles and updates the registration list according to personal status records. According to analysis by Democracy Reporting International (DRI), “Administrative changes to people’s status are countersigned by mukhtars [elected village council leaders] on the basis of certificates issued by doctors (relating to death and birth) or religious authorities (marriage).”<sup>10</sup> The heads of regional MOIM offices supply information about changes to citizens’ eligibility status to the Directorate General, as do the police and the courts.

A voter cannot make a voluntary change within a year of the revision of the list, except, unusually, for a woman whose status changed due to a marriage. Under the law, the Directorate General must disseminate the registration lists to various public places in the country for voters to check for accuracy, and publish them on the Internet annually, by February 10. Copies of the list are also available for a fee. Voters can submit changes or corrections until March 10. It is also possible

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**7** Increasing the Number of Internal Security Forces to 40 Thousand Elements. LBC, January 2015.

**8** DFAT Country Information Report Lebanon, Australian Government Department of Foreign Policy and Trade, March 19, 2019, p. 36, <https://dfat.gov.au/about-us/publications/Documents/country-information-report-lebanon.pdf>

**9** National Information Agency, February 27, 2015, <http://nna-leb.gov.lb/ar/show-news/144653/nna-leb.gov.lb/en>

**10** Democracy Reporting International, Lebanon: Assessment, 27.

during this period to ask the registration committee<sup>11</sup> to add or delete the name of another voter from the rolls. The criteria for doing so, such as any evidentiary requirements or notice to the voter, are not explained in the law.

Voters rolls are closed as of March 30 for the entire following year. Registration committees are tasked with much of the initial decision-making, but they too are under the auspices and primarily appointed by the MOIM. Voters can file complaints with the registration committee, and appeals of their decisions can be made to the Higher Registration Committee.<sup>12</sup> There is no further legal recourse, and the law does not specify the procedures by which the Higher Registration Committee is to make its determinations.<sup>13</sup>

Out-of-country voting provisions were included in the election law for the first time in 2017,<sup>14</sup> with articles 112 and 122 reserving six seats for non-resident candidates divided between Christians and Muslims, allowing for one seat to each major Lebanese sect of each faith. Out of country voters were incorporated into a single constituency across Lebanese embassies and consulates throughout the world. Article 111 allowed any non-resident Lebanese citizen to vote if they were registered. If not registered, they were allowed to register prior to November 20 of the year preceding the election.<sup>15</sup>

### 2.2.2 Voter Registration Exercise

In 2018, the annual passive registration went forward with the Ministry of Interior updating their registry and making it available for the public to check their voter registration information from February 10 through March 10. The voter rolls closed as of March 30, as per the legal requirement.

During its own six-week registration process, the MFA successfully registered 82,970 voters in 40 countries. The provisions in the electoral law pertaining to OCV were designed to come into effect during future elections, when six seats will be assigned to diaspora voters. For the 2018 elections, there were no written procedures aside from a training manual for polling staff, generating confusion and uncertainty about the process amongst parties and independent lists.

**11** Democracy Reporting International, *Lebanon: Assessment*, endnote 41. According to DRI, “Registration Committees are composed of a judge as chairperson, a member of a municipal council in the electoral district and an employee of the Personal Status Directorate as rapporteur. The number and composition of the registration committees is fixed by decree.”

**12** Democracy Reporting International, *Lebanon: Assessment*, endnote 42. “Higher Registration Committees are composed of the President of an Appeal Chamber in the Muhafazat as chairperson, a judge and an inspector from the Central Inspection Bureau as members, assisted by a rapporteur from the Personal Status Directorate of the MoI.”

**13** Democracy Reporting International, *Lebanon: Assessment*, 28.

**14** Articles of the Electoral Law 44 / 2017 pertaining to Lebanese expat ( المعلقة باقتراع ) ٤٤/٢٠١٧ (اللبنانيين غير المقيمين على الأراضي اللبنانية), Ministry of Interior and Municipalities, June 17, 2016, elections.gov.lb

**15** Lebanon’s 2017 Parliamentary Election Law, October 2017, 22, [https://www.ifes.org/sites/default/files/lebanons\\_2017\\_parliamentary\\_election\\_law\\_final.pdf](https://www.ifes.org/sites/default/files/lebanons_2017_parliamentary_election_law_final.pdf)

## 2.3 Candidate Registration

At the close of the candidate registration process on March 7, 976 candidates had registered, including 113 women. By the list deadline on March 27, 77 lists comprising 597 candidates were formed, including 86 women.<sup>16</sup> Out of 917 candidates who remained following the official withdrawal deadline, 320 were not included in the lists and were therefore not listed on the ballots. More than half of the sitting cabinet ministers ran as candidates.

Minor glitches in the candidate registration process were reported by the Lebanese Association For Democratic Elections (LADE). These included difficulties encountered by some of the candidates in obtaining voter registration certificates, but were promptly and adequately addressed by the MOIM. More problematically, certain aspects of the law relating to candidate registration possibly prevented interested individuals from participating. This includes the non-refundable deposit of some 5,300 USD, as well as the requirement for women to register under their maiden names, even though a woman may suffer a loss of name recognition in her district if she has been living under her husband's surname.

## 2.4 Civic and Voter Education

In February, the MOIM launched a media campaign to raise awareness about the annual passive voter registration period, in which citizens were asked to check that the information on the voter rolls was up-to-date and correct. The MOIM used their website and an SMS-based application for citizens to register changes.

MOIM leadership also engaged Lebanese civil society associations to partner for dissemination of voter education materials to raise awareness about the electoral process. In December the Take Action Coalition of civil society organizations launched voter education efforts specifically targeting first-time voters, to raise their awareness about the process and motivate them to vote. Tele Liban, the public broadcaster, played two daily programs focused on voter education that were hosted by experts and aired in the afternoon and evening.

Despite these voter education efforts, in addition to those of candidates and political parties, to inform voters about the new voting, counting, and tabulation processes, there remained concern about voters' level of understanding and acceptance of the new rules. In March, Tele Liban conducted an opinion poll of around 35 citizens from each district, and found that most were unaware of the electoral changes and the new voting process.

Ultimately, gaps in voter understanding of new procedures became evident with the steep increase in invalid ballots. Overall, the rate of invalid ballots increased by almost 300 percent with 2.09 percent of all submitted ballots being marked as invalid.<sup>17</sup>

<sup>16</sup> <http://elections.gov.lb/News/%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%A7%D8%AE%D8%A8%D8%A7%D8%B1%D9%8A%D9%88%D9%86%D8%B3-%D8%B9%D8%AF%D8%AF-%D8%A7%D9%84%D9%84%D9%88%D8%A7%D9%8A%D8%AD-%D8%A7%D9%84%D9%85%D8%B3%D8%AC%D9%84%D8%A9-%D8%B1%D8%B3%D9%85%D9%8A%D8%A7-77.aspx>

<sup>17</sup> A First Look at the Numbers!, 128 Lebanon, Ibrahim Jouhari, 11 May 2018, <https://www.128lebanon.com/2018/05/11/a-first-look-at-the-numbers/>

## 2.5 Campaign Finance and Misuse of State Resources

High campaign expenditure ceilings combined with the SCE's limited ability to monitor and sanction violations created opportunity for excessive campaign spending to go unregulated.<sup>18</sup> As per Article 61 of the Electoral law, the ceiling of the maximum amount that each candidate may spend during the campaign period is determined according to the following: A fixed section of LL150 million (\$99,240), plus a variable section that is linked to the number of voters in a large electoral district in which the candidate is elected to the amount of LL5,000 for each registered voter in the electoral lists in the large constituency. The ceiling of the electoral spending of the list is a fixed amount of LL150 million for each candidate. This ceiling can be reconsidered at the opening of the campaign period in the light of economic conditions. The Lebanese Transparency Association (LTA) calculated the expenditure ceiling for each list, candidate and district, recording an overall expenditure rate per candidate of LL1,520,284,797 and an overall expenditure rate per list of LL11,787,143,169.<sup>19</sup> Both figures are significantly higher than the national ceiling set in Article 6.

As in previous Lebanese elections, LTA reported that some of these funds were used to buy votes. As such, candidates violated Article 62 that prohibits the provision of services or the payment of funds including the obligations and expenses of candidates, including but not limited to: contributions, in-kind and cash assistance to individuals, charitable, social, cultural, family, religious or other organizations, sports clubs and all official institutions. LTA reported 63 violations in Zahle, Tripoli and Jezzine. 31 percent of these violations came in the form of direct cash payment to individuals and 17.46 percent of these violations came in the form of reimbursement for medical bills.<sup>20</sup> LTA believes that this number does not represent all violations in these three cities and speculates that more violations were committed by the candidates.

The reforms to the election law added opportunities for greater control by the SCE which had the potential to increase transparency of campaign finances. The SCE had access to candidate bank accounts and had the authority to review monthly financial reports submitted by campaigns prior to the elections and to audit final reports within one month of election day. However, the SCE lacked the resources to conduct audits of candidate financial reports and verify expenses through field monitoring, as well as the power to enforce penalties of violations directly. In some cases, guidance specifying what candidates could or could not do was delayed or only clarified weeks after candidates launched their campaigns.

LTA also alleged that some elected or appointed officials were using state resources, public spaces, government departments, public schools and places of worship to hold electoral meetings or promotion, which is prohibited by Article 77 of the Electoral law. LTA recorded instances where candidates held election speeches in mosques or municipal buildings and used municipalities' resources (security guards, officers, furniture, etc.) to organize electoral festivals.<sup>21</sup> In addition, LTA alleges that some candidates posted electoral pictures where they were not allowed as per Article 76 of the electoral law. LTA reported 623 violations in the three cities. 83 percent of these were posters on utility poles.<sup>22</sup>

**18** Report on the Transparency of the Legislative elections, (تقرير عن شفافية الانتخابات النيابية لعام ٢٠١٨), Lebanese Transparency Association, September 2018

**19** Report on the Transparency of the Legislative elections, 2018

**20** Report on the Transparency of the Legislative elections, 2018

**21** Report on the Transparency of the Legislative elections, 2018

**22** Report on the Transparency of the Legislative elections, 2018

## 2.6 Civil Society Engagement and Election Observation

### 2.6.1 Citizen and International Election Observation

LADE and LTA were both accredited to observe the polls by the SCE. LADE also successfully negotiated with the SCE to allow 18-21 year-olds to observe elections. LADE focused on recruiting this demographic, and deployed 1,380 observers on election day.<sup>23</sup> LADE observed the election process with the intention of updating its methodology to include observation of the tabulation process for the first time.

LTA monitored campaign finance compliance and violations in three electoral districts (Saida-Jezzine, Zahle, and Tripoli-Minnieh-Dunieh). LTA also monitored the work of the SCE to assess the responsiveness and transparency of the oversight institution. Their findings have informed the campaign finance, misuse of state resources, and media sections of this report.

## 2.7 Media

Lebanon has one of the most diverse and pluralist media landscapes in the region. State-run and private media outlets — in both traditional and online formats — are prolific, however in many cases, formally or informally aligned with a particular party or approximate business interests.

Chapter VI of the Law 44 addressed guidelines for media coverage and candidate advertising during the campaign period. Candidate obligations included refraining from libel, slander or defamation, as well as refraining from any broadcasting which might inflame religious tensions, be viewed as intimidation, or distorting information. The law was vague in its definition of media outlets and the extent to which digital sources including social media fell under the law. The SCE was responsible for both setting campaign parameters for candidates and reviewing complaints. Any complaints deemed reasonable were then referred to the Court of Publication, which had the right to impose fines, suspend the work of an outlet temporarily, or, if the violation persisted, suspend the outlet indefinitely.

In order to make use of the legally mandated free air time on public broadcaster Tele Liban, candidates were required to submit a request to the SCE and obtain official approval from the MOIM before they were allocated any time. Televised candidate debates were permissible for the first time under the new electoral law. High prices for appearances on media outlets beyond the legally mandated free airtime was seen as limiting the access of most candidates while favoring the wealthy candidates and incumbents.

Through media monitoring, LADE<sup>24</sup> concluded that the election coverage by private broadcast media put several candidates at a disadvantage and impacted the availability of voters to get unbiased information. Unclear legal provisions and the absence of comprehensive regulations by the SCE permitted several private TV channels to offer paid access to contestants in a variety of for-

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<sup>23</sup> 2018 Parliamentary Elections Monitoring Reports, Lebanese Association for Democratic Elections (LADE), November 2018, p. 60

<sup>24</sup> Second report in preparation for the Parliamentary elections, (التقرير الثاني التمهيدي لمراقبة الانتخابات النيابية), LADE, April 17, 2018, <http://www.lade.org.lb>

mats, including appearances on discussion shows and in newscasts. Several interlocutors spoke of very high prices for the paid coverage offered to candidates. The SCE failed to disclose a media rate in terms of television appearances and television campaigning prior to the beginning of the campaign. Moreover, the coverage received by each candidate or party was rarely marked as paid for, making it unclear whether it was editorial coverage or electoral campaigning.

The SCE also failed to observe obedience to the period of electoral silence. LADE reported that several broadcast media sources and candidates did not respect the mandated electoral silence on the day of the election.<sup>25</sup>

A prominent Lebanese civil society organization, Maharat, monitored media coverage of election campaigns for women candidates. Their report<sup>26</sup> indicated a severe lack of visibility of women candidates, especially in exclusive coverage (95 percent of election coverage focused on men, leaving only 5 percent to women candidates). In the little air time they were given, women tended to be treated as novelties rather than as serious contenders; they were asked questions related to their gender identities instead of being engaged in policy discourse like male candidates. Maharat noted a particularly clear absence of female candidates on TV covering issues related to government and legislative work, economy, environment, infrastructure and communications, security, human rights, social security, labor and other social issues.

## 2.8 Security and Electoral Violence

Lebanon's long history of volatility and inter-sectarian/party tensions (often including armed conflict) has been accentuated by evolving implications of the civil war in Syria and the scourge of the Islamic State in Syria (ISIS). Communities on the border (such as Aarsal in the Bekaa Valley and Akkar in the north) have been affected, requiring additional reinforcements by Lebanese security forces. These security challenges were used as a pretext to postpone parliamentary elections in 2013 and again in 2014. Prime Minister Hariri's resignation announcement from Saudi Arabia in November 2017 reinforced the potential for regional actors' direct or indirect intervention in the electoral process as well.

The MOIM coordinated with security services to tighten security procedures, including to combat vote-buying as well as to ensure the protection of polling centers, facilitate the safe movement of citizens, ensure access to polling locations on election day, and safeguard the transfer of election results and materials to the polling centers. According to the Ministry of Defense, 20,000 police and 15,000 military were deployed to 1,880 polling centers on election day.<sup>27</sup>

During the election period, there were isolated instances of physical violence between candidates or lists, in addition to the defacement of posted election materials. Some opposition candidates and civil society reported limited ability to campaign and monitor the election due to fears of reprisal against their supporters who make their affiliation public (either through attending public events or by serving as their agents on election day).

<sup>25</sup> **Second report on the elections day: Violation of the electoral silence and secrecy of ballots**, (التقرير الثاني الخاص بيوم الاقتراع، الاقتراع: خرق فاضح للصمت الانتخابي وسرية الإقتراع), LADE, May 6, 2018, <http://www.lade.org.lb>

<sup>26</sup> **Presence of Women in Media, 2018 Elections**, Maharat, 2018 <http://www.maharatfoundation.org/womenelectionstudy>

<sup>27</sup> **Information International Report on Parliamentary Elections (Arabic)**, 2018

However, overall political violence played a remarkably small role. Parties successfully kept their constituencies in check, and while there were the usual marches and protests, these were generally peaceful. The night following the election was the most violent of the election period, but those minor clashes quickly dispersed or were quelled by military forces deployed throughout Lebanon to keep the peace.<sup>28</sup>

The other major concern commonly cited for postponing the elections until 2018 was fear that instability in Syria would spill into Lebanon and disrupt a national election. However, though the war in Syria continued to rage throughout the campaign period, it did not have a discernible impact on the electoral environment in Lebanon.

## 2.9 Women's Political Participation

Attitudes toward women's role in politics have shifted since the last national elections in 2009, and this shift is mirrored in women's candidacy rates for the 2018 polls: 86 women ran as candidates, up from 11 in 2009. However, only six women ultimately secured seats.

Despite the increased interest of women to participate, political parties did not systematically promote women as candidates or campaigners, nor target support from women voters. As in many countries around the world, Lebanese women candidates are disadvantaged by the high cost of campaigns, lack of support by political parties to mobilize voters on their behalf, and registration requirements which may hinder name recognition in the districts where they will run.

### 2.9.1 Participation of Women as Voters

Women comprised 51.4 percent of actual voters according to the UNDP's estimates<sup>29</sup> based on the available and official 2018 Registered Voter Data. Women voters outnumbered men voters in 14 out of 15 districts, with South 1 (Saida and Jezzine) being the only district where more men voted than women (50.1 percent to 49.9 percent).

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**28** A group of several hundred Hezbollah supporters on scooters rode through Beirut on the night following the election and defaced posters of Future Movement or Prime Minister Hariri.

**29** 2018 Lebanese Parliamentary Elections Results and Figures, UNDP, 4 September 2018 [http://www.lb.undp.org/content/lebanon/en/home/library/democratic\\_governance/2018LebaneseParliamentaryElectionsResultsandFigures.html](http://www.lb.undp.org/content/lebanon/en/home/library/democratic_governance/2018LebaneseParliamentaryElectionsResultsandFigures.html)

## 2.10 Role of Youth in the Elections

As parliamentary elections had not been held for nine years, and the legal voting age in Lebanon is 21, no one under the age of 30 had previously voted in Parliamentary elections, making all Lebanese youth (here defined as those under 30) first time voters in national elections. A survey by German organization *Konrad Adenauer Stiftung* on youth participation in elections found that half of Lebanese youth had not voted in the 2016 municipal election.<sup>30</sup> A total of 654,950 first time voters participated in the election.<sup>31</sup>

## 2.11 Electoral Participation of Other Underrepresented and Marginalized Groups

### 2.11.1 Persons with Disabilities

Few of the observed polling stations were easily accessible to persons with disabilities, and none were equipped to facilitate their equal and dignified participation. While security officials made serious and commendable efforts to assist persons with limited mobility to reach their polling stations, the general inaccessibility of polling stations discourages their participation in elections. The majority of observers reported that polling stations tended to be located on the second floor or higher, and witnessed security officials or other voters carrying elderly or disabled individuals up flights of stairs in order to cast their vote.

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<sup>30</sup> Election Polling Survey: Lebanese Youth Segment, Konrad Adenauer Stiftung, 2018 [https://www.kas.de/c/document\\_library/get\\_file?uuid=56544a6f-3b7d-b892-a4e9-fa6156f4f325&groupId=284382](https://www.kas.de/c/document_library/get_file?uuid=56544a6f-3b7d-b892-a4e9-fa6156f4f325&groupId=284382)

<sup>31</sup> Information International Report on Parliamentary Elections (Arabic), 2018, p. 262

## Part Three Election Day

### 3.1 Election Day Findings

Voting was conducted in a generally calm and orderly manner in observed areas, although several physical altercations among partisans were reported throughout the day. Observers reported tensions growing somewhat in the afternoon as turnout increased. LAF and ISF security forces were present in and around centers and were able to maintain order when tensions arose. Security services generally adhered to their legally prescribed roles and showed calm and restraint. Observers noted that procedures were generally followed, although inconsistencies were reported, particularly related to the use of mobile phones inside polling stations, validation of the ballots, and checking voters' fingers for ink before allowing them to vote. In some instances, the voters were not asked to sign the voter list, while in others officials failed to reconcile ballots before opening. Polling stations where NDI observers were present closed on schedule or with a slight delay to allow voters in queues to cast their ballots. Observers noted that the counting processes in several stations demonstrated that officials lacked understanding of the official forms and procedures for this stage of the process. Some polling stations chose not to use the cameras and monitors to display ballots during the count. Disputes over ballot validity were observed in several polling stations. Some polling stations became overcrowded because the space secured was not sufficient for the number of voters and candidate agents in the room. Observers witnessed instances of unauthorized individuals interfering in or directing the process. In some cases the security of sensitive election materials (ballots, ballot boxes) was not ensured. In accordance with the Election Law, the results were posted outside the polling stations once the count was over.

Violations during the tabulation process were noted by the interlocutors the mission met with. Namely, candidates and domestic observers complained about their agents/representatives being dismissed from the polling stations during the counting and/or registration committees where the tabulation was taking place, thus limiting their right to monitor the process and compare polling station data with the tabulation results. Inconsistent application of definition of invalid ballots was noted as well. The mission heard allegations of ballot boxes not being properly secured and safety of sensitive election materials being compromised, including ballots being found outside polling stations. While the mission could not independently verify these claims, evidence in support of the claims would have been crucial for adjudication of post-election complaints.

### 3.2 Results Analysis

#### 3.2.1 Voter Turnout

The 48.02 percent turnout was a 5.35 percent drop from the 2009 election. The only district which did not see a fall in participation levels was Bekaa II (Baalbeck - Hermel), which had a gain in participation of 9.44 percent.<sup>32</sup> According to analyst Ibrahim Jouhari, four districts maintained statistically

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**32** A First Look at the Numbers!, 128 Lebanon, Ibrahim Jouhari, 11 May 2018, <http://www.128lebanon.com/2018/05/11/a-first-look-at-the-numbers/>

similar turnout figures as the 2009 election: Mount Lebanon IV (Chouf Aley) at -0.38 percent, South III at +0.38 percent, Beirut at +0.61 percent, and Mount Lebanon I (Jbeil Keserwain) at -1.16 percent. The remaining districts all saw lower turnouts than in 2009, sometimes significantly.<sup>33</sup>

### 3.2.2 Electoral Results

Publishing election results in a timely and open<sup>34</sup> manner helps enhance public confidence in the process. This allows representatives of political parties, candidates, citizen election observers, and media to compare the official results against their own findings. This can help reduce the potential for uncertainty, unfounded rumors, and disinformation to circulate during the often tense period immediately following election day.

Despite the Ministry's earlier promise that the election results would be announced the following morning (May 7), due to the delays in the tabulation process, the Minister of Interior announced the preliminary but incomplete results<sup>35</sup> that evening and only for the winning candidates. In accordance with the law, the results were officially communicated to the Speaker of Parliament and the President of the Constitutional Council on the same day. The long period between the end of the counting and the announcement of the preliminary results allowed the candidates to speculate about the results based on the information received from candidate and list agents. In addition, some interlocutors alleged that the delay in the announcement of the results allowed the authorities to tamper with the results in certain areas.

In a welcome step, the Ministry released data of all the results for each polling station on its website four days after the election — on May 10th.<sup>36</sup> While the results are not posted in an analyzable format nor are they available in bulk (in one consolidated file), which can slow efforts by independent observers and parties to compare official results to their own findings, providing the polling station-level results online provides a foundation for moving toward even more open publishing of results in future elections.

### 3.2.3 Election Outcomes

Even with the surge of independent candidates running for office, voters opted for stability over reform and elected only one civil society candidate to parliament. The major victors of the elections were the Free Patriotic Movement, which became the largest party in parliament by increasing its seats from 14 to 24, and the Lebanese Forces, which nearly doubled its representation from eight to 15. Prime Minister Saad Hariri's party, Future Movement, lost 13 seats, reducing its share of parliament to 20 seats. However, Hariri maintained his position as Prime Minister and led a prolonged effort to form a cabinet, which was finally announced as a national unity government on January 31, 2019. The number of seats held by other major parties shifted by no more than three seats. The graphic on the next page depicts the winning candidates by district, and Annex 3 depicts the MPs grouped by party affiliation.

**33** See Annex 3 for parliamentary election results including a breakdown of voter turnout by district.

**34** "Open" means, among other things, results data is freely available, timely, analyzable (i.e., in Excel or CVS), available in bulk (all in one file), and granular (polling station level). For more details, see Open Election Data Principles at <https://openelectiondata.net/en/guide/principles/>

**35** Results from Akkar have not been received by the time of the announcement.

**36** Polling station level data is available in Arabic at <http://elections.gov.lb/>

3.2.4 Election Winners by District

# Lebanon Members of parliament 2018

|                                     |                                     |  |   |  |   |   |   |  |   |                                       |   |   |  |                                  |                                 |
|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|--|---|--|---|---|---|--|---|---------------------------------------|---|---|--|----------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| BEIRUT 1                            |                                     |  |   |  |   |   |   |  |   |                                       |   |   |  |                                  |                                 |
|                                     | NICHOLAS SEHNAOUI<br>Greek Catholic | ANTOINE PANO<br>Evangelist               | JEAN TALOUZIAN<br>Armenian Catholic       | IMAD WAKIM<br>Armenian Catholic        | NADIM GEMAYEL<br>Maronite                 | HAGOB TERZIAN<br>Armenian Catholic      | ALEXANDRE MATOSSIAN<br>Armenian Catholic        | PAULETTE YAACOUBIAN<br>Armenian Catholic           |   |                                       |   |   |  |                                  |                                 |
|                                     | BEIRUT 2                            |  |   |  |   |   |   |  |   |                                       |   |   |  |                                  |                                 |
|                                     |                                     | AMIN SHERRI<br>Shia                      | SAAD HARIRI<br>Sunni                      | TAMMAM SALAM<br>Sunni                  | ROULA TABSH JAROUDI<br>Sunni              | NOHAD MACHNOUK<br>Sunni                 | NAZH NAJEM<br>Greek Orthodox                    | ADNAN TRABOULSI<br>Sunni                           | FOUAD MAKHZOUMI<br>Sunni                  | MOHAMMAD KHAWAJA<br>Shia              | EDGAR TRABOULSI<br>Evangelist                 | FAISAL EL SAYEGH<br>Druze                   |  |                                  |                                 |
|                                     |                                     | NABATIEH, BINT JBEIL, MARJAYOUN, HASBAYA |   |  |   |   |   |  |   |                                       |   |   |  |                                  |                                 |
|                                     |                                     |  | HASSAN FADALLAH<br>Shia (Bint Jbeil)      | MOHAMAD RAAD<br>Shia (Nabatieh)        | ALI FAYAD<br>Shia (Marjeyoun, Hasbaya)    | HANI KOBEISSI<br>Shia (Nabatieh)        | ALI KHALIL<br>Shia (Marjeyoun, Hasbaya)         | ALI BAZZI<br>Shia (Bint Jbeil)                     | AYOUB HMAIED<br>Shia (Bint Jbeil)         | YASSIN JABER<br>Shia (Nabatieh)       | ANWAR EL KHALIL<br>Druze (Marjeyoun, Hasbaya) | KASSEM HACHEM<br>Sunni (Marjeyoun, Hasbaya) | ASSAAD HARDAN<br>Greek Orthodox (Marjeyoun, Hasbaya) |                                  |                                 |
|                                     |                                     |  | SOUR, ZAHIRANI                            |  |   |   |   |  |   |                                       |   |   |  |                                  |                                 |
|                                     |                                     |  |   | NABIH BERRI<br>Shia (Sour, Zahrani)    | INAYA EZZEDINE<br>Shia (Sour, Zahrani)    | ALI KHEISS<br>Shia (Sour, Zahrani)      | MICHEL MOUSSA<br>Greek Catholic (Sour, Zahrani) | ALI OSSEIRAN<br>Shia (Sour, Zahrani)               | NAWAF EL MOUSSAWI<br>Shia (Sour, Zahrani) | HUSSEIN JESHI<br>Shia (Sour, Zahrani) |   |   |  |                                  |                                 |
| SAIDA, JEZZINE                      |                                     |  |   |  |   |   |   |  |   |                                       |   |   |  |                                  |                                 |
|                                     |                                     |  |   | BAHIA HARIRI<br>Sunni (Saïda, Jezzine) | IBRAHIM AZAR<br>Maronite (Saïda, Jezzine) | OUSSAMA SAAD<br>Sunni (Saïda, Jezzine)  | ZIAD ASWAD<br>Maronite (Saïda, Jezzine)         | SALIM EL KHOURY<br>Greek Catholic (Saïda, Jezzine) |   |                                       |   |   |  |                                  |                                 |
|                                     |                                     |  |   | TRIPOLI, MINNIEH, DINNIEH              |   |   |   |  |   |                                       |   |   |  |                                  |                                 |
|                                     |                                     |  |   |  | OTHMAN ALAMEDDINE<br>Sunni (Minnieh)      | SAMI FATFAT<br>Sunni (Dinnieh)          | MOHAMAD KABBARA<br>Sunni (Tripoli)              | SAMIR EL JISR<br>Sunni (Tripoli)                   | DIMA JAMALI<br>Sunni (Tripoli)            | NAJIB MIKATI<br>Sunni (Tripoli)       | NICOLAS NAHHAS<br>Greek Orthodox (Tripoli)    | FAISAL KARAMI<br>Sunni (Tripoli)            | JIHAD AL SAMAD<br>Sunni (Dinnieh)                    | ALI DARWISH<br>Alawite (Tripoli) | JEAN OEID<br>Maronite (Tripoli) |
|                                     | KOURA, BECHARRE, ZGHARTA, BATROUN   |  |   |  |   |   |   |  |   |                                       |   |   |  |                                  |                                 |
| GEBRAN BASSIL<br>Maronite (Batroun) |                                     |  | GEROGES ATALLAH<br>Greek Orthodox (Koura) |  | TONI FRANGIEH<br>Maronite (Zgharta)       | ESTEPHAN DOUJAIHI<br>Maronite (Zgharta) | FAYEZ GHOSN<br>Greek Orthodox (Koura)           | SETHRIDA TAWK GEAGEA<br>Maronite (Becharre)        | JOSEPH ISHAK<br>Maronite (Becharre)       | FADI SAAD<br>Maronite (Batroun)       | MICHEL MOUJAWAD<br>Maronite (Zgharta)         | SALIM SAADEH<br>Greek Orthodox (Koura)      |  |                                  |                                 |
| AKKAR                               |                                     |  |   |  |   |   |   |  |   |                                       |   |   |  |                                  |                                 |
|                                     |                                     |  | WALID BAARINI<br>Sunni (Akkar)            |  | TAREK EL MEREHBI<br>Sunni (Akkar)         | HADI HOREICH<br>Maronite (Akkar)        | MOHAMAD SULEIMAN<br>Sunni (Akkar)               | ASSAAD DERGHAM<br>Greek Orthodox (Akkar)           | WEHBE KATISHA<br>Greek Orthodox (Akkar)   | MOSTAFA HUSSEIN<br>Alawite (Akkar)    |   |   |  |                                  |                                 |

## Political Parties

|  |                         |  |                             |  |        |
|--|-------------------------|--|-----------------------------|--|--------|
|  | FREE PATRIOTIC MOVEMENT |  | LEBANESE FORCES             |  | KATAEB |
|  | FUTURE MOVEMENT         |  | HEZBOLLAH                   |  | MARADA |
|  | AMAL MOVEMENT           |  | PROGRESSIVE SOCIALIST PARTY |  | SSNP   |

|                  |   |  |   |   |  |   |   |  |  |   |  |  |  |
|------------------|---|--|---|---|--|---|---|--|--|---|--|--|--|
| HERMEL, BAALBACK |   |  |   |   |  |   |   |  |  |   |  |  |  |
|                  | AL WALID SUKKARIEH<br>Sunni<br>(Hermel, Baalback) | IHAB HAMADEH<br>Shia<br>(Hermel, Baalback) | ALI EL MEKDAD<br>Shia<br>(Hermel, Baalback)       | IBRAHIM EL MOUSSAWI<br>Shia<br>(Hermel, Baalback) | HUSSEIN HAJJ HASSAN<br>Shia<br>(Hermel, Baalback)            | GHAZI ZAITER<br>Shia<br>(Hermel, Baalback)              | ANTOINE HABCHI<br>Maronite<br>(Hermel, Baalback)  | BAKR EL HUJERI<br>Sunni<br>(Hermel, Baalback)    | ALBERT MANSOUR<br>Greek Orthodox<br>(Hermel, Baalback) | JAMIL EL SAYYED<br>Shia<br>(Hermel, Baalback) |  |  |  |
|                  | ZAHLE   |  |   |   |  |   |   |  |  |   |  |  |  |
|                  |   | ANWAR JOMAA<br>Shia<br>(Zahle)             | GEORGE OKEISS<br>Greek Catholic<br>(Zahle)        | CASAR MAALOUF<br>Greek Orthodox<br>(Zahle)        | MICHEL DAHER<br>Greek Catholic<br>(Zahle)                    | SALIM AOUN<br>Maronite<br>(Zahle)                       | ASSEM ARAJI<br>Sunni<br>(Zahle)                   | EDDY DEMERJIAN<br>Greek Orthodox<br>(Zahle)      |  |   |  |  |  |
|                  |   | WEST BEKAA, RACHAYA                        |   |   |  |   |   |  |  |   |  |  |  |
|                  |   |  | ABDEL RAHIM MRAD<br>Shia<br>(West Bekaa, Rachaya) | WAEI ABU FAOUR<br>Druze<br>(West Bekaa, Rachaya)  | MOHAMAD NASRALLAH<br>Greek Orthodox<br>(West Bekaa, Rachaya) | ELIE FERAZLI<br>Greek Orthodox<br>(West Bekaa, Rachaya) | MOHAMAD KARAAWI<br>Sunni<br>(West Bekaa, Rachaya) | HENRI SHDID<br>Maronite<br>(West Bekaa, Rachaya) |  |   |  |  |  |
|                  |   |  | CHOUF, ALEY                                       |   |  |   |   |  |  |   |  |  |  |
|                  |   |  |   | AKRAM CHEHAYEB<br>Druze<br>(Aley)                 | HENRY HELOU<br>Maronite<br>(Chouf)                           | TAYMOUR JUMBLAT<br>Druze<br>(Chouf)                     | MARWAN HMADEH<br>Druze<br>(Chouf)                 | BILAL ABDALLAH<br>Sunni<br>(Chouf)               | NEHMEH TOHMEH<br>Greek Catholic<br>(Chouf)             | ANIS NASSAR<br>Greek Orthodox<br>(Aley)       |  |  |  |
|                  |   |  |   |   |  |   |   |  |  |   |  |  |  |
|                  | GEORGES ADWAN<br>Maronite<br>(Chouf)              |  |   | MOHAMAD EL HAJJAR<br>Sunni<br>(Chouf)             | TALAL ARSLAN<br>Druze<br>(Aley)                              | MARIO AOUN<br>Maronite<br>(Chouf)                       | CESAR ABI KHALIL<br>Maronite<br>(Aley)            | FARID EL BUSTANI<br>Maronite<br>(Chouf)          |  |   |  |  |  |
| BAABDA           |   |  |   |   |  |   |   |  |  |   |  |  |  |
|                  | ALI AMMAR<br>Shia<br>(Baabda)                     | PIERRE BOU ASSI<br>Maronite<br>(Baabda)    |   | HADI ABOUL HOSN<br>Druze<br>(Baabda)              | ALAIN AOUN<br>Maronite<br>(Baabda)                           | HEKMAT DEEB<br>Maronite<br>(Baabda)                     | FADI ALEMEH<br>Shia<br>(Baabda)                   |  |  |   |  |  |  |
|                  | JBEIL, KESSERWAN                                  |  |   |   |  |   |   |  |  |   |  |  |  |
|                  |   | ZIAD HAWAT<br>Maronite<br>(Jbeil)          |   | SHAWKI DAKASH<br>Maronite<br>(Kesserwan)          | SIMON ABI RAMIA<br>Maronite<br>(Jbeil)                       | NEHMAT FREM<br>Maronite<br>(Kesserwan)                  | SHAMEL ROUKOZ<br>Maronite<br>(Kesserwan)          | ROGERT AZAR<br>Maronite<br>(Kesserwan)           | MOUSTAFA EL HUSSEINI<br>Shia<br>(Jbeil)                | FARID EL KHAZEN<br>Maronite<br>(Kesserwan)    |  |  |  |
|                  |   | METN                                       |   |   |  |   |   |  |  |   |  |  |  |
|                  |   |  |   | SAMI GEMAYEL<br>Maronite<br>(Metn)                | ELIAS HANKASH<br>Maronite<br>(Metn)                          | MICHEL EL MURR<br>Greek Orthodox<br>(Metn)              | MAJED EDDY ABI LAMAA<br>Maronite<br>(Metn)        | ELIAS BOU SAAB<br>Roman Orthodox<br>(Metn)       | IBRAHIM KANAAN<br>Maronite<br>(Metn)                   | EDGARD MAALOUF<br>Greek Catholic<br>(Metn)    | AGOS PAKRADOUNIAN<br>Armenian Orthodox<br>(Metn) |  |  |

|  |                           |  |                       |  |                         |
|--|---------------------------|--|-----------------------|--|-------------------------|
|  | LEBANESE DEMOCRATIC PARTY |  | SABAA                 |  | AL AZM MOVEMENT         |
|  | TASHNAG                   |  | BAATH PARTY           |  | NATIONAL DIALOGUE PARTY |
|  | NASSERIST MOVEMENT        |  | ARAB LIBERATION PARTY |  | AHBASH                  |

## Part Four

# Election Dispute Resolution

The Constitutional Council (Council) is the primary body tasked with the adjudication of post-election complaints. In its mandate, it is only limited to hear the complaints (challenges) on a case-by-case basis submitted by defeated candidates. The Council does not review the validity of the whole electoral process even if similar violations are identified in other cases. Based on its previous decision,<sup>37</sup> the Council also does not review violations committed during the pre-election period unless such violations were intentionally committed to mar the integrity of the elections. While reviewing an individual complaint, the Council does not rule on the constitutionality of the electoral law.

A candidate has up to 30 days after the announcement of the final results of the elections to submit a complaint to the Council together with all documents/evidence supporting the complaint. A challenged candidate has 15 days to submit a response. The law does not set clear admissibility criteria for complaints. According to the member of the Constitutional Council, relevant guidelines on admissibility of the complaints are dispersed in other decisions of the Council.

The President of the Council appoints one member (or more, if need be) to act as a rapporteur on the case. The appointed member enjoys broad powers and is entitled to request official documents, hear witnesses and call upon everyone he/she considers fit for questioning. In addition, the Ministry is obliged by the law to provide the Council with all minutes, documents and information it has to allow it to carry out the required investigations. According to the information received by the mission, the Ministry was willing to share the data from the election day — such as copies of tabulation protocols — with the candidates requesting this as well. The rapporteur has up to three months to finish the investigation while the Council is encouraged to come to a decision within one month from receiving the report.

With such a long time timeframe, a complaint may take nearly six months from the day of the official announcement of the election results until a decision is announced, allowing potential uncertainties around the election results to persist while not limiting the right of a contested MP to exercise his/her powers.

The long timeframe for the complaint adjudication process is further exacerbated by the deadlines set for the SCE for receiving and reviewing campaign finance documents. According to the law, the candidates (including deregistered candidates) have up to 30 days from the date of publication of the official election results to submit their campaign income and expenditure report. SCE should review the reports within 30 days and submit its reasoned decision to the Council. If not reviewed within the deadline, the report is automatically deemed to have been approved. In total, it might take SCE up to two months before its review of the candidates' financial statements is submitted to the Council - thus delaying the Council's ability to investigate complaints, especially as they relate to allegations of vote buying and exceeding campaign spending limits. In addition, the confidence in the quality of data submitted by SCE has been questioned by some interlocutors based on tight deadlines and lack of capacity of SCE.

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**37 Constitutional Council Decision December 8th, 2000**

The legal framework regulating the complaints process is based on Law no. 250/93 on the establishment of the Constitutional Council (last amended in 2008). It does not account for the changes made to the electoral system following the adoption of the new electoral law.<sup>38</sup> As such, it lacks clear procedures related to lodging complaints against lists rather than candidates as well as procedures for recalculating the results (including preferential vote) should the complaint be upheld.<sup>39</sup> The law is also silent on polling day complaints.

Interlocutors the missions met with expressed varying degrees of confidence in the Council's ability to adjudicate the complaints in an impartial and unbiased manner and to withstand political pressure. However, candidates with whom the mission spoke were eager to exhaust all legal means for disputing election results — including lodging a complaint with the Council.

## 4.1 Pre-Election Complaints

The SCE reported receiving 45 complaints prior to the election.<sup>40</sup> Common complaints included: the use of public resources, public buildings, or houses of worship for campaign activities; the damage or defacement of campaign materials such as billboards; reports of bribery and vote-buying; and accusations of false reports by the media. During the campaign period, the SCE identified 900 violations of the media coverage and candidate advertising guidelines in Chapter VI of Law 44, which included: libel, slander or defamation; distortion of information; inflaming sectarian tensions; and intimidation.<sup>41</sup>

## 4.2 Election-day Complaints

Following the MOIM's delayed announcement of official results and its report that some 7,000 violations were reported by local or international observers to the Ministry, a number of stakeholders expressed concerns that the count and the tabulation processes could have been manipulated, and several candidates announced their intention to file complaints to the Constitutional Council. They cited lack of transparency in the process as their key reason behind the suspicion of fraud, reporting that their observers or agents were expelled from the premises. The high number of invalid ballots in some districts (e.g. Tripoli) has been questioned by electoral contestants who announced their intention to ask for a recount. In addition, several candidates and officials complained that the vote count from their polling stations did not reflect their own vote (e.g. a mayor of one of Beirut's areas claimed that the candidate he voted for did not get any preferential votes). Interviewed candidates also allege having evidence of discarded ballots being found at a trash bin in Beirut. Additionally, there were errors in the turnout of MOIM released turnout statistics and instead of 49.2, the correct national turnout was 48.02 percent (1,861,203 voted out of 3,875,981 registered). According to the MOIM, the discrepancy that has been identified was a result of polling officers wrongly filling in the

**38** The elections were held under a regional proportional system with a preferential vote for candidates on open lists (while maintaining confessional quotas) as compared to the majoritarian/first-past-the-post system used previously.

**39** The law gives the Council a broad power to annul the result of the election of a specific candidate and to either announce the victory of the candidate who received the highest number of votes or order a re-election to be held for the vacant seat. However, it is unclear how such a decision would affect the list and the order of the candidates on the preferential list.

**40** SCE Election Report, p. 49

**41** SCE Election Report, p. 136

number of eligible voters in their polling station and not the number of actual voters. In MOIM's assessment, this recurrent mistake did not change any of the results, since the quotient depends on the number of actual voters and not the number of registered voters.

The SCE met with the Presidency of the Council of Ministers (PCM) to formally submit their report on the elections to Prime Minister Hariri on March 4, 2019. The full report has not been made public. The SCE separately informed NDI that it had contracted 14 auditing firms, with some 70 auditors to look into the candidates' financial statements. It views the legal provisions related to campaign finances and its role as inadequate, as the time provided is not sufficient to adequately scrutinize almost 1,000 reports. The SCE classified reports into three categories — class A being the winning candidates and those who narrowly lost; class B the other candidates and class C all those who withdrew or did not end up on the lists. In this manner, the Commission hopes to at least provide sufficient information to the Constitutional Council and the public with the most urgently needed information. They prepared files on each candidate, including party, list, and individual spending on advertisement and media, as well as received complaints. The SCE voiced concern that its archives would not be properly maintained after the end of its term. The law lacks clarity about what the Commission's duties are between the elections.

### 4.3 Constitutional Council Complaints Resolution

Within the mandated 30 days following the election, 13 individual candidates and four candidate lists submitted complaints to the Constitutional Council.<sup>42</sup> The Council's investigations and deliberations exceeded even the extensive timeframe laid out by law, and finally ended with an announcement on February 21, 2019, which upheld all the election results except one. The Council annulled the election of Dima Jamali in response to a complaint filed by Taha Naji, another Sunni candidate from her district in Tripoli. The head of the Constitutional Council, Judge Issam Sleiman, reported that the decision was based on voting irregularities and violations of the election law. With the vote count too close to call, the Council declared a vacancy, which triggered a by-election in Tripoli on April 14th. Jamali maintained her seat by winning the election with 68 percent of the vote.

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**42** European Union Election Observation Mission to the Republic of Lebanon 2018, p. 37-38

## Part Five Recommendations

### **Strengthening the Electoral Framework:**

- To enhance confidence that elections are administered without political bias, the government should establish a permanently staffed and adequately resourced, independent election authority with responsibility for administering and monitoring elections and full autonomy over its budget.
- To achieve more equitable representation of voters, the parliament should revise election laws to adopt a further re-balancing of the distribution of voters per seat.
- Lawmakers should review and revise rules regarding election day campaigning, as they are routinely flouted. The MOIM and SCE should uniformly enforce the new rules until an independent election authority is established.

### **Polling Center Reforms:**

- While polling station staff and security personnel provide assistance to elderly voters and people with disabilities, polling stations have limited access. The MOIM should make further reforms to provide uninhibited access to elderly voters and people with disabilities to polling centers and stations.
- In order to make it easier for citizens to cast ballots without having to return to their ancestral villages, the MOIM should revisit the election law's directive to implement digital IDs and centralized voting locations ("mega centers") in major cities.

### **Counting and announcement of the results:**

- The MOIM should provide comprehensive training on closing and counting procedures to all polling officials, with special emphasis on validity of ballots, safety and security of electoral materials, and the right of party agents and election observers to attend all stages of the counting and aggregation process.
- The MOIM should require and consistently enforce the public posting of physical copies of the results at each polling station once the counting is complete.
- The MOIM should publish the results of the elections in a timely fashion and report vote counts to the press, on the internet and in an official gazette. Copies of the results protocols from each polling station should be transmitted to the Ministry and published online immediately upon their receipt — without waiting for the official results tabulation process to be over. In addition, changes made to the polling data at the level of the registration committee should be properly documented. The Ministry should continue the practice of publishing election results by polling station on its website, but should do so in a machine-readable format to allow for quick analysis of the data.

### **Post-election Complaints and Appeals:**

- The law should enhance the effectiveness of the complaints process by providing a tighter timeframe for complaints adjudications. Three months for investigation and one month for the Council to deliberate the findings is excessive and should be shortened without prejudice to the candidates' right to a reasonable period for evidence gathering and complaint submission.
- The legal framework should be amended to specify admissibility criteria for complaints.

**Advancing SCE capacities:**

- The SCE should review and enhance campaign finance regulations, monitoring mechanisms, and potential prosecution power for candidates and lists who do not respect the law.
- In accordance with its mandate, the SCE should make key decisions well in advance to allow for proper voter education and information sharing.
- The SCE should consider investing in additional training and deployment of auditors to review campaign period financial reports to enhance and encourage consistent compliance by candidates.

**Broadening political inclusion:**

- The parliament should reinforce measures to build upon accomplishments in these elections and expand the representation of women in elected office, including reconsideration of a gender quota in future electoral legislation.
- The parliament should take steps to encourage youth participation, including measures such as lowering the age requirement for voters and membership in parliament.

**Enhancing citizens' confidence in Lebanon's political institutions:**

- Given the escalating voter alienation evident in the 2018 process, political leaders entering parliament should redouble their efforts to understand and address citizen concerns.
- In order to overcome citizen mistrust, both established political parties and newcomers must focus on clear policy solutions to address citizen concerns, which voters can use to assess their performance.
- Members of parliament elected in the long-awaited 2018 elections should commit to exercising parliament's oversight capabilities and enhance its role in proposing policy and legislation.
- To encourage meaningful political participation, the government should support civic education initiatives targeting youth.
- By embracing the modest achievements through the law and election results, civil society can seize the opportunity to effect further change following these elections.

**Election Administration:**

- The MOIM should release financial and human resources requested by the SCE to support the Commission's expanded mandate and ensure proper monitoring of the media and campaign environment.
- The MOIM and MFA should establish coordination to finalize polling station locations and staffing needs to assign requisite budgets for OCV.
- The MOIM should issue training materials to MFA staff in Lebanon and embassies abroad to ensure the proper procedures and safeguards are in place sufficiently in advance of elections.
- Election authorities should ensure timely accreditation and access to citizen monitoring groups and agents for electoral contestants in the countries where voting takes place abroad.
- Electoral stakeholders — including election authorities, political competitors, civil society and media — should come together to openly and frankly analyze the process under the new electoral framework, and to document and consider changes to further reinforce transparency for future reform processes.

**Voter Information and Education:**

- The MOIM and SCE should launch multi-faceted voter education measures taking into consideration first-time voters as well as changes in the process for experienced voters.

- █ Candidate campaign teams, NGOs and the media should all continue their efforts to educate the public and encourage participation.

**Election-Day Administration and Security:**

- █ The MOIM should ensure consistent and transparent selection criteria for polling staff and their assignments to electoral districts to build confidence.
- █ The MOIM should train law enforcement personnel in electoral security best practices and deploy them to high-risk areas to deter or quickly de-escalate disruptions.
- █ The MOIM should clearly define and communicate the roles and responsibilities of these security forces so that their presence does not in itself interfere with electoral processes or generate unnecessary anxiety among voters.
- █ To ensure all stakeholders are fully informed about the procedures and safeguards in place, the MOIM should organize a public demonstration of the results management system.
- █ The MOIM should release results to the public in a timely and open manner to ensure independent verification by all stakeholders.
- █ The MOIM, in cooperation with the MOJ, should produce procedures to manage the results management process and provide training to registration committees to ensure clear distribution of roles.

**Candidates and Campaigns:**

- █ Candidates should engage the public through electoral appeals based on issues important to citizens and avoid unnecessarily exacerbating sectarian divisions.
- █ Candidates should seek out opportunities to participate in debates and dialogue focused on policy issues.
- █ Political parties should consider developing and agreeing to a shared code of conduct outlining acceptable campaign practices and using the code to enforce compliance by party activists.
- █ Candidates who also serve in Lebanon's cabinet should consider steps to counter perceived abuse of state resources and conflicts of interest.
- █ Political parties should consider deliberate, democratic, and inclusive candidate recruitment processes.

**Women's Participation:**

- █ The MOIM should consider introducing flexible measures to allow women candidates to present their names on the ballot prior to the list registration deadline.
- █ The MOIM should commit to gender parity as they recruit polling staff for election day.
- █ Citizen observers should recruit female monitors and publish findings including gender-sensitive analysis.
- █ Political parties should demonstrate genuine commitment to women's inclusion and participation, including revisiting candidate preparation and selection procedures; as well as setting internal quotas to bring more women into decision-making.
- █ Lawmakers, in consultation with civil society, should revisit tangible measures to increase women's political participation, such as a gender quota.

**Campaign Finance:**

- █ The MOIM should ensure that the SCE receives the approved budget and staffing to properly conduct its monitoring efforts.
- █ Campaigns should voluntarily and regularly disclose the sources and amounts of their donations and their expenditures.

- | To demonstrate commitment to transparency, election authorities should explore all options for open data which respect the spirit of the law, including release of readable format election-related information.
- | Candidate registration fees should be set at levels that do not discourage serious new entrants.
- | More rigorous limits on campaign contributions and expenditures should be developed.
- | Mechanisms for requiring greater transparency about campaign finances should be considered.

**Media Environment:**

- | The media should provide fair coverage to all political parties, candidates and campaigns, and disclose all paid airtime.
- | Electoral contestants should engage in candidate debates to provide voters with choices about policy approaches.
- | The SCE should promptly respond to requests from media and campaigns regarding regulations, and follow-up on any violations noted during their monitoring efforts in a timely and transparent manner.

**Electoral Dispute Resolution:**

- | Parliament should consider revising the election law to expedite the adjudication process, prioritizing deadlines prior to a new parliament being sworn in, as well as to take into account the new electoral system and to specify criteria and procedures for election day complaints.
- | Election laws should be revised to provide clear criteria for admissibility of complaints and consolidate this criteria.
- | The Constitutional Council should consider accepting complaints during the pre-election period regarding not only election fraud, but also electoral malpractice (negligence, carelessness, and other unintentional actions that are damaging to the electoral stakeholders and/or the process overall).

# | Annexes

## | **Annex 1** Electronic Links to Public Reports and Statements

- | Statement of the NDI Pre-Election Assessment Mission to Lebanon’s 2018 Parliamentary Elections, March 11-15, 2018  
<https://www.ndi.org/sites/default/files/Lebanon%20PEAM%20Statement%20EN.pdf>
  
- | NDI Preliminary Statement of NDI’s International Observation Mission to Lebanon 2018 Parliamentary Election, May 7, 2018  
<https://www.ndi.org/sites/default/files/NDI%20Preliminary%20Statement%20-%20Lebanon%20May%207%202018%20EN.pdf>
  
- | Lebanon Poll Results Following May 7 Parliamentary Elections  
<https://www.ndi.org/publications/lebanon-poll-results-following-may-7-parliamentary-elections>

## Annex 2

### List of NDI Observers

#### Pre-Election Assessment Mission — March 2018

|                       |  |
|-----------------------|--|
| <b>Daniel Mitov</b>   | Former Minister of Foreign Affairs (Bulgaria)                              |
| <b>Chafik Sarsar</b>  | Former President of the Independent High Authority for Elections (Tunisia) |
| <b>Shari Bryan</b>    | Vice-President, NDI (United States)  |
| <b>Nicole Rowsell</b> | Senior Advisor, Middle East and North Africa, NDI (United States)          |

#### Long-Term Analyst — March - May 2018

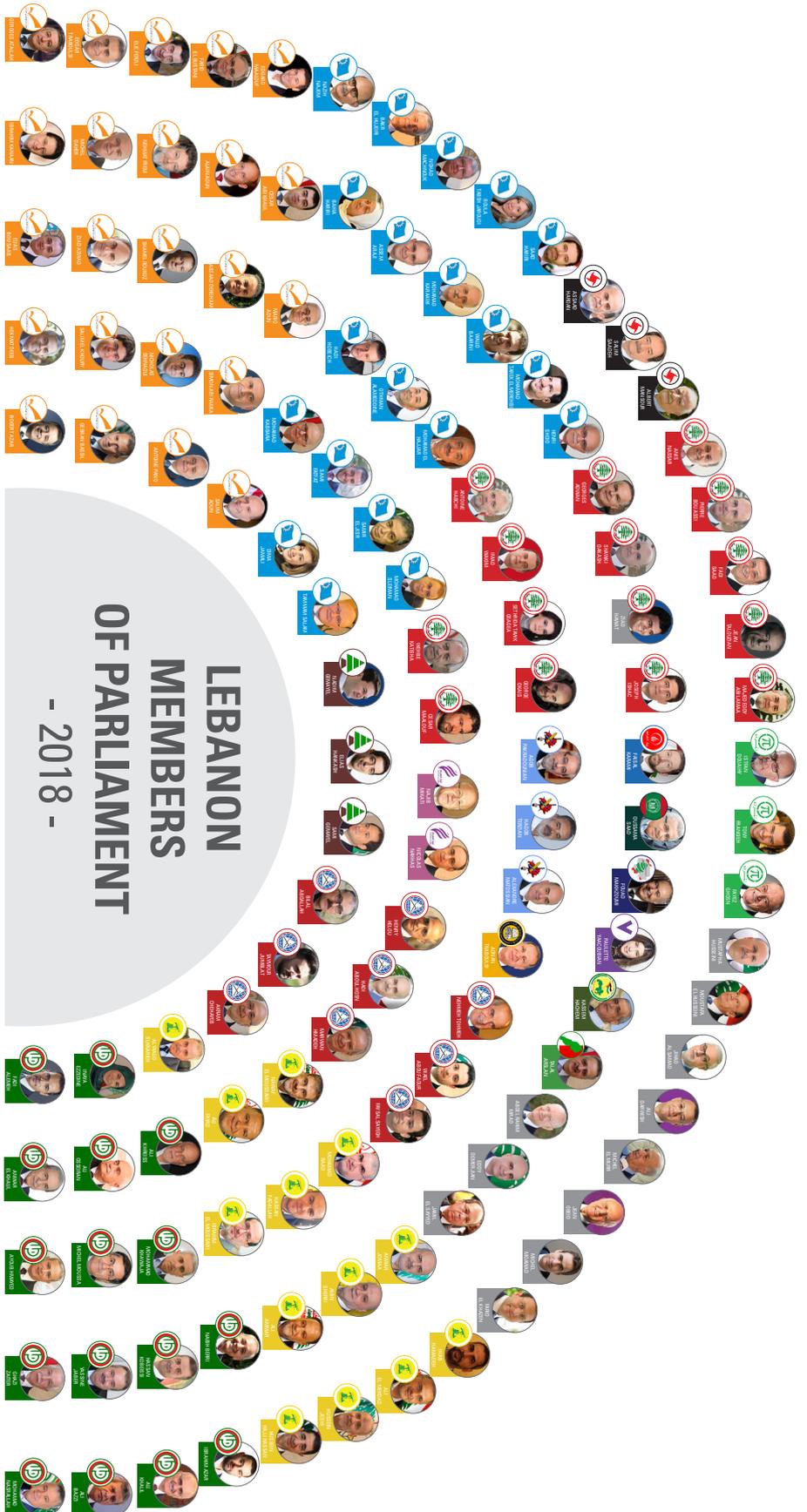
|                     |  |
|---------------------|--|
| <b>Marija Babic</b> | Long-Term Election Analyst, NDI (Serbia) |
|---------------------|--|

#### International Electoral Observation Mission — May 2018

|                          |   |
|--------------------------|---|
| <b>Paul Adams</b>        | Journalist , author and academic (Canada)   |
| <b>Travis L. Adkins</b>  | Director of Global Governance & Civic Engagement, InterAction (United States)                     |
| <b>Lutfi Asfour</b>      | Office Director, Prince Ghazi bin Muhammad Royal Hashemite Court (Jordan)                         |
| <b>Jennifer Birch</b>    | Head of the British Foreign Office’s Reform Programme, British Embassy in Beirut (United Kingdom) |
| <b>Haley Bobseine</b>    | Independent writer, researcher, and analyst (United States)                                       |
| <b>Wim Borremans</b>     | Chief of Staff to Alderwoman Elke Decruynaere, City Council of Ghent, (Belgium)                   |
| <b>Assia Bouzekri</b>    | Vice President, Tangier-Tétouan-Al Houceima Regional Council (Morocco)                            |
| <b>Leslie Campbell</b>   | Senior Associate and Regional Director for Middle East and North Africa, NDI (Canada)             |
| <b>Margaret Curran</b>   | Political consultant and trainer; former MP (United Kingdom)                                      |
| <b>Gemma Doyle</b>       | UK Labour Party politician; former MP (United Kingdom)  |
| <b>Carla Hummud</b>      | Analyst, Congressional Research Services (United States)  |
| <b>Boutaina Karrouri</b> | MP; President of the parliamentary thematic group for parity and equality (Morocco)               |
| <b>Mirjana Kovacevic</b> | Short Term Consultant (women candidates training and consultations), NDI (Serbia)                 |
| <b>Sam S. Koplewicz</b>  | JD, Harvard Law School (United States)  |

|                             |   |
|-----------------------------|---|
| <b>Dirk Kunze</b>           | Project Director for Lebanon and Syria, Friedrich Naumann Foundation for Freedom (Germany)  |
| <b>Peter MacKay</b>         | Partner, Baker McKenzie (Canada)  |
| <b>Wafaa Bani Mustafa</b>   | MP; Member of the Legal Committee of the Parliament and the Committee on Public Liberties and Citizens' Rights (Jordan)                   |
| <b>Rob Norris</b>           | Senior Strategist for Research Partnerships, Office of the Vice-President for Research, University of Saskatchewan (Canada)               |
| <b>Peggy Nash</b>           | Distinguished Visiting Professor, Ryerson University, Facilities of Arts and Community Services; former NDP Member of Parliament (Canada) |
| <b>Birgitta Ohlsson</b>     | Former Minister for European Union Affairs and MP (Sweden)  |
| <b>Geraldine O'Mahoney</b>  | Professor, Central Washington University (United States)  |
| <b>Mohamed Ouzzine</b>      | Deputy Speaker of Parliament (Morocco)  |
| <b>Octavius Pinkard</b>     | PhD Researcher in International Relations (United States)   |
| <b>Aous Qutaishat</b>       | Technical Advisor to the Chairman of the Independent Election Commission (Jordan)   |
| <b>Ross Reid</b>            | Former Progressive Conservative MP (Canada)   |
| <b>Tamara Sartania</b>      | Parliamentary and Elections Programs Manager, NDI (Georgia)   |
| <b>Louisa Slavkova</b>      | Co-founder and Director, Sofia Platform (Bulgaria)  |
| <b>Toni Verstandig</b>      | Executive Vice President, S. Daniel Abraham Center for Middle East Peace (United States)  |
| <b>Maureen White</b>        | Senior Fellow, Foreign Policy Institute, School of Advanced International Studies, Johns Hopkins University (United States)               |
| <b>Tamara Cofman Wittes</b> | Senior Fellow, Center for Middle East Policy, Brookings Institution (United States)   |
| <b>Mona Yacoubian</b>       | Senior Advisor for Syria, the Middle East and North Africa, U.S. Institute of Peace (United States)                                       |

# Annex 3 Parliamentary Election Results



## Political Parties

-   
**FREE PATRIOTIC MOVEMENT**
-   
**LEBANESE FORCES**
-   
**KATAEB**
-   
**LEBANESE DEMOCRATIC PARTY**
-   
**SABAA**
-   
**AL AZM MOVEMENT**
-   
**FUTURE MOVEMENT**
-   
**HEZBOLLAH**
-   
**MARADA**
-   
**TASHNAG**
-   
**BAATH PARTY**
-   
**NATIONAL DIALOGUE PARTY**
-   
**AMAL MOVEMENT**
-   
**PROGRESSIVE SOCIALIST PARTY**
-   
**SSNP**
-   
**NASSERIST MOVEMENT**
-   
**ARAB LIBERATION PARTY**
-   
**AHBASH**

