



EUROPEAN UNION ELECTION OBSERVATION MISSION

PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS

LEBANON 2005

FINAL REPORT

Table of contents

1. Introduction	4
2. Executive Summary and Recommendations	6
3. Political and Statistical background	12
3.1. Data on electoral population and territory	12
3.2. Overview of Parliamentary election after the war	13
3.3. Common features of post-war elections	14
3.4. Overview of post-war results	18
4. Political landscape of the 2005 elections	20
4.1. Pre-election context and campaign	20
4.2. Main features of the campaign	24
4.3. Overview of 2005 results	25
5. Legal and Institutional framework	36
5.1. Legal framework and the electoral system	36
5.1.1. Suffrage rights	38
5.1.2. Campaign finance	39
5.1.3. Law on associations	40
5.1.4. Candidates and electoral tickets	41
5.2 Election Administration	42
5.2.1 The Ministry of Interior	43
5.2.2 Local election administration	43
5.2.3 Voting procedures	44
5.2.4 Civic and voter registration	45
5.2.5 Voter card system	47
5.2.6 Candidate registration	48
5.2.7 Candidate and non partisan observers	49
5.2.8 Election related complaints	50
5.3 Media framework	52
6. Observation of the 2005 elections	55
6.1. Media monitoring results	58

Annexes

Composition of the new Parliament	61
Media monitoring results	66

This report was produced by the EU Election Observation Mission and presents the EU EOM's findings on the Parliamentary elections in Lebanon. These views have not been adopted or in any way approved by the Commission and should not be relied upon as a statement of the Commission. The European Commission does not guarantee the accuracy of the data included in this report, nor does it accept responsibility for any use made thereof.

1. Introduction

The European Union Election Observation Mission (EU EOM) was deployed in Lebanon since 11 May 2005, following an agreement between the EU and the government of the Republic of Lebanon. A Memorandum of Understanding, outlining the rights and responsibilities of observers and their unrestricted access to all parts of the electoral process, was signed between the Lebanese government and the European Commission on 14 May.

The Mission was led by a Chief Observer, Mr. José Ignacio Salafranca (Spain), a Member of the European Parliament. The Core Team comprised: Deputy Chief Observer, Riccardo Chelleri (Italy), Country Expert, Agnes Favier (France), Election Expert, Ron Herrmann (Germany), Legal Expert, Fredrik Blanck (Sweden), Media Expert, Alexandre Castanias (France), Press Officer, Sarah Fradgley (UK), Operations Expert, Miguel Arranz (Spain), Field Coordinator, Alessandro Parziale (Italy), Assistant Field Coordinator, Eirini Skouzou (Greece) and Security Expert, Stuart Poucher (UK).

A total of 26 Long-Term Observers from 24 different EU member states, plus two from Switzerland were deployed on 16 May, while 62 Short-Term Observers (50 from EU member states, 10 from Canada and 2 from Switzerland) were deployed on 26 May. For the observation of the four election days, they were also joined by four locally recruited Short-Term Observers from EU member state embassies in Lebanon. A Delegation of seven Members of the European Parliament, led by Mr. Carlos Carnero González (Spain) also joined the EU EOM during the four election days. For the first round of the election, a seven-member delegation of the Spanish Parliament also joined the EU EOM.

The key objectives of the EU EOM were to undertake a comprehensive analysis of the entire election process and to provide an impartial, balanced and informed assessment of the entire election cycle and to provide support to the development of the Lebanese institutions and election procedures in the country.

In making its assessment of the electoral process the EOM took account of key Lebanese laws and international treaties to which Lebanon is a party, in particular the UN International Covenant for Civil and Political Rights.

The EOM met with Lebanese institutions, candidates, political parties, representatives of major media outlets, national non-partisan election observation organisations and representatives of civil society. It also maintained close contact with representatives of EU Member States.

The EU EOM wishes to thank the Lebanese Ministry of Internal Affairs and election administration for their cooperation and assistance during the course of the observation. Also, it wishes to thank the Lebanese Ministry of Foreign Affairs for its assistance, and candidates, political parties and civil society organisations for their valuable time and co-operation.

This final report presents the findings of the EU EOM covering the 2005 Parliamentary elections (including pre-election days period and post-election day developments) and contains a number of recommendations for future elections. The report and its conclusions remain the sole responsibility of the EU EOM.

2. Executive Summary and Recommendations

- The elections were well managed and took place in a peaceful manner within the existing framework for elections. However, there is a need for urgent reform of the legal and election framework
- A large number of candidates contested the elections offering a broad range of political options. However, lacking provisions on election campaigning meant that there was not enough equal playing field. The role finance played in the campaign, and the heated debate on money politics that followed clearly underlined the need of regulations for campaign and financial disclosure.

- The decision of holding the elections during four weeks influenced the campaign because of the publishing of the results of earlier rounds. Candidates in different areas did not have the same time available for campaigning.
- Key Constitutional provisions, based on the Taif Agreement have not yet been implemented. Namely, a bicameral Parliamentary system and aiming at the reduction of the role of confessionalism in public life
- The current electoral system does not respect the principle of equality of votes. Also, the delimitation of electoral constituencies does not respect this principle.
- The right to suffrage of Lebanese voters is restricted in several ways by the current system.
- One of the main features of the first part of the election was the assignment of seats by default before even voting took place. Only one candidate was then available for one seat, therefore winning it by default regardless to the number of votes received on election day. The seats were officially assigned by the Ministry of Interior to the candidates before election day, which meant that the voting process was considered irrelevant. While the lack of competition on some seats is a regrettable effect of the election system and the practice of power-brokering, the problem is exacerbated by the official understanding that the seat is assigned without the voters being given a chance to express their preference. With this system it would be possible to have elections decided entirely before election day.
- Even if the election administration, under the Ministry of Interior, generally performed well and was committed to holding the elections according the legal deadlines, shortcomings such as ill-defined procedures, lacking provisions and overlapping responsibilities were evidenced during the electoral process.
- The system for voter registration showed serious shortcomings. Antiquated legislation, lacking regulations and the lack of modern technical means make it unreliable, non transparent and in need of urgent reform. Also, candidates and *mukhtars* play a too big role in allowing voters to obtain Voter Cards, allowing for discrimination and pressure.

- Polling took place in a clam and orderly way. However, the EOM observed extensive campaigning during election day, both outside and inside polling stations, which did not always create an optimal environment for voters.
- The absence of uniform ballots lessened the secrecy of vote. Also, provisions that foresee the burning of ballots immediately after the count make reconciliation and recount of vote impossible; this would create uncertainty and lack transparency in case of controversies about results.
- Lebanese media, both public and private, gave an extensive coverage of the electoral campaign. The coverage was, however, unbalanced, and did not offer the same opportunities to all candidates. An experimental initiative of self-regulation, the Code of Ethics, was initially adopted by the main media, but was largely ignored by them in the second part of the elections.

Recommendations

- It is widely recognised in Lebanon that the system of political representation and the election framework need to be overhauled. The Taif Agreement and the Constitution foresee reforms which would reduce the role played by confessions
- According to the Lebanese Constitution and the Taif Agreement, Parliament should be divided into two houses, the Chamber and a Senate.
- The electoral law should be completely revised. Discussion on a new electoral law should start soon and must be inclusive, engage state institutions, political representatives, civil society and citizens. It should take into account the Constitution, national laws and international obligations for elections. There have been extensive discussion in Lebanon on this issue and the Ministry of the Interior has already received around 40 different propositions for a new electoral law, an indication for the broad interest the question of electoral reform enjoys.
- While the choice of the election system is a matter of domestic debate, the number of constituencies should allow for a large enough number of seats in each constituency in order to have representatives from each of them reflecting all major political views in respective region. A certain number of seats could be

distributed nationwide to achieve an even more proportional representation. For a diverse society as the Lebanese it is crucial to have as many different views as possible represented in Parliament. Delimiting electoral district boundaries should be done in such manner that it serves best the principles of equal vote, and adequate political representation.

- Voters should be registered in their place of actual residence and changes of residence should be taken into consideration according to a transparent and accessible procedure, without the right of a discretionary veto from the Council of Ministers. This would establish a link between citizens and local politicians, enhancing accountability.
- Official uniform ballots should be adopted to enhance the secrecy of vote and to enhance the accountability of the tabulation process, as they would allow reconciling numbers of voters and votes cast. Provisions on burning ballots after the counting should be abolished, in order to allow for possible recounts, if necessary.
- Financial disclosure should be mandatory for all candidates, and should be audited by an independent body at the end of the elections. Campaign spending limits should also be considered.
- Voting should take place during one single day, to allow for equal campaigning opportunities all through the country.

In addition, numerous other steps could be undertaken to strengthen the elections system:

Election and other Laws

- Limitations on the electoral rights for army and police officers should be abolished and other restrictions of suffrage regarding professions should be limited as much as possible.
- Provisions should be introduced to enfranchise the homebound and hospitalised, election officials and public servants on duty on election day, in order to make

- suffrage as universal as possible. There are different possibilities to be considered such as mobile teams, pre election voting at the local election authority, postal voting or documents issued by the local election body authorising to vote in another polling station than where registered.
- A vast number of Lebanese citizens in the diaspora are still registered in Lebanon. This leads to uncertainties about the actual numbers of voters. This question should be carefully studied in order to find an adequate and balance solution taking into account that some countries allow out-of-country voting for their citizens living abroad.
 - It could be considered to lower the age of eligibility for voting to 18, in line with the age of legal majority (attainment of full age) age of 18 years.
 - The right of domestic and international election observers to follow all relevant stages of the election process should be recognised in the law.
 - There is a need for legislation related to political parties including their legal status, rights of establishment, their rights and obligations, the byelaws necessary for their internal work, etc. Such a reform should include a revision on the regulations concerning non-governmental organisations in order to establish a distinction between bodies involved in politics or with political agendas and other organisations with mainly educational/cultural and/or humanitarian aims. It should guarantee the implementation of the recognised right to form, belong to and participate in associations in line with Art. 22 UN International Covenant for Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR).
 - There should be a campaign silence during the last day of the campaign and on Election Day itself, especially in and around polling sites
 - There should be an obligation for the elections administration to promptly publish all election related laws, sub-legal acts, decrees and decisions. This could be done on a daily updated official website of the future election authorities. This issue could also be addressed in broader legislation related to access to public information.

Election Administration

- It should be considered to establish an independent electoral body being in charge of all electoral processes, including voter registration, preparing, organising and supervising polling, counting, tabulation and publication procedures, providing sufficient training of all election officials, assuring an efficient and outreaching voter education program, facilitating a speedy, transparent, comprehensive and accountable complaints and appeals procedure and possibly assisting Parliament in drafting more sustainable electoral framework.
- In order to avoid undue influence on voters and allegations of unfair treatment, election related functions currently performed by *mukhtars* should be transferred to local levels of the election administration.
- Introduction of a permanent and transparent procedure assuring a regular and speedy update of the civic records as the basis for voter lists, including a fully computerized data management linking different registration offices.
- Consideration should be given to abolish the Voter Card system, where it actually creates more controversies than benefits to voters. As the question is only for the voter to identify him/herself, the current partial national ID system should suffice if extended to all Lebanese citizens.
- A campaign silence period immediately before election day should be considered to give voters time to reflect on their choice. Also, campaigning should be forbidden on election day around polling stations, and candidates should be responsible for any infringements.
- Polling board members should be forbidden from wearing or carrying any propaganda material.
- All polling board members should be appointed by the election administration, and should be given effective training and instructions prior to each elections and be clearly identifiable as elections officials

- There should be direct accessibility of physically impaired voters or others with additional needs at any polling station, strengthening the full integration of all electors.

Election Complaints

- A system for efficiently dealing with election-related complaints should be put in place, allowing voters and candidates to obtain legal redress efficiently and transparently. The highest level of an independent election administration could be ultimately responsible for the resolution of election-related complaints. Polling station committees should be given the power to adjudicate issues related to voting procedures on Election Day. Alternatively, the judiciary might be involved in the resolution of complaints, in which case the delimitation of jurisdiction between the election administration and court system would have to be clearly defined.

Media

- Media, and in particular public-owned ones which are financed by citizens' taxes, should provide all contestants equitable and fair media coverage. This should be specified in law. Private media should be required to apply the same conditions at least for advertisements and to provide either free or paid airtime on an equal basis. Compliance should be monitored by a supervisory body with access to sanctions against infringements of the legal provisions

3. Political and Historical Background

3.1 Data on electoral population and territory

Lebanon is culturally, religiously and ethnically diverse with noticeable regional differences and social inequalities. The only official census the country has known is that of 1932. Because of the sectarian organization of power, any population census is seen as a sensitive issue that might upset the general balance of power.

Each Lebanese is born into, grows and dies as a member of a religious group. Most aspects of family law (such as marriage, divorce and inheritance) are governed according to religious affiliation. Religious freedom is guaranteed by the Constitution and Lebanon has several established religious communities. Nineteen communities are legally recognized, but only seventeen are institutionalized: 12 Christian (Maronite, Greek-orthodox, Greek-catholic, Armenian-orthodox, Armenian-catholic, Chaldean, Nestorian, Syriac, Jacobites, Latin, Protestant, and Copt), four Muslim (Shiite, Sunni, Druze, Alawite) and one Jewish. The two non-institutionalized communities recognized in 1936 are the Ismaelite and the secular community. According to the registered voters' figures, the most numerous groups are Sunni Muslims, Shiites Muslims, Maronite Christians, Greek-orthodox Christians, Druses and Greek-Catholics.

	<i>Mohafaza</i> ¹	%
Despite the absence of an official census, and official figures pertaining to the national resident population, the Central administration for statistics estimated in 1997 a resident population of 4 million (of which 7.6 % are foreigners, mostly Palestinians who enjoy no social or political rights). A recent study ² calculated that the resident Lebanese population in 2001 was of 3 935 000, 36 % of which lives in the Greater Beirut Region (Beirut and its suburbs).	Beirut	8.7
	Mount Lebanon	43.5
	- Beirut's suburb	27.3
	- Rest of M-L	16.2
	North Lebanon	19.9
	South Lebanon	9.7
	Nabatieh	6.3
	Bekaa	12

¹ Resident population per region in 2001, source : Kasparian

² Choghig Kasparian, *La population libanaise et ses caractéristiques*, Presses de l'Université Saint Joseph, 2003.

As for voting population, the Ministry of the Interior holds a registry that is updated every year. All living Lebanese nationals over the age of 21 are automatically included in the registry according to their civic record location and their confession. The registry does not take into account the place of residence or whether or not the voter resides in Lebanon or abroad. In 2005, the voters account to 3, 007, 927. Considering that 46,2% of the Lebanese households have at least one of its members living abroad⁴, and second and third generation immigrants holding a Lebanese

Confession	Registered voters ³	%
Alawite	23 696	0.8
Armenian-catholic	20 217	0.7
Armenian-orthodox	90 675	3
Druze	169 293	5.6
Greek-catholic	156 521	5.2
Greek-orthodox	236 402	7.9
Maronite	667 556	22.19
Minorities	47 018	1.56
Protestant	17 409	0.58
Shiite	783 903	26.06
Sunni	795 233	26.44
Total	3 007 927	100.0

passport are automatically registered as voters following their 21st birthday, it is estimated that a million voters actually do not reside in Lebanon.

The Lebanese communities are to a great extent concentrated in certain regions, rather than evenly scattered across the Lebanese territory. This tendency was reinforced during the war years when some mixed regions were ‘ethnically cleansed’. These demographic changes do not show on the electoral map because voters do not vote according to their place of residence, but according to the location of their civic record (usually the town of their forefathers).

3.2 Overview of Parliamentary elections after the war

Lebanon has a long experience of Parliamentary elections that have taken place since the 1920s. The only time elections were suspended was during the years of civil war. Unlike other Arab countries, Lebanon’s democratic experience was characterized by a high degree of electoral competition and a relatively open political system. This found

³ Source : Ministry of Interior, 2005

⁴ Choghig Kasparian, *Les Libanais émigrés depuis 1975*, Presses de l’Université Saint Joseph, 2003.

expression in an average voter turnout of 50 to 60% before the war and a renewal rate of MP varied between 20 and 25 % from one poll to another.

Traditionally, elections in Lebanon are not meant to delineate a framework for competing political parties, governmental programs or public policies. They are not directly meant to produce a governing majority in Parliament, or to determine which party or political group will participate in government or join the opposition. Their primary function is to ensure the participation of the elites and the representation of the country's regions, confessions and political families, through a specific system of seat allotment, which actually limits political competition and confines it within each confession.

Twenty years after the last ballot was organized in 1972, and three years after the signing of the Taif Agreement in 1989, Lebanon resumed its electoral tradition. The organization of the election in 1992 laid the very foundation of the post-war political order and introduced the new rules of the game. The legal timeframe for each Parliamentary election was respected in 1992, 1996 and 2000, but the control of the electoral process allowed the Syrian regime to consolidate, strengthen and institutionalise its hold on Lebanese politics. This was carried out through the adoption of controversial electoral laws and the setting up of electoral coalitions.

3.3 Common features of post-war elections

Absence of constant and stabilised rules

The Lebanese electoral process in the last decade was always influenced by regional developments. In 1992, the elections coincided with the planned Syrian military redeployment, itself influenced by the effects of the Gulf war and the preparations of the Oslo accords. In 1996, the elections followed the difficulties of the Arab-Israeli peace process. In 2000, the elections in Lebanon came shortly after Hafez el-Assad's death and Israel's evacuation of southern Lebanon. On each of the three post-war elections, the exact timing of the polls and the electoral legislation remained uncertain until the very last minute.

This looming uncertainty had a direct effect on the political debate in the run-up to polling day, many groups hoping and working for a last minute amendment of the law. During the post-war's first Parliamentary elections, the political debate did not center on actual political issues, but revolved around the question of holding the elections in difficult local and regional circumstances. Despite the opposition of a great number of Lebanese, the elections were held as scheduled. As for the 2000 elections, analysts expected a postponement and a new electoral law because the special provision made for the South could no longer be justified after the total pullout of the Israeli army. But eventually elections were held as planned.

The electoral legislation was usually amended through a draft law adopted by the Cabinet and voted by the Parliament with a simple majority. These amendments were made in haste in 1992 and 1996, less than a month before the actual polls started. For the 2000 Parliamentary elections, the law was approved on 22 December 1999. This left very little time to candidates to prepare their campaign, and to the electorate to adapt to the new districts introduced by the law. Similarly, the decision not to hold the elections on the same day, but on two, three or four consecutive Sundays (respectively in 2000, 1996 and 1992) was equally announced at the very last minute. The authorities usually argued that the Lebanese Security forces were insufficient numerically to ensure the safety of the whole territory if the voting took place on the same day.

Beyond their timing, amendments to the electoral legislation voted by Parliament were highly politicised and controversial due to the fact they contradicted general principles agreed upon in the Document of National Understanding, most notably the number of seats, and the shape and size of constituencies.

The number of seats in Parliament became a heated issue in 1992. The Taif Agreement had decided on a 108-member Parliament, adding 9 Muslim seats to the 99-member pre-war Parliament so as to split the seats evenly between Christians and Muslims. In 1992, the Government decided to raise the number to 134, arguing that it would secure a better

representation for the Druze and Greek-Catholic communities. When it adopted the 1992 electoral law, Parliament brought that figure down to 128. The reason behind the increase of number of seats has remained obscure, but analysts reckon that it was meant to satisfy a greater number of “clients”. The number of MPs has remained unchanged since then.

As for the constituencies, the post-war electoral laws are characteristically drawn on a dual basis: that of the *mohafaza* and that of the *qada*. And even where the *mohafaza* was taken as an electoral constituency, the *qada* remained a unit within it⁵. The Taif Agreement had stipulated that the *mohafaza* was the new electoral unit instead of the *qada*, but it did not specify the size that this constituency will actually have⁶. Nevertheless, it undisputedly adopted an expanded administrative division as the basic unit for the drawing of constituencies. This was meant to strengthen national unity by ensuring religiously diverse multi-member constituencies where voters and candidates belonged to various religious groups. In practice, the electoral districts in 1992, 1996 and 2000 were arbitrarily drawn on a mixed basis. In 1992, the elections were based on the *mohafaza* in Beirut, the South and the North, while they were based on the *qada* in Mount Lebanon and the Bekaa (where the electoral districts of Baalbeck-Hermel and Western Bekaa-Rashaya grouped together two *qadas*). Similarly, in 1996 all constituencies were based on the *mohafaza*, except for the region of Mount Lebanon, where they were based on the *qada*. The newly established Constitutional Court invalidated the 1996 law, because it violated the principle of equality among citizens, but recognized that these electoral divisions could be accepted provided they were “exceptional and meant for one time only”. This formula would come to symbolize the post-war’s legal doctrine and would be used in the 2000 electoral law to justify the merging of the South’s newly created two electoral districts.

What could be termed as a new legal tradition, that of the “exceptional” and “temporary” arrangements, was actually a way to secure the electoral victory of the post-war regime’s key figures. The electoral law was tailor-cut to suit the decision makers and the electoral

⁵ The vote counts for the entire constituency, but the candidates compete on the basis of the *qada*

⁶ The Taef Agreement planned a general administrative reform with a decentralization scheme based on the creation of new *mohafaza*.

coalitions they were sponsoring. When a large district threatened leaders who enjoyed a geographically restricted popular base, it was divided into smaller constituencies. In Mount Lebanon some leaders could easily secure a victory if the elections were based on the *qada*, while a *mohafaza*-based district might have jeopardized their seat in Parliament.

Lists building and sponsorship

As opposed to Mount Lebanon's smaller districts, the South, the Bekaa and the North's larger multi-member constituencies meant that large electoral alliances had to be set up in a politically fragmented landscape. In each region, the Lebanese and the Syrian regime backed strong coalitions grouping key political figures. These electoral lists have been called bulldozers (*mahdala*) and electoral buses (*busta*) since 1996 because they are mere vehicles in which individual and sometimes rival political groups or figures "hop into" in order to "crush" all others and win the district's entire seats.

The electoral list formation was actually transformed into a mechanism that influenced the pre-electoral choice of MPs in post-war Lebanon. Often negotiated and agreed upon few days before the polls, these coalitions demonstrate the lack of consistency between the political discourse, the political stands based on the principles upheld by the political players, and their tactical alliances. These coalitions can appear contrived and incoherent, bridging rival forces or political figures. This was certainly the case in the South where two rival organizations quarrelled over the control of a region partially occupied by Israel. A similar practice occurred in Northern Lebanon, a region that has been under the direct influence of Syria since 1976. In 1996, four competing lists were offered to the voters, out of which three included both government supporters and opponents. Moreover, alliances between political forces in one district would often contradict the alliances of these political forces in other districts.

Increased weight of "political money"

Money has played an increasingly important part in elections since the mid 1990s. Whereas in the past, wealthy figures were added to a list in order to finance it, the

relationship between the political class and the wealthy entrepreneurs was reversed in the 1990s, when the latter started heading electoral lists and adding political allies to them. This phenomenon conveys to a large extent the fact that the elections had lost much of their political substance. More and more often, the choice of vote was determined, instead of political considerations, by offers of services (a vote in return for a private or public service provided by the candidate to the voter's family), or money (vote buying on election day).

3.4 Overview of the post-war electoral results

The first two Parliamentary elections that followed the Taif Agreement were described as unsurprising: analysts could guess the makeup of the coming Parliament in advance. The 2000 elections witnessed a renewed political discourse and brought along several "electoral surprises".

The 2000 elections

The year 2000 was in many respects a turning point on the regional level. Two events influenced the Parliamentary elections that took place in two rounds during August and September 2000. On 24 May, after 22 years of occupation, the Israeli army unilaterally withdrew from southern Lebanon. On the 10 June Syrian President Hafez el-Assad passed away, thirty years after coming to power.

The 2000 electoral campaign was characterised by a strong political battle between supporters of Emile Lahoud and his opponents (mainly Hariri, Jumblatt and some Christian local figures), while at the same time the opposition remained divided. Some contested the President's growing powers while others criticized the continued presence of Syrian soldiers in Lebanon.

All major Christian political groups participated in these elections. The results indicated a strong political pluralism with many parties winning seats. The biggest winners in those elections were: Hezbollah, Amal, Hariri's Future movement and Jumblatt. Hariri

succeeded in improving his result in Beirut, winning all seats in its three districts, and in Northern Lebanon, while Jumblatt secured his control of the Chouf and extended his power to the adjoining Baabda-Aley district. Other small blocks managed to reconfirm themselves in their small constituency (in Zahleh, in Metn, in Zghorta). These elections enabled Hariri to reclaim his position as Prime Minister, and Jumblatt to have three ministers in the cabinet.

Through these elections, the most important political players in post-war Lebanon managed to maintain and consolidate their position within the political system. The Christian political parties were still unable to have a meaningful share in the 2000 Parliament.

4. Political landscape of 2005 election

4.1 Pre-election context and campaign

The 2005 Parliamentary election took place during a serious national crisis. A mounting polarization in Lebanese politics has been gradually increasing the past five years due to international, regional and domestic factors.

On the regional level, the liberation of southern Lebanon and the passing away of Syrian President Hafez al-Assad during the spring 2000 resulted in the freeing of the political speech. Criticism against the military intelligence's growing involvement in political life and demands for Syrian military withdrawal were voiced more frequently and became difficult to ignore. This resulted in a new dynamic within the opposition: it ceased to be confined to the Christian community and embraced other political figures and groups such as Jumblatt and his allies.

The turning point: September 2004

The real turning point in the Lebanese political landscape took place in 2004, a year dominated by the debate over the extension of President Lahoud's presidential mandate. On 2 September 2004, the UN Security Council enacted resolution 1559, calling for free and fair elections without foreign interference, for the withdrawal of all foreign forces from Lebanon, the disbanding and disarmament of all militias and the government control of all Lebanese territory. Only one day later, the Lebanese Parliament voted a three year extension of Lahoud's mandate: 29 MPs voted against the extension (Christian opposition and Jumblatt's bloc) while Hariri's bloc had been pressured into approving the extension. The combined effect of this extension and Resolution 1559 created major shifts in political alliances. Two main coalitions gradually emerged by the end of 2004. They were usually presented as two rival camps: the Lebanese opposition and the loyalist camp. The division did not follow religious lines.

The Lebanese opposition issued its first joint statement calling for Lebanon's "right to self-determination" on 13 December 2004 from the Bristol Hotel, and came to be identified as the Bristol Gathering. The Gathering was led by the mostly Maronite Qornet Shehwan gathering (supported by the Maronite Patriarch), Jumblatt's Progressive Socialist Party (PSP) and its allies (the Democratic Gathering), and the small Democratic Leftist Movement. Two representatives from Hariri's Future Movement and Aoun's Free Patriotic Movement (FPM) participated. The Bristol gathering demanded a fair and just electoral law, and an impartial government to supervise the Parliamentary elections in May 2005.

Throughout the 1990s, this opposition group spearheaded sovereignty demands. On 30 April 2001, Christian leading figures opposing Lahoud's policies and Syrian interference in Lebanese affairs founded the Qornet Shehwan gathering. Its members were independent Maronite MPs, Christian intellectuals and political activists close to the Patriarch, members of the Democratic Renewal Movement, former President Amin Gemayel's Reformist Kataeb Party, representatives of two old Christian political parties

(National Liberal Party and National Bloc), and representatives of Samir Geagea's outlawed Lebanese Forces.

The larger part of the Druze community, led by Jumblatt, joined the opposition when its leader began opposing the Syrians and President Lahoud ahead of the 2000 Parliamentary elections. Despite Jumblatt's wavering political stands, especially in 2001 and 2002, he became one of the pillars of the growing opposition to the extension of Lahoud's term of office in 2004. As a sign of protest against the extension, the three ministers representing Jumblatt's bloc immediately quit the government, among them Marwan Hamadé who in October 2004 escaped an assassination attempt. Since that date, Jumblatt became the spearhead of the opposition.

The Sunni leadership moved towards the preceding groups more timidly and passed to the opposition later. Hariri resigned following Lahoud's extension. Even though the Future Movement attended the first Bristol Gathering through two of its members, it neither joined the gathering nor signed the Bristol Charter. Nevertheless, Hariri started to emerge as the next candidate for membership in the inner-circle of the opposition as the Parliamentary elections neared.

A fourth group, the Democratic Left Movement, played an important role in the unification of the Lebanese opposition, in drafting of the Bristol Charter and bringing together of many of young Lebanese militants.

The loyalist camp mirrored the opposition in the sense that it was a loose coalition of diverse antagonistic forces. The two core political forces around which other MPs and groups gathered were Amal and Hezbollah. These two Shiite groups united to denounce resolution 1559 as an attempt to meddle in internal Lebanese affairs. As early as November, they organized a large demonstration against the UN resolution that they called the "million demonstration". After the Bristol declaration that marked the coming together of the opposition, the loyalist camp met in Ain el Tine⁷ on 7 February.

⁷ The residency of the Speaker of Parliament, Nabih Berri.

The Ain el Tine Gathering was mainly composed of Hezbollah, Amal and other political parties linked to Syrian regime such as the Baath party, the Syrian Social National Party (SSNP), Jama'a Islamiyya and the Lebanese Phalange Party (K. Pakradouni faction).

Political turmoil after Hariri's assassination

Hariri's assassination on 14 February 2005 produced a political earthquake and left a gaping void in the national political leadership. It was immediately attributed to the Syrian regime and hastened the collapse of the post-war political system based on ties the local political class had with the Syrian regime. Its immediate effect was to push the Sunni community into the anti-Syrian camp. In other words, the assassination shifted the internal political balance.

The assassination translated into a peaceful campaign for independence launched on 18 February. The movement against the Syrian presence and the symbols of the pro-Syrian regime in Lebanon culminated with the anti-Syrian demonstration on 14 March, the most important demonstration in modern Lebanon's history. An estimated one million called for "truth, freedom and national unity".

On the institutional level, the assassination of Hariri was followed by a serious governmental crisis. No agreement was reached on the formation of a new cabinet following Omar Karami's resignation on 28 February, under street and Parliamentary pressure. On 10 March, he was designated to head a 'government of national unity', but unable to do so, he stepped down in April. The governmental crisis ended on 19 April, with the nomination of Najib Mikati as Prime Minister, and the formation of a 14-member cabinet of ministers that agreed not to run in the coming elections.

Among the principal changes that took place under the new government and in accordance with the main demands of the opposition were: the complete withdrawal of Syrian troops from Lebanon on 26 April, some thirty years after they entered the country, the dismissal of the most powerful pro-Syrian security chiefs who symbolized the Syrian

grip on Lebanese politics (starting on 25 April), an agreement on an international commission to investigate Hariri's murder, and the decision to hold elections on time. Owing to the length of the electoral period, as polls were spread over four Sundays starting on the 29 May and ending on the 19 June, the term of Parliament had to be extended until 20 June.

Negotiations over electoral alliances dragged on until the final week of campaigning. The earlier division between opposition and loyalists very quickly became obsolete due to the new and constantly changing political climate.

The rapid change that the country underwent in a couple of weeks caused some dramatic changes. The Bristol Gathering was shaken up by the events. It was overwhelmed by the unexpected success of the 14 March demonstration, and divided on several issues. Some of its members were favourable to a technical government while others were ready to be represented in a government of national unity, and the druze leader and president of the PSP, , refused to take part in any Cabinet as long as the President of the Republic, remained in power. General Aoun's return on 7 May, after 14 years of exile, constituted another upsetting factor for the opposition. He became a central element in the resetting of alliances during the electoral campaign.

4.2 Main features of the electoral campaign

The official campaign started a month ahead of the first polls, when the President signed a decree calling the voters to the ballots until the 19 June. It focused on several controversial issues.

Early on, the opposition was divided on sectarian lines over the issue of a just electoral law. Druze and Sunni leaders did not oppose large or medium-sized districts. The Christian opposition preferred small constituencies, while Speaker Berri was only ready to discuss large districts. The debate over the electoral law became even more embittered following the 11 May statement from Maronite Council of Bishops that argued that the electoral law violated the principle of coexistence between Christians and Muslims and

called for the adoption of smaller districts. Most Christian leaders shared this view, from President Lahoud to Aoun. Opposing them, the most prominent Muslim leaders seemed to agree that in lack of a better alternative, and in compliance with the constitutional calendar, elections had to go ahead according to the 2000 law. This option finally prevailed, in compliance with international requests that elections take place with no further delay.

The second important issue during the electoral campaign was that of the ousting of President Lahoud. During a period of two months, several explosions hit Christian neighbourhoods, and a prominent intellectual, Samir Kassir⁸, was killed on 2 June. The assassinations continued after the elections, with the killing of George Hawi, the former secretary general of the Lebanese Communist party.

Another important feature of the 2005 elections are the protracted negotiations and disputes within the opposition which had participated in 14 March demonstration. Although Aoun's FPM had actively participated in the demonstrations throughout February and March 2005, Jumblatt and the Qornet Shehwan gradually marginalized it, preferring to strike alliances with the Lebanese Forces. The two sides failed to agree on the number of seats that should be allocated to each partner in the planned coalition. The failure of those negotiations embittered the whole campaign.

Finally, the campaign was also characterised by the role played by religious leaders who, like the Maronite Patriarch, took a stand on the electoral law, or like the Mufti of Tripoli and Northern Lebanon who actively participated in the campaign calling the worshipers to support the Hariri lists. The confessional discourse hit unprecedented heights, in sharp contrast with the official discourse of all contesters who argued for reconciliation and against confessionalism. Also, most of the candidates dug up old files, held their

⁸ Journalist in the leading opposition paper, An Nahar, Professor at the Université Saint-Joseph and founding member of the Democratic Left Movement. An active member and organiser of the 14 March movement.

opponents responsible and accountable for many misdeeds and threatened them with a thorough legal investigation⁹.

4.3 Overview of the 2005 election results

Parliamentary elections stretched out on four consecutive Sundays. They took place in Beirut on 29 May, in southern Lebanon on 5 June, in Mount Lebanon and the Bekaa on 12 June, in northern Lebanon on 19 June.

A week ahead of the first day of elections, pre-electoral bargaining and manoeuvring confirmed a new configuration at national level. On the one hand, in Beirut, Mount-Lebanon and the North, the Hariri-Jumblatt front decided to enter an alliance with Christian political figures and groups close to Patriarch Sfeir, the Lebanese Forces and Qornet Shehwan. On the other hand, in Beirut, the South and the Bekaa, it decided to strike an alliance with the two main Shiite political groups Amal and Hezbollah.

As a counterpart, the political forces and figures that were left out from these coalitions regrouped around General Aoun. This gave way to a very odd coalition encompassing numerous political figures who had in common close ties with the Syrian regime, and figures who struggled for Lebanon's independence and sovereignty. Besides Beirut, Southern Lebanon and the Chouf, where unrivalled lists were formed, all other regions witnessed an intense electoral competition between lists backed by the Bristol Gathering, and those backed by Aoun.

The extent of the electoral and political competition varied from one region to another. It was quite low during the first two Sundays, but intensified following the polls in Mount Lebanon. Three indicators can be used to measure the level of competition: the number of candidates running for the same seat (after subtracting the number of withdrawals), voters' turnout and the difference in number of votes between the least scoring winning candidate and the highest scoring non elected candidate.

⁹ Aoun made allegations on Jumblatt's involvement in several corruption cases, while Jumblatt said he has several files against Aoun that will be used against him in due time.

Beirut, 29 May

In a city that had been politically ‘conquered’ by Rafik Hariri as early as 1996, and in which the lists he supported won all 19 seats during the 2000 elections, the results were easily predictable well in advance. The widespread expectation of Saad Hariri’s sweeping victory following his father’s assassination convinced many traditional Sunni leaders or political parties (most importantly the Islamist party, Jamaa Islamiyya) not to run. As a result, the number of candidates registered remained low, with only 51 candidates for 19 seats, and nine of the 19 seats were won by default. This lack of competition might in part explain the low turnout of voters that varied between 20% in Beirut III constituency and 31% in Beirut I. Calls for boycott coming from the Armenian Tashnag party, the Sunni Jamaa Islamiyya and Aoun’s FMP also contributed to the low turnout.

Only one complete¹⁰ list called “Loyalty to the martyr Rafik Hariri” ran in each of Beirut’s constituencies. Hariri’s lists included members from the Future Movement, one Hezbollah candidate, a PSP candidate, and two members of the Christian opposition. The three lists won all of Beirut’s seats with a very comfortable margin. Hariri’s personal score was the highest, receiving more than 90 % of votes cast. Overall, the contribution to the Hariri’s lists by his allies materialised, even though some Hezbollah supporters seem to have voted for competing candidates.

South, 5 June

In many ways, the elections in the South were expected to resemble those of Beirut. They shared similar features: low candidacy figures, one complete list (made up in this case of the two dominant Shiite parties Hezbollah and Amal) and six seats assigned by default. For the first time in the post-war area, the South’s 23 seats were divided between two districts: 12 seats for South Lebanon I (Saida-Zaharani-Tyre-Bint Jbeil) and 11 seats for South 2 (Nabatieh, Marjayoun-Hasbaya, Jezzine). Similar to previous past-war elections, Amal and Hezbollah’s “Development, liberation and resistance” lists dominated the electoral process. This winning ticket included candidates from other parties, and

¹⁰ A list including candidates for all the confessional seats available in a given constituency.

confirmed its alliance with the Hariri-Jumblatt axis at both national and the regional level.

Official results show the overwhelming victory of the “Development, liberation and resistance” lists, which took all 23 seats in the South’s two electoral districts. Nabih Berri, headed the list in South I while Mohamed Raad, leader of Hezbollah’s Parliamentary block, headed the list in South II. The strong mobilization of Amal-Hezbollah supporters and voting for entire lists explains the unambiguous victory of the winning ticket, while the inability to form a united front in opposition to these so-called “bulldozer” lists explains the small number of independent candidates and their low results.

Voter turnout was relatively high, with an average of 45.5 % for both electoral districts; however there were striking disparities between different regions and communities. The lowest participation rate was observed in the predominantly Christian *qada* of Jezzine, where only 22 % of the electorate voted. The highest voter participation rate was in 55% in Nabatieh.

These elections showed an important mobilization of the Shiite electorate, expressing its rejection of UNSCR 1559 and their support to those that symbolize the defence of the Shiite identity. Figures show that very few voters crossed out names from the winning list, preferring to vote for complete slates, aimed at protecting the Shiite community. Compared to the 2000 elections, Hezbollah won an additional seat in the South.

Bekaa, 12 June

Similarly to the South, the Bekaa was long considered to be of vital importance for Syria’s defence strategy. The region was divided into three electoral districts coinciding with three very distinct sub-regions. The northern part of the valley, Baalbeck-Hermel formed a predominantly Shiite electoral district with a small minority of Christians and Sunnis (most notably in the city of Baalbeck). The central part of the valley with its mixed Christian and Sunni population and dominated by the mostly Greek-Catholic and

Maronite town of Zahle, constituted the second district. The third district corresponded to the mixed southern part of the valley comprising the *qadas* of Rashaya and Western Bekaa which had been partially occupied by the Israeli army until May 2000.

In Baalbeck-Hermel, one of the country's poorest regions placed under the influence of Hezbollah, the list headed by former Speaker Hussein Husseini included representatives from Hezbollah and Amal, a candidate close to the SSNP, and another from the Kataeb party, Pakradouni faction. With the exception of Assem Qanso, the leader of the Baath party, this list was identical in the way it allocated seats among allied parties to that "imposed" by Syria for the 2000 elections¹¹.

Less of an identity vote in defence of the Shiite community than the preceding polls in South Lebanon, it amounted to the victory of the entire Husseini list; each of its ten members receiving between 64% and 67% of votes cast. The list owed its success to Hezbollah's popularity coming from the public services this party offers in this poor region. The main opposing list, headed by Yehia Shamas, a former MP considered to be an opponent of the Syrian regime, included important local figures, among them a former Minister and the vice-president of the PSP. Its members obtained between 25000 and 34000 votes, an honourable score, especially if one takes into account that a third list was running in these elections, headed by Ali Sabri Hamadé, representative of a once very powerful family and son of a former Speaker.

In the Bekaa's two other electoral districts, the change was much more dramatic. More than half of the MPs elected in 2000 lost and were replaced by new ones. In Zahle the competition was very high, an unprecedented fact in this region, and 51 candidates were running for 7 seats. During the campaign, two main lists emerged after intense negotiations between the district's most prominent political players: on one side, the Popular Bloc, headed by Elie Skaff, the town's leading politician, heir of a prominent Zahle family and backed by General Aoun and the Armenian Tashnag party; on the other

¹¹ In 2005, Assem Qanso was first included in the list, but as he lacked popularity amongst the Hermel population that felt underrepresented, he was replaced during the last week of campaign by a candidate from Hermel close to the Hezbollah.

side, N. Fattoush headed an equally strong list, backed by the Hariri family. The members of the two lists were announced belatedly due to Hariri efforts to reconcile Fattoush and Skaff in a common list¹².

Money was a big issue during the campaigning; Zahle is considered as one of the most corrupt districts in Lebanon. The turnout in Zahle was 15 points higher this year than it was during the last polls. Skaff's Popular Bloc won six of the seven seats, F. Turk, considered as the most recommendable candidate of the list, lost to Fattoush by less than 3000 votes.

In the Western Bekaa-Rashaya district, only one outgoing MP was re-elected¹³, while the five other MPs who were part of former deputy-Speaker, E. Ferzli's list lost. The National Decision List that won all of the districts seats was the only complete list in Western Bekaa-Rashaya. It included candidates close to the Hariri family or to Jumblatt. The former allies in the Syrian-sponsored list of 2000 were incapable of reuniting, and decided to run in two separate incomplete lists. Many other candidates, who hoped to join the Hariri list, withdrew in its favour. In this politically fragmented district, the nationwide hegemony of the Hariri family over the Sunni community succeeded in counterbalancing the political weight of opposing candidates with stronger local credentials than those running in the list they sponsored.

Mount Lebanon, 12 June

The elections in Mount Lebanon amounted to a turning point in political and electoral alliance making. In 2000 the region saw the political scene split between a pro-regime side and the opposition (stretching from N. Lahoud in the Metn to Jumblatt in the Chouf). In 2005, with the exception of the Chouf where Jumblatt exercises total hegemony, Mount Lebanon witnessed strong battles between its principal Christian political figures. The main stake of the poll in Mount Lebanon was in fact the choice of the Christian leadership.

¹² In 2000, they ran in the same list.

¹³ Robert Ghanem, the region's Maronite MP who is also considered as a likely candidate to coming Presidential elections.

The alliances became clear only during the last week ahead the election. They had been shifting until the very last moment due to the full participation in the negotiations of the anti-Syrian Christian opposition (mainly, Qornet Shehwan Gathering, the Lebanese Forces, the FPM and Carlos Edde's National Bloc). The failure of talks between Jumblatt and Aoun in the mixed district of Baabda-Aley was considered as a breaking point in the negotiations between Aoun and the Bristol Gathering alliances in the other districts.

Ultimately, the elections in Mount Lebanon were heavily contested, with the Bristol Gathering alliance facing coalitions grouped around Aoun's FPM. Initially, 170 candidates had registered to contest the regions 34 seats. A week later, 25 had officially withdrawn their candidacy. Furthermore, unlike the preceding polls in Southern Lebanon and Beirut, only two MPs were elected by default: Jumblatt and M. Hamadé, for the Chouf's two Druze seats, which explains the relatively low turnout in this particular electoral district.

The turnout in Mount Lebanon was higher than in the country's other regions. It was also significantly higher than during the 2000 elections (54,46% as opposed to 50,42 %). It reached an all time record in KISRwan-Jbeil (62,55%) where Aoun was running as a candidate.

The most noticeable fact in these polls was the unexpected extent of Aoun's electoral victory in the KISRwan-Jbeil and Metn. His victory came to the detriment of the Qornet Shehwan Gathering who lost several of its leading MPs such as Nassib Lahoud and Fares Souheid. It also pushed aside members of prominent Christian families that traditionally dominated the political scene in those regions. Although Aoun promotes a secular and trans-communitarian program, he became, de facto, the most important leader in these Christian areas, heading the country's largest Christian bloc.

One reason for the defeat of the Hariri-Jumblatt lists might be that voters in Mount Lebanon expressed their rejection of the manner in which they chose the Christian

candidates in their lists: sacrificing some and co-opting others. As the political scene after the 14 March returned to traditional confessional arrangements, the need for a leader that would unite the divided Christian community and defend its interests grew. Personal attacks against General Aoun launched by the anti-Syrian opposition proved to be counterproductive. At the same time, Aoun did not lose credibility and trust in eyes of his supporters when he allied himself with politicians close to the Syrian regime.

In the Metn district, the contest set against one another the opposition list encompassing members of the Qornet Shehwan Gathering such as Nassib Lahoud¹⁴, Pierre Gemayel¹⁵ and Gabriel el-Murr¹⁶, and the Reform and Change list backed by Aoun. Ghassan Mukhaiber who had been elected in 2002 with less than 2000 votes gathered the greatest number of votes in 2005 after having joined Aoun's list. The Reform and Change list included mostly young candidates, unknown to the public. It originally comprised only 5 candidates. But two days before the actual polls, it was joined by the Murr-Tashnag¹⁷ duo that had failed in forming a larger list. This last minute alliance between Aoun and Murr probably helped the former to secure his victory and the latter to survive politically, as he obtained the lowest score on the list. Only one member of the opposite list, Maronite MP Pierre Gemayel, won a seat only due to the fact that Aoun did not field any candidate for that seat. Aoun's list in the Metn won with an average of 65 % of votes.

In the Kisrwan-Jbeil district, where the two *qadas* were first merged into one electoral district in 2000, the list led by Aoun won all of the 8 seats (7 Maronite and one Shiite). In Kisrwan, few traditional families had dominated the political scene during the post-war years. Although the population is known for its hostility to the Syrian tutelage, many MPs

¹⁴ President of the Democratic Renewal party, he was first elected to Parliament in 1992. N. Lahoud was known throughout the 1990 for his commitment to democracy and public reform.

¹⁵ Son of former President A. Gemayel. He is part of the reform faction of the Kataeb party, whose popular base is concentrated in the Metn district. He became an MP in 2000.

¹⁶ Brother and rival of Michel Murr, he ran in the 2002 bye elections in the Metn as the opposition's candidate. Although he got the greatest number of votes, his election was annulled by the Constitutional Court, soon after the Television he owned was shut down by the courts. He is popular among the young aounists.

¹⁷ This alliance dominated the Metn political scene throughout the 1990, winning up to 7 out of the Metn's 8 seats. Michel Murr who headed it was the irremovable minister of the Interior. His son who succeeded him to this post is married to President Lahoud's daughter. In the 2000 elections, the President's son ran in the same slate as Michel Murr. He did not run in 2005.

from Kisrwan served as ministers in different past governments. Jbeil, on the other hand was the birthplace and the stronghold of the National Bloc. Aoun has counted many followers in that district since the late 1990s. Voters there massively supported the boycott in 1992.

In 2005, as in 2000, a large number of candidates ran in the two districts. The lists were announced only 3 or 4 days prior to e-day. A complete list headed by Aoun, entitled “Change and Reform” list was the first to be announced, soon followed by the “Unity of the Opposition” list, backed by a larger coalition led by Jumblatt and Hariri. It included Qornet Shehwan leaders (Fares Said, Camille Ziade), the head of the National Bloc (Carlos Edde), and members of the Amine Gemayel’s Reformist faction of the Kataeb Party, the Lebanese Forces, and figures close to the Patriarch.

The decisive electoral battle in Baabda-Aley was won by a very small margin by the “Unity of the Mountain” list backed by Jumblatt. Its eleven members included PSP, Lebanese Forces, reformist Kataeb and Future Movement candidates and received 50 % of the votes cast. The making-up of the list was meant to underline the cross-sectarian reconciliation between past enemies during the civil war. The list owes its victory to the voting instructions given by Hezbollah, asking its supporters to respect the party’s national alliances and to vote accordingly for an entire list. This victory allowed Jumblatt to emerge as the sole leader of the Druze community by sweeping all contested seats.

North, 19 June

In Northern Lebanon, the electoral campaign witnessed mounting political tension linked to the importance given to the outcome of the country’s last round of elections. Having already gathered about 45 seats, the Hariri-Jumblatt-Qornet Shehwan-Lebanese Forces alliance was seeking to grab at least 20 out of Northern Lebanon’s 28 seats in order to obtain the absolute majority in the coming Parliament. They formed one complete list in each of the region’s electoral districts: in North I, 11 candidates ran under the banner of “Reconciliation and reform”, while in North II, 17 candidates formed the “National

Unity- 14 March” list. The two lists achieved a complete victory, introducing 19 new MPs to the Lebanese Parliament.

They faced two other complete lists backed by General Aoun. In North I, the “People’s will” list encompassing many MPs and former MPs was defeated by new candidates belonging to the Lebanese Forces (in the almost exclusively Maronite district of Bsharri) and to the Future Movement (in the mostly Sunni populated sub-districts of Akkar and Denniye). The number of registered voters in Akkar’s is twice as big as the other two electoral sub-districts combined, and was crucial in determining the winning list.

In North II, Aoun backed a list that included three of his loyal supporters (his son-in-law, a prominent retired judge and a former colonel who was jailed in Syria) and a varied coalition of important local political figures (Sleiman Franjeh¹⁸ in Zghorta, Abdel Majid al Rifai¹⁹, and Ahmad Karami²⁰). In this constituency, the predominantly Sunni *qada* of Tripoli represented by 8 MPs was crucial in determining the victorious list, due to its electoral weight (44.7% of the district’s registered voters).

Unlike the previous rounds, no candidate was elected by default in Northern Lebanon. But similarly to the elections in Beirut, many former MPs, prominent political figures or representatives of major “political” families, chose not to run in these elections, or withdrew their candidacy. Similarly to other districts that witnessed a fierce electoral battle between two main competing lists (Mount-Lebanon and the Bekaa), the turnout in the North’s eight electoral sub-districts was high by Lebanese standards (51.61% in North I, 44.89% in North II), and significantly higher than in previous polls (inferior to 41% in both districts in the 2000 Parliamentary elections). Bsharri, the Lebanese Forces’

¹⁸ Zghorta’s MP since 1991, and several times minister, head of the former Marada militia, son of a former Minister and militia leader assassinated by the Lebanese Forces, grandson of a former Lebanese President and close to Syria’s Assad family (Hafez, Bassel and Bachar al-Assad).

¹⁹ Former MP (Elected in Tripoli in 1972), who lived in exile for 25 years because of his membership to the Iraqi Baath party (rival to the Syrian Baath party).

²⁰ Cousin and rival of Omar Karami, backed by Rafik Hariri in the previous Parliamentary elections.

stronghold where Sitrida Geagea²¹ ran, witnessed an extraordinary mobilization for the first time during the post-war years.

The substantial and disciplined voting observed in the North favouring the Hariri sponsored lists can be explained by the strong and active mobilization during the final week of campaign, in response to Aoun's victory in Mount Lebanon the previous Sunday. The "National Unity" and the "Reconciliation and Reform" lists asked the voters to choose between change (that they represented) and the safeguarding of the status quo represented by the rival list. The Parliamentary elections in the North confirmed the importance of the "sectarian vote" observed in the other districts, although the prominent candidates (Hariri, Jumblatt, Aoun) upheld non-confessional and anti-sectarian electoral "programs".

The portrait of the new Parliament

The new Parliament reflects the shift in the balance of power that followed Rafik Hariri's assassination.

Despite the high percentage of new MPs (47.66%), the main Parliamentary blocs are almost identical to those of the previous Parliament elected in 2000. Hariri and Jumblatt reinforced their blocs and their leadership of the Sunni and Druze community, respectively. Amal and Hezbollah maintained their dominance over the Shiite community.

The major novelty in these elections is the entrance of blocs representing the former Christian opposition, mainly the Lebanese Forces and the FPM. Different members of Qornet Shehwan kept their seats, and some entered Parliament for the first time (S. Franjeh). The strengthening of the sectarian leadership came at the expense of families that have traditionally been represented in Parliament (Karami, Salam, Solh, Arslan, Lahoud, Edde, Chamoun). Also, several political parties were either excluded from

²¹ Samir Geagea's wife who, similarly to him, is a native of Bsharri and belongs to a prominent political family. Her campaign focused around her husband's release.

Parliament or considerably weakened (SSNP, Baath, Communist Party, Democratic Renewal, Kataeb).

A new majority has emerged, comprising two large Parliamentary blocs led by Hariri (36 MPs) and Jumblatt (15 MPs), allied to Qornet Shehwan (6 MPs), the Lebanese Forces (6 MPs) and other small parties and coalitions. The FPM along with its allies (21 MPs) had at first declared itself to be the new Parliamentary opposition. The two main Shiite political forces, Amal and Hezbollah, who had struck an electoral alliance with the Hariri-Jumblatt coalition during the electoral process, have 15 and 14 MPs, respectively.

In these elections, older blocs were boosted (Hariri added ten MPs to his bloc, Hezbollah, two), while others shrunk or disappeared (Michel Murr's bloc, the Baath, the SSNP or Sleiman Franjeh's bloc), confirming the leverage Syria had in the past in supporting or limiting some political forces in Lebanon.

Several features will distinguish the new Chamber of Deputies from the previous ones. It holds 61 new MPs that account to either the first time entry of political groups and forces to Parliament, or the regeneration of the political elite in parties that have already enjoyed Parliamentary representation. Aoun's FPM made its entry with 12 MPs, the Lebanese Forces with 6 MPs and the Democratic Left with one MP. Another notable difference in the 2005 Parliament is the presence of six women MPs, a record in Lebanon.

The new majority in Parliament has already proceeded to the election of F. Makari to the post of deputy-Speaker. It has equally proposed F. Siniora, Hariri's former Minister of Finance, as the next Prime Minister. The promise of change that was heralded during the electoral campaign has shown its limits with the re-election of N. Berri as Speaker for the fourth time in a row. He has held to this position since 1992.

5. Legal and Institutional Framework

5.1 Legal Framework and Electoral System

The overall structure of the electoral system is regulated by the National Pact of 1943 and the Taif Accord of 1989, characterised by their consociational structure and the allotment of confessional seats in Parliament. The legal framework of the election consists of the Constitution of Lebanon, the 2000 Parliamentary Election Law (PEL) and other relevant laws and regulations. In the present majoritarian system, the Parliament has 128 seats, equally divided between Muslim and Christian MPs. They are elected in 14 constituencies with 6 to 17 seats to distribute in each of them, depending on the number of registered voters. Within the constituencies, seats are allocated to the sub-districts (*qadas*) shared proportionally between confessions according to the number of registered voters per confession. There are 11 different confession-related types of seat, with links to 25 sub-districts (*qadas*).

One important provision of the Ta'if Agreement, states that the Parliament should be divided into two houses, a Chamber and a Senate. This is reiterated by Art. 22 of the Lebanese Constitution. The Senate is supposed to mirror the confessional diversity while “appropriate measures to realise the abolition of political confessionalism according to a transitional plan²²” should be taken. Therefore, it suggests a Chamber not composed on the base of confession. So far, no steps have been taken to implement these provisions.

The legal framework is also characterised by the absence of sufficient regulation in a vast number of fields related to the electoral process, and by a number of important shortcomings existing in the PEL. Almost all political stakeholders have spelled out their discontent with the PEL, while some other even called for a boycott of the elections in order to promote amendments. The debate on possible amendments continued well into the election period but no political consensus for changes was reached.

²² This point is reiterated even in the preamble of the Lebanese Constitution, point h.

The legal framework contains shortcomings that fail to meet Constitutional provisions as well as the standards set out in the UN International Covenant for Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR), to which Lebanon is a party. While the question of confessional distribution of seats raises wider issues, it is clear that the current system and the current delimitation of constituencies do not respect the principle of equality of votes as set out by Art. 25 ICCPR. Also, amongst other, no provisions address the right to vote of homebound voters, and of those resident abroad, no regulation exists on campaign expenses made by candidates, no effective system is in place to deal with election related complaints, and no comprehensive law regulates media behaviour during the electoral campaign. The only law regulating political parties and associations dates back to an Ottoman Empire law from 1909.

5.1.2 Suffrage Rights

While Art. 25 ICCPR states that citizens should enjoy universal and equal suffrage, the PEL contains significant limitations to the right of vote. Art. 28 PEL deprives “army officers and all those who have a similar status, of any grade whether in the armed forces, state security, internal security forces, public security or custom police” from voting. Art. 9 PEL²³ states that enjoying full civil and political rights, together with an age above 21 grant the right to vote. Art. 10 PEL gives a very broad selection of cases that result in the loss of the right to vote.

Apart from those disenfranchised by the law, many others are effectively disenfranchised by the lack of provisions for voting outside polling stations. Categories concerned are homebound by illness or age, hospitalised, detained citizens, public servants on duty on election day in communications, transport, health, fire brigades and election officials on all levels.

²³ Art. 9 PEL : Every Lebanese person, having completed 21 years of age is entitled to be a voter if he enjoys his civil and political rights and is not incapacitated for one of the reasons stated in the law.

Other features of the current electoral system impact on the equality of vote. The different size of the electoral constituencies and the number of seats assigned to each of them result in a very different number of votes needed to win a seat, from approximately 12,000 for an Alawite seat to 47,000 votes for a Christian minority seat. This results in unequal suffrage rights for voters both geographically and according to different confessions.

Majority age and the enjoyment of most civil and political rights in Lebanon come at the age of 18, but Art.21 of the Constitution sets the voting age only at 21, differently from most of countries.

In order to be able to vote, a voter does not only need to be registered on the voter register, but also needs to present a Voter Card (VC) issued by the MoI. This additional requirement also limited the chance of eligible voters to vote, because of the lack of efficient and transparent mechanism for the procedure for production and distribution of VC. As a result, more eligible voters were disenfranchised by the electoral system.

5.1.3 Campaign finance

In the PEL there are no provisions dealing with the amount of money that can be spent by candidates for election purposes. The issue of campaign finance was a central one during the election, with allegations of large amounts of money being spent, linked with numerous allegations of vote buying practices.

The absence of legal requirements on campaign finance disclosure opened the door to all sorts of allegations. The EOM directly observed some instances of vote buying, where fuel coupons or cash were given to voters in exchange of their vote, and was aware of other similar practices involving provision of free medical services, payment of university tuition costs and other.

In an environment where there are frequent allegations of corruption there is a special need for legal provisions to obtain financial transparency. The absence of adequate campaign finance regulations did contribute to the creation of an uneven playing field during the election campaign. It has reduced the number of possible choices available for the electorate by preventing a number of candidates, who did not have the necessary financial resources, to run or by pushing them to withdraw.

More and more countries introduce requirements for mandatory disclosure of candidates' and elected members' financial status. The disclosure includes regular income and assets inside and outside the country as well as corresponding information concerning members of the near family. Ideally, to give a proper picture of the person's financial strength, it includes also income related to companies and foundations in which the person has a strong influence, which can be expected to contribute to the funding of the person's campaigning.

In order to create a level playing field for the contesters and prevent vote buying and other kinds of malpractice, the financial disclosure generally is combined with a campaign spending limit, calculated as a specified amount per eligible voter. For effectiveness it usually covers not only costs for regular campaign activities but also contributions or donations made. Petrol coupons, contributions to the cost for medication and health services and food rations also create a dependency between the donor and the receiver and are normally included in the notion of campaign spending and monitoring.

A body with auditing capacity and access to sanctions is needed to make the system work, possibly in conjunction with the monitoring of media's performance during the electoral campaign.

5.1.4 Law on Associations

There is no specific law dealing with the constitution and functioning of political parties. The Ottoman Law on associations, from 1909, states that citizens that are at least 20 years old, not convicted for felony or deprived their civil rights can establish an association by just notifying the Ministry of Interior (MoI) of the decision to constitute it. The list of members must be submitted to the MoI annually. In practice this does not happen, as MoI has refused in past years to acknowledge the notifications anticipated in the law and thus incriminate the organisers. Recently, an association has resorted to a strategy to sending such a big amount of messages concerning their activities to the MoI that it would be impossible for the Ministry to deny knowledge of the organisation. Others have chosen to establish private non profit companies in order to make their activities legal.

5.1.5 Candidates and electoral tickets

According to the PEL, in order to register as a candidate, an eligible voter has to pay a deposit of approx. 6600US\$. If the candidate withdraws at least 10 days before the election, the deposit is refunded.

The law assumes that candidates run individually and not as part of a political party or organisation. Candidates offer other personalities from other confessions to join an alliance on a specific ticket in each constituency in order to gain all the seats for all the confessions contesting the elections in a certain constituency. The main advantage of this system is that cross-religious voting requires candidates to appeal to all groups and therefore discourages extremism. In theory, voters can pick different candidates running on different electoral tickets, but in practice the different alliances distribute pre-printed pieces of paper with the names of candidates included in the ticket, and voters in the vast majority of cases vote for the entire list without making any changes of the names. In general, most candidates on the same ticket received a very similar number of votes, meaning that the same list took most of the seats.

The distribution of votes between different tickets would have been different if individuals had had to compete, leading to a greater diversity of political representation than achieved. Furthermore, this practice in some cases generates more votes for an elected member of Parliament than the number of registered voters that was the basis for the seat allocation to the confession in question²⁴.

One of the main features of the first part of the election, mainly in Beirut, was the assignment of seats by default before even voting took place. Nine of the 19 available seats in Beirut were assigned this way. In the elections in South Lebanon, six seats were won uncontested, two in Mount Lebanon elections, while no seats were won uncontested for the North Lebanon election. Because of the system assigns seats on a confessional base, some seats have been won without a real electoral contest. This happened where it was clear that a specific ticket would win comfortably, provoking the withdrawal of all other competitors. Only one candidate was then available for one specific confessional seat, therefore winning it by default regardless to the number of votes received on election day. The seats were officially assigned by the Ministry of Interior to the candidates already before election day, which meant that the voting process was considered irrelevant. There is no basis in the election law for this practice. While the lack of competition on some seats is a regrettable effect of the election system and the practice of power-brokering, the problem is exacerbated by the official understanding that the seat is assigned without the voters having a chance to express their preference. With this system it would be possible to have elections decided entirely before election day. At a minimum a seat should only be assigned until voting has taken place.

5.2 Election Administration

The overall electoral process is organised and supervised by the Ministry of Interior (MoI). Under the auspices of the MoI 'General-Directorate for Political and Electoral

²⁴ The Greek Catholic seat in the Mount Lebanon 2 constituency, assigned to 15613 registered voters, was won with 55017 votes.

Affairs' elections are each time managed by ad hoc inter-ministerial and -departmental task groups. The operational preparation of elections on provincial and administrative district levels is implemented with the assistance of the respective governors, sub-governors, *mukthars* and other communal representatives of the MoI.

The absence of an independent body for the administration for the election results in overlapping powers and a lack of uniformity in the implementation of the legislation. The actual electoral administration lacks a formal process of decision making as well as any consistent and transparent procedures for the publication of decisions. This lacuna was particularly noticeable within the MoI and its several departments dealing with the election. Overall it was never clear to the election stakeholders who would make which decision and take respective responsibility.

5.2.1 Ministry of Interior

Within the MoI the main departments responsible for the overall electoral process are the General-Directorate for Political and Electoral Affairs' (DGPEA), the General-Directorate for Personal Statistics (DGPS) and the General-Directorate for Internal Security (GDIS). The DGPEA is responsible for the overall management of the process and the full compliance with the given legal framework. Subsequently it decides over the ways and means on how to apply the election laws and assure elections are held under the given legal principles and conditions. It drafted and distributed an 'Election Guide', presenting instructions to Polling Station Presidents and other polling board members. In general it would also be responsible for conducting training seminars for polling officials, but for the 2005 elections it decided not to provide any training, officially because such training exercise was already made prior to the municipal elections in 2004 and it would only appoint polling officials with previous training and polling management experience.

5.2.2 Local Election Administration

The MoI pre-selected public servants by mid of May 2005 for being deployed as polling officials (Polling station President and Secretary) on the respective election days. In most

cases it followed the suggestions given by the Ministry of Education, in other cases it deployed own MoI staff members or state employees from other public institutions. Applying the policy to deploy polling officials exclusively in governorates where they were not registered resulted in a regional shifting of thousands of polling officials. Despite any legal basis at that state the DGPEA decided to continue with its policy not to deploy any female polling official. The explanation given to the EOM simply referred to the alleged physical incapability to carry the PS equipment.

After receiving the MoI regional deployment plan it is up to the governor of each province to allocate specifically the PS president and secretaries. Polling and counting are directly managed by these two election officials – whereas additional four assistants have a marginal role (i.e. one of them signing together with the president and the secretary ballot envelopes to be used for casting a ballot).

5.2.3 Voting procedures

Voters elect individual or grouped contestants from various informal candidates' lists in conformity to the legally pre-defined allotment of confessional seats per constituency. On the basis of a 'confessionally limited open list system' voters are free to choose complete lists or to cross out any name from the chosen list and replace it with names alternative candidates – as long as they represent the confessional quote. The number of seats per constituency and sectarian quotas are pre-defined by the election law, and has varied strongly since the first post-war elections in 1992.

The PEL does not foresee the use of unified and printed ballots but allows its electors the use of any written expression of choice, as long as it fits into prepared envelopes given out in the PS. In most of cases, candidates provide preprinted ballots with candidates covering all the confessional seats. These are of several different sizes, colors and fonts, endangering the secrecy of the ballot and making any form of reconciliation impossible during the counting. Eligible citizens vote for all seats within their constituency and not

just for deputies of their own confession. In each constituency the electorate has a choice of candidates categorized by confessions.

At places hosting more than one polling stations, polling centres are subdivided first by sex, then by confession and finally (if the total number of allocated voters remains still too high per polling station) by numerical groups according to voter card numbers.

After recommendation from the MoI and Ministry of Justice, president and secretary for each PS were appointed by the Governor not later than 5 days prior to election day. At the opening of the polling the president was supposed to elect two citizens as his assistants and the other citizens present should elect another two assistants. However in most cases the assistants were at the same time accredited representatives of the candidates.

Voting hours are defined by law and are from 7am until 6pm. Any elector at the polling site at 6pm is still entitled to vote. Once voting is concluded, counting starts. Due to the immense variety of ballots, overhead projectors are used to discuss collectively the votes. Voting and counting protocols are to be signed by the official members of the polling board. In case no objections are made, including those made by the candidate agents present at the counting, all ballots are burned and all remaining election material are to be transported to the next Registration Committee. These consist of one judge, a municipal administrator or councillor and a civil servant from the MoI Department for Civil Registration. Once verification and preliminary tabulation is finalised all protocols are submitted to the 'Higher Registration Committees', one in each province. All Committee members are appointed by the Governor of the province. All protocols are finally delivered to the MoI who announces the preliminary and final results by publication in the official gazette.

5.2.4 Civic and Voter registration

Lebanon has no centralised civil registration system. Most of the records concerning changes in the civil status (birth and marriage) are first issued by religious authorities, countersigned by the *mukhtar* and then entered in the records of one of the 43 MoI registration offices spread around the country²⁵. According to the PEL, a voter list is drafted every year by 30 March, based on data from the civil register. After the VL is issued, it constitutes the base for further updating. In the process corrections are made in order to delete those categories that are disenfranchised because of special reasons (PEL Art.10) and those who in general are not allowed to vote (PEL Art. 28). Although the lists are said to be “frozen” for one year from 30 March, the MoI can refer matters concerning noticed mistakes or omissions to the relevant Registration committee for updates or corrections (PEL Art. 25).

In the civil register, citizens are generally registered at the place of the family’s origin, which rarely correspond to the place of their actual residence. The place of registration determines *inter alia* the place of vote. The procedure²⁶ in place for citizens to change place of residence, hence their place of vote, is not transparent and assigns to the Council of Ministers too much discretionary power on the issue, effectively maintaining the *status quo* in terms of the geographical distribution of the electorate.

The confessional system permeates the civic registration system. Based on Law 60, issued by the French High Commissioner in 1936 and later amended in 1939 no civil marriage is allowed in Lebanon. Most of the confessional communities have also their internal court system, thus creating several structures parallel to the state.

Lebanon’s system of civil registration is outdated. It suffers from chronic structural, procedural and material deficiencies. No centralised database exists and almost no

²⁵ Three more are planned to open, bringing the number to 46. Data from the MoI DG for personal statistics.

²⁶ As set by Art. 40 of the law on personal status from 1951.

computer support is available. As for the Voter Register, it suffers from the same shortcomings, being a direct extract of the civil register. At the moment, the actual VR is actually based on an electronic copy, produced in 1996 by a private firm contracted by the Lebanese government. The list is updated every year, based on changes made to the CR during the year.

Voters also do not have unique identification numbers, which makes any control for multiple entries in the VR virtually impossible.

5.2.5 Voter card system

Apart for the registration requirements, voters face another hurdle to be allowed to vote: obtaining a Voter Card (VC). An application has to be filed to the local police station. Voter cards are produced by a technical division, known as the Workshop, within the General Directorate for Political and Electoral Affairs of the MoI, sent back to the police station where the application was filed, and delivered to voters.

Because the application has to be made at the place of official residence of the voter, and this does not in most cases correspond to the actual place of residence of the voter, the application and withdrawal of VCs is usually done through a proxy, either a candidate activist or a *mukhtar*. VCs are then often delivered on election day, after voters are transported to the voting place, usually at the expenses of a candidate. Allowing this practice, the law plays in the hands of candidates wishing to influence voters' choice

There is no legal deadline for the submission of a request for a VC; rather Art. 49 PEL outlines a deadline of seven days before election day for the delivery of such cards to voters. Additionally, according to a memo from the MoI, the Workshop must, after receiving an application, scrutinize and produce a card within 48 hours or reject the claim due to insufficient eligibility specified in Art. 10 and 48 PEL. However, there is neither a regulation nor formal decision specifying the maximum time a received application must be forwarded from the local police station to the Workshop.

Because of the absence of defined deadlines, large quantities of VCs are requested shortly before the deadline for delivery, the result being a complete paralysis of the system due to the limited capacity of the Workshop. MoI officials also referred to a decree issued by the Director-General for Internal Security instructing police stations in Southern Lebanon, Mount Lebanon and Bekaa Valley to receive applications only up until ten days prior to the respective election day, thus setting a deadline not foreseen by the law, and limiting voters' rights. According to the MoI, a press release was sent to the media to inform the electors. However, according to some MoI officials, the press release was not distributed to the media.

The VC system shows evident shortcomings. It allows a whole mechanism of pressure on voters, both from candidates and *mukhtars*, who in some cases observed by the EOM discouraged voters to apply for one, it is not based on an efficient and transparent administrative mechanism granting a VC to all eligible applicants, and it poses a further limitation to voters' right to vote.

5.2.6 Candidate registration

In order to register as a candidate, Article 6 PEL requires a person to hold Lebanese citizenship, to be included in the voter list, to be at least 25 years old enjoying civil and political rights and qualifying for an unspecified education requirement. Naturalised citizens are only eligible ten years after the date of naturalisation. Citizens holding various prominent official positions mentioned in Art. 30 cannot be elected unless they have resigned from their positions 6 months prior to taking office.

In his application for candidacy, certified by a notary public, the candidate must state the constituency and *qada* s/he want to run in, which can be another than the one s/he is registered in. s/he also has to deposit ten million Lebanese pounds (approx US\$ 6650) at the latest 15 days prior to the Election Day in his/her constituency. The full deposit is refunded to candidates that manage to get at least 10% of the votes in the constituency ,

while those who withdraw at the latest 10 days prior to respective Election Day only receive half. Confirmation or refusal of the application for candidacy is given within five days from the submission. A refused candidate can appeal to the State Council for revision.

During the election, 448 candidates were registered, and 121 (27%) out of them formally withdrew within the given ten day timeframe. In addition more than 40 official candidates announced their withdrawal only after the deadline election days and were subsequently still on the official candidates' lists posted in the polling stations.

In the aftermath of the elections EU EOM interviewed 14 (out of 121) candidates who withdrew their candidacy within the legal deadlines. The major reason given to explain their decision was in 36% cases the unequal financial opportunities to run a competitive campaign battle, followed by 29% referring to the unrealistic chances to be elected and equally and 21% by the perception of unequal media coverage.

5.2.7 Candidate and non-partisan observers

Each candidate is entitled to one representative per PS plus an additional one for every two PSs in villages and one for every five polling stations in cities. Representatives have to obtain a permission certified by the Governor. A list containing the accredited representatives is included in the list of essential material that shall be present in every polling station. Representatives have the right to control the electoral operations and can only be expelled from a PS if s/he causes disorder or is witnessed to commit a crime that justifies an arrest.

The authority to scrutinize applications and to grant the accreditation of candidates' representatives is given to the governors and the sub-governors. In the Bekaa Valley the EOM observed a different procedure, where the MoI issued a late decree one day before election requesting from the governor personally to issue accreditation certificates for

candidate representatives. That decision was later defended by the General Director for Electoral Affairs with identified irregularities regarding accreditations issued earlier by some sub-governors.

According to the EOM findings, the great presence of accredited representatives contributed to the overcrowding of most polling sites. Since no regulations for polling centres are foreseen in the PEL, the immediate access area to PS became gathering points for aggressive campaigning from candidate representatives.

Local and International observers

The PEL holds no provisions for any domestic or international observers. However, both domestic and international observers were given access to the polling procedures through a set of Memoranda of Understanding between the Ministry of Interior and respective organisations. During the 2005 elections, the Lebanese Association for Democratic Elections (LADE²⁷) was for the first time granted accreditation by the MoI. Despite this formal success, the MoI was initially reluctant to grant more accreditations than given to international observers, namely 150. Only after persistent pressure the ministry reconsidered its policy and provided prior to the third election round 417 accreditation cards to LADE.

Apart from the EUEOM, other international delegations visited Lebanon to observe the elections: a delegation of the 'Francophonie' originally headed by its Director and former UN SG Boutros Ghali, a US Congress delegation, an observation team from the Canadian Government and one Australian MP.

²⁷ In April 2005 LADE and more than thirty other NGOs and institutions formed 'CLOE', the Lebanese Coalition for Election Observation.

5.2.8 Election related complaints

The Electoral Law has no adequate structure for legal redress. Various institutions have ill-defined and sometimes overlapping competencies for the adjudication of complaints, and procedures are not defined in detail by legislation. The resulting system is non-transparent, barely accessible to voters and seldom results in effective legal remedies. Additionally, in only 2% of all polling stations observed by the EOM, written complaints were made on the official PS report form. This general absence of formal complaints can either be explained by the alleged satisfaction of the electors who had participated in the elections or by a very low level of civic and voter education, assuring the popular understanding of electoral procedures and voters' rights.

The following institutions can be involved at different stages of the electoral process: the Constitutional Council, The State Council, the Registration Committees and the Higher Registration Committees, The Ministry of Interior and the Police.

The Constitutional Council (CC) can only consider complaints on the election results. The term of office of half of its ten members, including the Chairman, expired 22 months ago. According to the law, their mandates cannot be extended. At the same time, 3 new members have been nominated but not yet been appointed, so meanwhile the expired members continue to function.

The CC reaches its decisions by simple majority in most cases. However, a 1999 amendment of the law doesn't allow any dissenting opinion to become public, as that might "endanger the trust" in the ruling. The CC can either annul the elections and call for repeat election or replace the candidate who had been declared the winner with the candidate who got the second highest number of votes. It can only act on a complaint from a defeated candidate. Neither an ordinary voter nor organisation can initiate any procedures. As commented by one interlocutor from the CC "*...if we allow ordinary voters to complain a loosing candidate could pay voters in his district to massively*

complain in order to get a new chance. The complaint procedure shouldn't allow that to happen."

If a candidate is refused to registration, that decision can be appealed to the State Council (SC) for revision. The SC is an administrative court and is in general not involved in Parliamentary elections. On Election Day there is a theoretical possibility for a refused eligible voter to complain to a registration committee, and if the complaint was rejected, the decision could be appealed to the SC. However, because of time constraints this cannot physically happen.

Prior to election day, the Registration Committees and the Higher Registration Committees are involved in amendments of the voter register, while on election day the committees are dealing with the return of polling results. They have the authority to revise invalid ballots and overrule the PS decision.

Irregularities that are considered crimes can be referred to the police for a criminal investigation. Actions can be initiated either by the president of a PS, a candidate's delegate or any voter. Prosecutors can also *ex officio* start an investigation if they learn about malpractice. On election day, prosecutors on all levels were identified to deal with crimes related to the electoral process. To let a non-eligible voter vote is a crime that falls under public prosecution.

Normally any independent electoral administration includes one set of judiciary or semi-judiciary units that is competent to handle all kinds of complaints and appeals that might occur during the electoral cycle. Issues that can be addressed are adjudication of registration of political parties and candidates, accreditation of observers and party representatives, changes in voter lists, delimitation issues, prohibition of campaign events, sanctions related to campaigning, campaign funding, inequitable or biased media coverage, malpractice during voting and mistakes/manipulation in counting and tabulation of results. In first instance of appeal it is enough to have a body within the

election administration. Sometimes the issues can be solved just by addressing them informally and generally there is no need of a second instance. However, for the sake of rule of law there usually is a possibility to appeal more serious matters to an independent specially assigned court, constitutional or ordinary. Criminal cases that could lead to imprisonment or heavy fines are regularly dealt with within the normal criminal court structure.

5.3 Media Framework

Media in Lebanon works in a very complex and politicised framework. The Audiovisual Broadcasting Law from 1993, is not fully implemented and by many deemed not sufficient to regulate Lebanon's modern media scene. When related to the electoral process, the lacking regulation and shortcomings of the few existing regulations are evident. Art. 68²⁸ PEL, the main provision regulating media behaviour during the campaign, is extremely controversial as it was used arbitrarily in the past to close media outlets. If the article had been implemented during the elections, almost all TV stations would have been closed.

Even if explicitly forbidden by Art. 39 of the media law, the advertising market is in effect monopolised by one same media group, through many small companies, which control 92% of the national market and also 72% of satellite network in the gulf region. Another provision which has not found implementation limits the creation of monopolies in media ownership, stating that one person or family can own maximum 10% of the media market.

Electronic media

According to the Audiovisual Broadcasting Law, frequencies can be leased from the state monopoly by Lebanese corporations. The law provides for private outlets. There are two types of media outlets: Category 1 for stations with news and category 2 without news

²⁸ The article 68 of the electoral law forbids media outlets to publish any sort of paid political communication

and political programmes²⁹. Media licenses are valid for 16 years and are renewable. There are 7 category 1 TV licences and 12 radio licences. There are also several unlicensed stations.

Most of decisions on media are taken by the Council of Ministers, using the National Media Council (NMC) as an advisory body.

The Ministry of Information is to monitor and eventually sanction outlets violating the rules. For the first breach the broadcast can be cut for a maximum of three days. A second one within a year can be followed by a cut for a maximum of one month. Decisions by the Ministry and the NMC can be appealed in court. The NMC consists of ten members elected and nominated by the Parliament and approved by the Council of Ministers. The principle of confessional distribution is respected.

According to the law, the NMC advises the Minister of Information on all matters related to media, it receives reports from TV stations, it audits media financial disclosures, it advises on adjudication issues and verifies if the allocated frequencies are respected. In practise the institution is not very effective as it has only consultative functions.

Print media

The Press law of 1953 limits to 110 the number of papers that are allowed within Category 1, however only 52 are operating. Licenses are obtained from the Ministry of Information after consultations with the Press syndicate. In order to start a new print publication, one of the old licences should be used. Furthermore, a standard license gives the right to publish only for 6 days a week. Category 2 non-political papers are only allowed to publish once a week. There are 1674 licences on the market but only 318 are operating.

²⁹ Are considered political: Programmes that discuss domestic or foreign policies and issues of public concern related to the work of ministries, all public authorities and institutions and municipalities their relationship with citizens and with the each other and the behaviour of their employees.

According to the law, papers are not allowed to publish anything that endangers national security, national unity or state frontiers or insults high rank Lebanese officials of foreign heads of state. Newspapers have to send copies of each issue to the appeal public prosecutor, the Ministry of Information and the Union of the Lebanese Press.

The functions of the Union of the Lebanese Press are defined by the Press law. It consists of two independent unions: the Press Union, to which all owners of newspapers and magazines belong, and The Editors' Union which includes professional journalists. It has a Disciplinary Council that can sanction journalists for breaking professional rules. Journalists must have an accreditation from the Union of the Lebanese Press in order to be allowed to work.

Offending journalists can also be prosecuted in the Publication Court. The Publication Court's competence is specified in the Press law. Criminal responsibility lies with the managing editor and the author of the article.

The code of ethics

For the 2005 elections, at the initiative of the Ministry of Information a code of ethics was adopted in order to provide a set of principles common to all media during the campaign period. Media outlets and the NMC agreed upon using the code of ethics as a framework where the Ministry of Information may arbitrate eventual disputes that could occur in the course of the election process. The decision to implement took place on 16 May 2005 and was applied to radios and TV media outlets.

The code, itself a positive step towards securing some basic principles in media coverage of the elections, remained however an empty effort. As no reliable procedure to adjudicate media related complaints and the Code was purely a self-regulatory agreement, media ended up virtually ignoring it, and even coordination meetings agreed between media and institutions were suspended before the end of the electoral process. This cast a shadow on the willingness of both institutions and media to develop a more modern and equitable system.

6. Observation of the 2005 Parliamentary Elections

A total of 3,007,261 electors were registered to vote in 5,875 polling stations. At the end 1,395,025 voters cast a ballot, resulting in an overall turnout of 44,43%. Considering that not all eligible citizens are currently in the possession of a voter card (only 2,265,873 cards were issued) which is prescribed by the election law as a precondition to vote, the turnout based on voter card holders is 61,57%.

Due to the wide use pre-fabricated ballot-tickets distributed by candidate campaigners, the number of ballots identified as void accumulated only to 14,290, marking 1,024% of the total number of ballots cast.

In total the EUEOM was able to observe opening, polling and counting procedures in 1,308 PS. It identified various procedural shortcomings, related to the inconsistent implementation of legal provisions. However, those deficits were not regarded to affect the outcome of the elections, but exemplify the need for better preparations of future electoral processes.

The EOM observed that in 17% of all visited PS police officers were present inside the PS, without the explicit request of the presiding officer, as required by Art. 43 PEL. In addition, EOM observers noticed the overwhelming presence of campaign material inside PS, mainly campaign T-shirts, caps worn by the candidate representatives etc. In the majority of cases candidate representatives were the main source of propaganda material. Also, in 16% of observations all or at least the majority of official PS assistants were actually candidate representatives – something not prohibited by law, but clearly jeopardizing the foreseen impartiality of the polling board because the lack of provisions that secure pluralistic representation in the PS. The provision that only one representative of each candidate should be accredited as a permanent observer for each PS was often violated. According to the election law the governors and the sub-governors, responsible

for the given constituencies, are accountable for granting accreditation and should have prevented such ‘over-representation’.

Another observed feature was the massive presence of campaigning immediately in front of and within each polling centre creating an environment clearly not free from intimidation. The mission notified that campaign activists and in some cases even accredited candidate representatives were in the possession of several voter cards to be handed out only before the respective voter would approach the polling site, clearly creating some sort of control over the voters’ free choice to vote, this in violation of Art. 67 PEL³⁰. EOM observers also identified that 20% of the visited polling sites were not located in neutral sites but in religious premises or even police stations.

In almost every fifth PS visited electors were denied the right to vote because their name was not found on the official elimination list, even if they were in possession of a voter card. Although there are various possible reasons for a rightful denial it clearly identifies a need for a reform of the overall voter registration process.

In order to establish an efficient checks-and-balance system the current electoral framework gives a high responsibility to candidate representatives to ensure the accurate compliance with legal and procedural provisions in the PS. However, since neither official training nor detailed ‘representative manual’ was provided the quality of supervision depended on the preparation provided by the respective candidates. In consequence, the interpretation of the procedural provisions has been observed to be highly different from PS to PS.

Even in those cases where the provisions were clear, discrepancies had been discovered: I.e. in 67% of the observed polling procedures the presiding officer, his secretary and one assistant (in most cases a candidate representative) signed the ballot envelopes in advance

³⁰Art. 67 states : it is forbidden for the candidates through their delegates to keep the identification card or extracts of the individual civil register or the election cards before the elections and on the voting day”.

– despite the requirement to do so in the presence of each respective voter. The necessity to use the camera-TV set during counting to display the individual ballots was ignored in 16% of the observed counting procedures; in 11% of the counting observations the presiding officer did not read out loudly the content of each ballot; in 8% of the observations the provision to do the tally sheet in duplicate was disregarded; in 10% that sheet was not signed by all polling officials and in 14% the valid ballots were not destroyed after the counting procedure was completed.

Although these figures seem to be quite low, it indicates the lack of a comprehensive understanding and compliance with the most clearly defined procedures. That, combined with the fact that only in 2% of the observed counting procedures written complaints had been made, underlines that future polling officials need to be better prepared and the capacities of candidate representatives and domestic observers be enhanced and be encouraged at least to document any procedural shortcomings in the official polling day report forms. In this respect the policy decision of the Ministry of Interior to abstain from deploying any official election supervisors, verifying on spot the adequate implementation of the election law and related procedures is to be questioned.

6.1 Media monitoring results

The EOM Media Monitoring Unit monitored print and electronic media³¹ representing a wide range of the political spectrum. It analysed both the quantity of time and space dedicated to political issues, and the tone used in the reporting. It also analysed the existing legal framework governing media during the elections.

There have been two phases in the elections. The first phase consisted of the first rounds where competition was low and the second phase for the two last rounds when competition was very aggressive. Likewise, the tone of the campaign has been very positive for the lists of the first phase and became quite negative for most of the lists in

³¹ The newspapers that monitored were Al-Mustaqbal, An-Nahar and As Safir. TV stations were TV-NBN, Future Television, Tele Liban, LBCI (Lebanese Broadcasting Corporation International) and AL-MANAR.

the second phase. The charts included in the Annex illustrate the media coverage of the political factions in the print and electronic media outlets. Considering instead the whole aggregated national coverage, the balance seems to be fairer than for each election round as illustrated in the Annex.

Electronic media

All TV stations gave a wide coverage of the election process. A big number of news, talk shows, commentaries and analysis were offered to the public. The TV stations monitored by the EOM evidenced a markedly partisan coverage during the whole election cycle. As most of the electronic media is closely associated with either a competing candidate or a political party, TVs gave a coverage that clearly reflected their natural bias towards their patrons. The state broadcaster, Tele Liban, provided a less biased coverage than the others, but it failed to ensure equal coverage of all candidates.

The tone of coverage given by the electronic media differed markedly between the first two rounds and the second two. While for the Beirut and South Lebanon the coverage was quite neutral, with the heating up of the campaign, and with the bitterly contested elections in Mount Lebanon, Bekaa and North Lebanon, the tone became more partisan, and therefore negative coverage of opposing candidates became a major feature in their coverage.

Printed media

Newspapers also gave a very wide coverage of the elections, sometimes even by offering whole special sections dedicated to the campaign. In general, the coverage given was biased, even if to a lesser extent than the electronic media. Also, printed media distinguished itself from the electronic media by giving deeper analysis and critical approach to the campaign.

As for the electronic media, there was a marked difference in the tone of coverage between the first and second half of the election, with tone becoming much more negative

during the second phase. However, the tone as a whole was less negative than TV stations.

Assessment

The media were able to cover many viewpoints, but their coverage of the elections was biased. In order to offer a level playing field for contesting political ideas many countries have restrictions on media during the campaign period. A level playing field also requires that all contestants get an equitable and fair coverage of their activities and programmes at least by publicly owned media.

Private media are usually required to apply the same conditions for advertisements, if at all and to provide either free or paid airtime on an equitable basis. The compliance is generally monitored by a supervisory body with access to sanctions against infringements of the legal provisions.

The absence of proper legislation concerning the media has contributed to the creation of an uneven playing field during the election campaign.

The agreement on a Code of Ethics for media during the election was certainly a positive step. However, because it was not a legally binding document, it could not be enforced. Furthermore it was almost impossible to implement because of the vagueness of some of the provisions.

The Code also allowed campaign on election day, based on the principle that the same PEL does not foresee limitations on campaigning on election day. The rationale for a media silence is to give the electorate some quiet time for reflection between the end of the campaign and the act of casting the ballot. Generally, electoral frameworks also contain corresponding provisions that set a period of campaign silence during the last couple of days and on Election Day itself. There is an obvious link between the two kinds of silence in the sense that if there is no campaign silence there is no justifiable call for restrictions on media on Election Day.

Breaches of the media silence.

The EOM observed a limited number of breaches of the media silence before the first and second election days. However, as soon as the competition became fiercer for the third and fourth rounds, despite the request of the minister of Information to respect the media silence, breaches increased.

Annex 1 The composition of the new Parliament

Constit.	Name	Confession	Current List	Political affiliation	Votes	Parliamentary Bloc
Beirut I	Saadeddine Hariri	Sunni	PM Martyr R. Hariri'list	Future Movement	39 499	Hariri's Bloc
	Ammar Hourri	Sunni	PM Martyr R. Hariri'list	Future Movement	30 741	Hariri's Bloc
	Michel Pharaon*	Greek Catholic	PM Martyr R. Hariri'list	Independent	Uncontested	Hariri's Bloc
	Gebzan Tueni	Greek Orthodox	PM Martyr R. Hariri'list	Qornet Shehwan	30 591	Qornet Shehwan
	Bassem al Shabb	Evangelical	PM Martyr R. Hariri'list	Future Movement (close to)	Uncontested	Hariri's Bloc
	Solange Gemavel	Maronite	PM Martyr R. Hariri'list	Lebanese Forces	Uncontested	Independent (Brist)
Beirut II	Bahije Tabbara	Sunni	PM Martyr R. Hariri'list	Future Movement (close to)	27 981	Hariri's Bloc
	Walid Eido*	Sunni	PM Martyr R. Hariri'list	Future Movement	25 123	Hariri's Bloc
	Amin Sherri	Shiite	PM Martyr R. Hariri'list	Hezbollah	31 859	Hezbollah' Bloc
	Atef Majdalani*	Greek Orthodox	PM Martyr R. Hariri'list	Future Movement	26 163	Hariri's Bloc
	Yeghia Djerdjian*	Armenian Orth.	PM Martyr R. Hariri'list	Henchaq	Uncontested	Hariri's Bloc
	Nabil de Freije*	Minorities	PM Martyr R. Hariri'list	Independent	27 364	Hariri's Bloc
Beirut III	Mohammad Qabbani*	Sunni	PM Martyr R. Hariri'list	Future Movement	24 527	Hariri's Bloc
	Ghinwa Jalloul*	Sunni	PM Martyr R. Hariri'list	Future Movement	23 731	Hariri's Bloc
	Ghazi Youssef	Shiite	PM Martyr R. Hariri'list	Future Movement	Uncontested	Hariri's Bloc
	Ghazi al Aridi*	Druze	PM Martyr R. Hariri'list	Progressive Socialist Party	Uncontested	Jumblatt's Bloc
	Serge Torsarkissian*	Armenian Catholic	PM Martyr R. Hariri'list	Independent	Uncontested	Hariri's Bloc
	Jean Oghassapian*	Armenian Orth.	PM Martyr R. Hariri'list	Independent	Uncontested	Hariri's Bloc
	Hagop Kassarian*	Armenian Orth.	PM Martyr R. Hariri'list	Ramgavar	Uncontested	Hariri's Bloc
South I Saïda	Bahiya Hariri*	Sunni	Liberation, development and resist.		Uncontested	Hariri's Bloc
	Oussama Saad*	Sunni	Liberation, development and resist.	Nasserist Organization	Uncontested	Independent (Anti Hariri)
South I Zahrani	Michel Moussa*	Greek Catholic	Liberation, development and resist.	Berri (close to)	152 705	Berri's Bloc
	Nabih Berri*	Shiite	Liberation, development and resist.	Amal	153 036	Berri's Bloc
	Ali Osseiran*	Shiite	Liberation, development and resist.	Berri (close to)	152 593	Berri's Bloc
South I Tyre	Mohammad Fneish*	Shiite	Liberation, development and resist.	Hezbollah	154 056	Hezbollah Bloc
	Hassan Hobballah	Shiite	Liberation, development and resist.	Hezbollah	151 964	Hezbollah Bloc
	Abdelmajid Saleh	Shiite	Liberation, development and resist.	Amal	151 114	Berri's Bloc
	Ali Khreiss*	Shiite	Liberation, development and resist.	Amal	149 446	Berri's Bloc
South I Bint Jbeil	Hassan Fadlallah	Shiite	Liberation, development and resist.	Hezbollah	152 539	Hezbollah's Bloc
	Ali Bazzi*	Shiite	Liberation, development and resist.	Berri (Close to)	149 967	Berri's Bloc
	Ayoub Hmayid*	Shiite	Liberation, development and resist.	Amal	149 307	Berri's Bloc
South II Nabatieh	Mohammad Raad*	Shiite	Liberation, development and resist.	Hezbollah	107 853	Hezbollah's Bloc
	Yassine Jaber*	Shiite	Liberation, development and resist.	Berri (close to)	107 302	Berri's Bloc
	Abdel-Latif al-Zein*	Shiite	Liberation, development and resist.	Berri (close to)	104 230	Berri's Bloc

South II Marjeyoun -Hasbaya	Anwar el-Khalil*	Druze	Liberation, development and resist.	Independent	106 953	Berri's Bloc
	Assad Herdan*	Greek-Orthodox	Liberation, development and resist.	Syrian Social Nationalist P.	99 539	SSNP Bloc
	Mohammad Haydar	Shiite	Liberation, development and resist.	Hezbollah	105 076	Hezbollah's Bloc
	Ali Hassan Khalil*	Shiite	Liberation, development and resist.	Amal	104 674	Berri's Bloc
	Qassem Hashem*	Sunni	Liberation, development and resist.	Baath	Uncontested	Baath's Bloc
South II Jezzine	Antoine Houry*	Greek-Catholic	Liberation, development and resist.	Berri (close to)	Uncontested	Berri's Bloc
	Pierre Serhal	Maronite	Liberation, development and resist.	Hezbollah (close to)	Uncontested	Hezbollah's Bloc
	Samir Azar*	Maronite	Liberation, development and resist.	Berri (Close to)	Uncontested	Berri's Bloc
Mount Lebanon I Jbeil	Walid al-Khoury	Maronite	Change and reform	FPM	56 840	Aoun's Bloc
	Shamel Mouzaya	Maronite	Change and reform	FPM	51 678	Aoun's Bloc
	Abbas Hashem*	Shiite	Change and reform	Independent	62 294	Aoun's Bloc
Mount Lebanon I Kisrwan	Michel Aoun	Maronite	Change and reform	FPM	67 433	Aoun's Bloc
	Youssef Khalil	Maronite	Change and reform	FPM	61 740	Aoun's Bloc
	Nahmtallah Abi Nasr*	Maronite	Change and reform	Independent	59 738	Aoun's Bloc
	Farid al-Khazen	Maronite	Change and reform	FPM	56 719	Aoun's Bloc
	Gilberte Zouein	Maronite	Change and reform	FPM	52 376	Aoun's Bloc
Mount Lebanon II Metn	Hagop Pakradounian	Armenian-Orthodox	Change and reform	Tashnag	53 272	Murr's Bloc
	Edgard Maalouf	Greek-Catholic	Change and reform	FPM	55 017	Aoun's Bloc
	Michel Murr*	Greek-Orthodox	Change and reform	Independent	48 662	Murr's Bloc
	Ghassan Mukhaiber*	Greek-Orthodox	Change and reform	Independent	56 906	Aoun's Bloc
	Ibrahim Kanaan	Maronite	Change and reform	FPM	56 840	Aoun's Bloc
	Salim Salhab	Maronite	Change and reform	Ex- National Bloc	54 776	Aoun's Bloc
	Nabil Nicholas	Maronite	Change and reform	FPM	48 872	Aoun's Bloc
Pierre Gemayel*	Maronite	Opposition list	Reform Kataeb	29 421	Qornet Shehwane	
Mount Lebanon III Aley	Akram Shuhayeb*	Druze	Unity of the Mountain	PSP	70 085	Jumblatt's Bloc
	Faysal Sayegh	Druze	Unity of the Mountain	PSP	69 103	Jumblatt's Bloc
	Henri Helou*	Maronite	Unity of the Mountain	Independent	69 637	Jumblatt's Bloc
	Fouad al-Saad*	Maronite	Unity of the Mountain	Independent	69 567	Jumblatt's Bloc
	Antoine Andraous*	Greek-Orthodox	Unity of the Mountain	Independent	69 748	Hariri's Bloc
Mount Lebanon III Baabda	Ayman Shouqueir*	Druze	Unity of the Mountain	PSP	68 968	Jumblatt's Bloc
	Edmond Naim	Maronite	Unity of the Mountain	Lebanese Forces	71 453	Lebanese Forces
	Antoine Ghanem*	Maronite	Unity of the Mountain	Reform Kataeb	70 946	Jumblatt's Bloc or Qornet Shehwan
	Abdallah Farhat*	Maronite	Unity of the Mountain	Independent	69 440	Jumblatt's Bloc
	Ali Ammar*	Shiite	Unity of the Mountain	Hezbollah	74 892	Hezbollah's Bloc
	Bassem al-Sabeh*	Shiite	Unity of the Mountain	Future Movement	71 531	Hariri's Bloc
M ou nt Le	Mohammad Hajjar*	Sunni	National Struggle Front	Future Movement	57 104	Hariri's Bloc
	Alaeddine Terro*	Sunni	National Struggle Front	PSP	54 861	Jumblatt's Bloc

	Walid Jumblatt*	Druze	National Struggle Front	PSP	Uncontested	Jumblatt's Bloc
	Marwan Hamadé*	Druze	National Struggle Front	PSP	Uncontested	Jumblatt's Bloc
	Nabil Boustani*	Maronite	National Struggle Front	n/a	53 543	Jumblatt's Bloc
	Elie Aoun*	Maronite	National Struggle Front	n/a	52 075	Jumblatt's Bloc
	Georges Adwane	Maronite	National Struggle Front	Lebanese Forces	51 701	Lebanese Forces
	Naame Tohme*	Greek-Catholic	National Struggle Front	n/a	57 358	Jumblatt's Bloc
Beqaa I Baalbeck Hermel	Marwan Fares*	Greek-Catholic	Baalbeck Hermel list	Syrian Social Nationalist P.	80 539	SSNP Bloc
	Nader Sukkar*	Maronite	Baalbeck Hermel list	Kataeb (Pro-Syrian)	82 574	Kataeb (Pro-Syrian)
	Ali al-Moqdad	Shiite	Baalbeck Hermel list	Hezbollah	86 815	Hezbollah's Bloc
	Hussein Hajj Hassan*	Shiite	Baalbeck Hermel list	Hezbollah	86 262	Hezbollah's Bloc
	Jamal al-Taqsh	Shiite	Baalbeck Hermel list	Hezbollah (close to)	84 727	Hezbollah's Bloc
	Ghazi Zaayter*	Shiite	Baalbeck Hermel list	Berri (close to)	81 733	Berri's Bloc
	Nawar al-Sahili	Shiite	Baalbeck Hermel list	Hezbollah (close to)	81 502	Hezbollah's Bloc
	Hussein Husseini	Shiite	Baalbeck Hermel list	Independent	78 945	Independent
	Ismail Sukkariah	Sunni	Baalbeck Hermel list		87 612	Hezbollah's Bloc
Kamel al-Rifai	Sunni	Baalbeck Hermel list		86 016	Hezbollah's Bloc	
Beqaa II Zahle	Georges Kassarji*	Armenian-Orth.	Popular Bloc	Tashnag	35 065	Skaff's Bloc
	Elias Skaff*	Greek-Catholic	Popular Bloc	Independent	38 035	Skaff's Bloc
	Nicholas Fattouh*	Greek-Catholic	Zahle Pride and Beqaa Concord	Independent	31 111	Independent/ Hariri
	Kamil al-Maalouf	Greek-Orthodox	Popular Bloc	n/a	31 108	Skaff's Bloc
	Salim Aoun	Maronite	Popular Bloc	FPM	36 408	Aoun's Bloc
	Hassan Yaaqoub	Shiite	Popular Bloc	n/a	31 920	Skaff's Bloc
Assem Araji	Sunni	Popular Bloc	n/a	31 418	Skaff's Bloc	
Beqaa III Western Beqaa Rachaya	Wael Bou Faour	Druze	National Decision list	PSP	27 651	Jumblatt's Bloc
	Antoine Saad	Greek-Orthodox	National Decision list	Independent	25 984	Jumblatt's Bloc
	Robert Ghanem*	Maronite	National Decision list	Independent	29 923	Independent/ Hariri
	Ahmad Fattouh	Sunni	National Decision list	Future Movement	25 767	Hariri's Bloc
	Jamal Jarrah	Sunni	National Decision list	Future Movement	25 682	Hariri's Bloc
	Nasser Nasrallah	Shiite	National Decision list	n/a	26 120	Berri's Bloc
North I Akkar	Azzam Dandachi	Sunni	National Union – 14 th March	Future Movement	83 046	Hariri's Bloc
	Mustapha Hachem	Sunni	National Union – 14 th March	Future Movement	83 302	Hariri's Bloc
	Mahmoud Mrad	Sunni	National Union – 14 th March	Future Movement	85 256	Hariri's Bloc
	Mustapha Ali Hussein	Alawite	National Union – 14 th March	Future Movement	87 966	Hariri's Bloc
	Hadi Fawzi Hobeiche	Maronite	National Union – 14 th March	Independent	91 568	Hariri's Bloc
	Abdallah Hanna	Greek-Orthodox	National Union – 14 th March	Independent	88 509	Hariri's Bloc
	Riad Rahal	Greek-Orthodox	National Union – 14 th March	Independent	94 683	Hariri's Bloc
North I Dinniye	Ahmed Fattat*	Sunni	National Union – 14 th March	Future Movement	89 196	Hariri's Bloc
	Kassem Abdul Aziz	Sunni	National Union – 14 th March	Independent	94 760	Hariri's Bloc
North I	Sitrida Geagea	Maronite	National Union – 14 th March	Lebanese Forces	93 340	Lebanese Forces

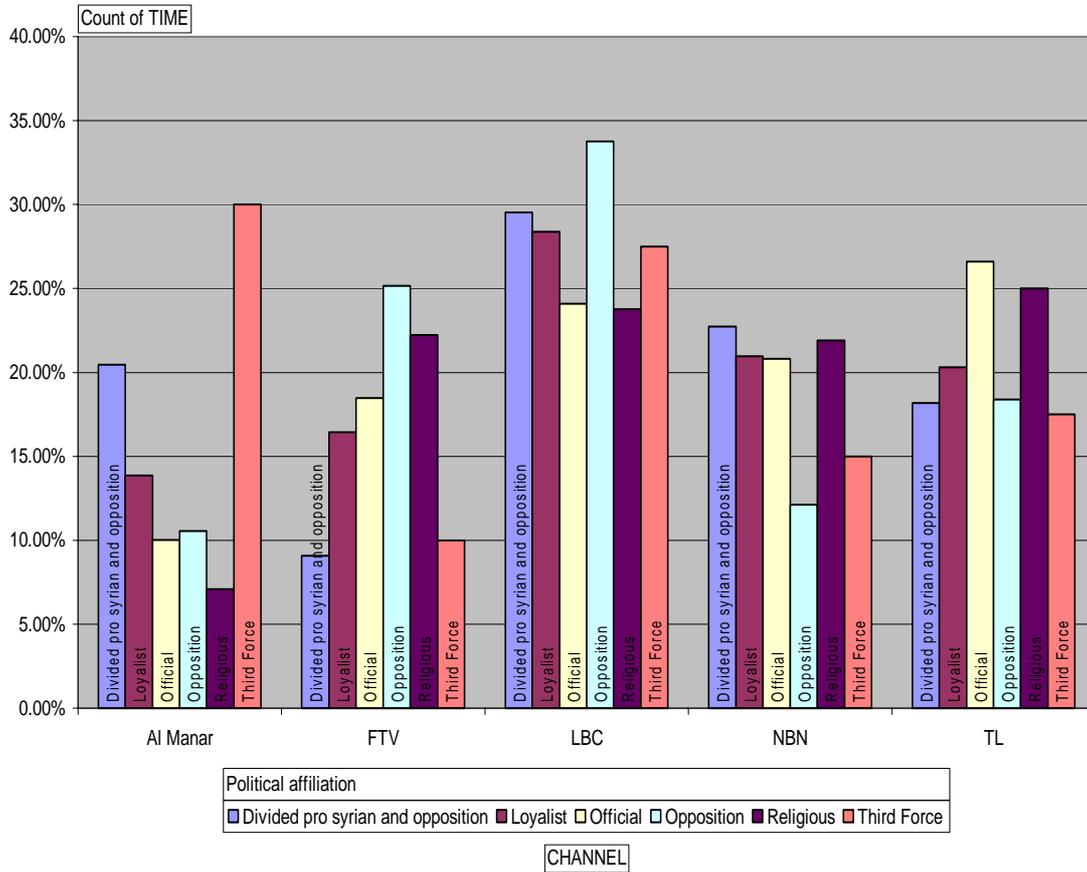
Bsharre	Elie Kayrouz	Maronite	National Union – 14 th March	Lebanese Forces	91 161	Lebanese Forces
North II Tripoli	Samir Jisr	Sunni	Reconciliation and reform	Future Movement	93 903	Hariri's Bloc
	Mohamed Safadi*	Sunni	Reconciliation and reform	Tripoli Coalition	104 711	Tripoli Coalition
	Mohamed Kabbara*	Sunni	Reconciliation and reform	Tripoli Coalition	96 922	Tripoli Coalition
	Misbah al Ahdab*	Sunni	Reconciliation and reform	Renewal Democratic Mvt	97 137	RDM
	Mustapha Allouch	Sunni	Reconciliation and reform	Future Movement	92 015	Hariri's Bloc
	Badr Wanous	Alawite	Reconciliation and reform	Independent	89 688	Independent/Hariri
	Elias Attalah	Maronite	Reconciliation and reform	Democratic Left Mvt	89 890	DLM
	Maurice Fadel*	Greek-Orthodox	Reconciliation and reform	Tripoli Coalition	99 284	Tripoli Coalition
North II Miniye	Hachem Alamedine	Sunni	Reconciliation and reform	Independent	89 060	Hariri's Bloc
North II Koura	Farid Mekari*	Greek-Orthodox	Reconciliation and reform	Independent	96 837	Hariri's Bloc
	Nicolas Ghosn	Greek-Orthodox	Reconciliation and reform	Independent	92 907	Hariri's Bloc or Qornet Shehwane
	Farid Habib	Greek-Orthodox	Reconciliation and reform	Lebanese Forces	93 169	Lebanese Forces
North II Zghorta	Nayla Moawwad*	Maronite	Reconciliation and reform	Qornet Shehwane	93 032	Qornet Shehwane
	Samir Franjeh	Maronite	Reconciliation and reform	Qornet Shehwane	90 830	Qornet Shehwane
	Jawad Boulos	Maronite	Reconciliation and reform	Independent	91 786	Qornet Shehwane
North II Batroun	Boutros Harb*	Maronite	Reconciliation and reform	Qornet Shehwane	95 554	Qornet Shehwane
	Antoine Zohra	Maronite	Reconciliation and reform	Lebanese Forces	87 645	Lebanese Forces

Annex 2 Media monitoring results - classification of electoral alliances for monitoring purposes

Political Forces	Classification of Political forces
Amal Movement	Loyalist
Baath Party	Loyalist
Bekaa Reference List	Loyalist
Bristol Meeting	Opposition
Change and Reform List	Opposition
Communist Labor Organization	Third Force
Communist Party	Third Force
Democratic Assembly	Opposition
Democratic Choice	Opposition
Democratic Leftist Party	Opposition
Democratic Party	Loyalist
Democratic Platform Movement	Opposition
Democratic Renewal Movement	Opposition
Free Patriotic Movement	Opposition
Future Trend	Opposition
Hanshak	Opposition
Harriri's List	Opposition
Hizbullah	Loyalist
Islamic Charitable Projects Association	Loyalist
Islamic Group	Divided pro Syrian/opposition
Lebanese Forces	Opposition
Lebanon Al Kafa'at Movement	Opposition
Liberation and Change List	Communist Party
Maronite League	Opposition
Mountain Unity List	Opposition
Nadwat Al Aamal	Third Force
Nassery Movement	Loyalist
National Bloc	Opposition

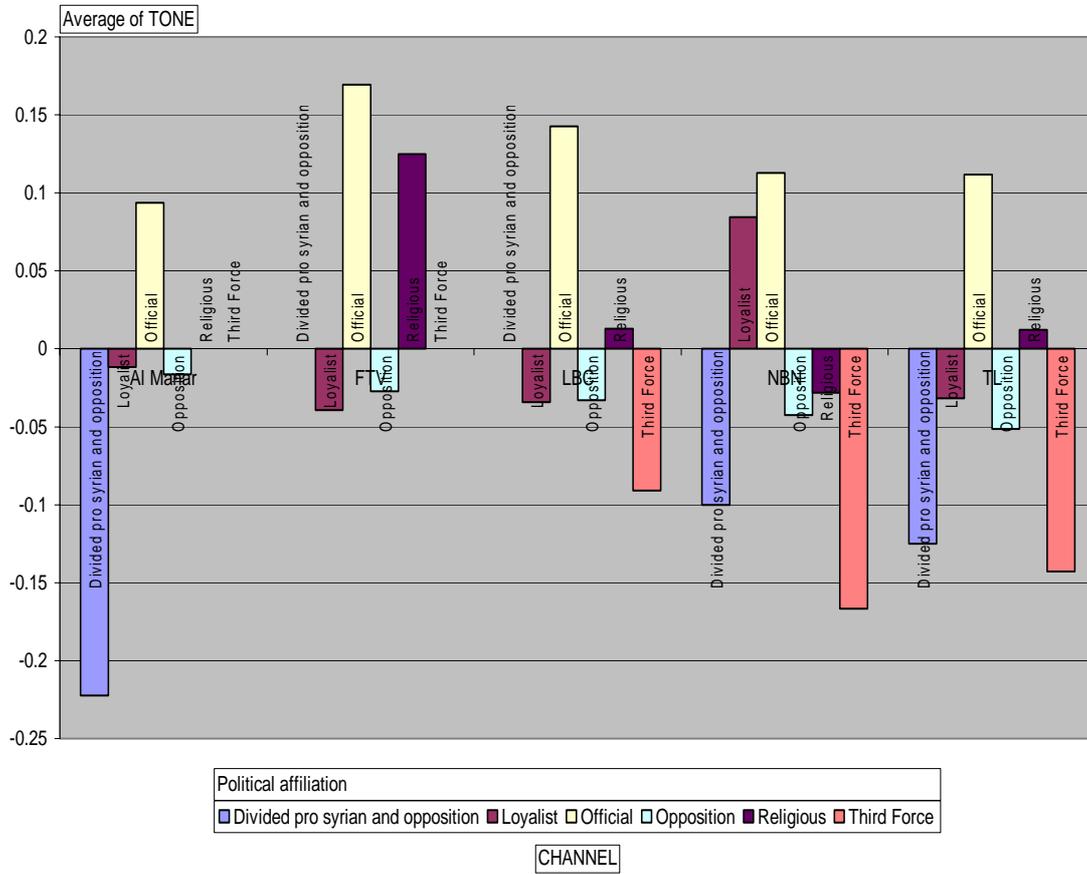
National Decision List	Opposition
National Decision List North	Loyalist
National Liberal Party	Opposition
National Struggle Front	Opposition
National Unity List	Opposition
North Opposition	Opposition
Opposing Forces	Opposition
Opposition List	Opposition
People Decision List	Loyalist
People Will List	Loyalist
Kataeb / Phalangists	Loyalist
Phalangists Opposition	Opposition
PSP	Opposition
Qornet Chehwan	Opposition
Ramgavar	Opposition
Reconciliation and Reform List	Opposition
Reformist Phalangist Party	Opposition
Renewal Bekaa Choice List	Loyalist
Development Liberation & Resistance List	Loyalist
Shaab Movement	Opposition
Shiite Lebanese Gathering	Third Force
SSNP	Loyalist
Tashnag	Loyalist
Tawheed Faction	Divided pro Syrian/opposition
Tripoli Gathering Members	Opposition
Tripoli List	Loyalist
Waad Party	Opposition
Zahleh Pride and Bekaa Accord List	Opposition

DATE (All) Region of Election National



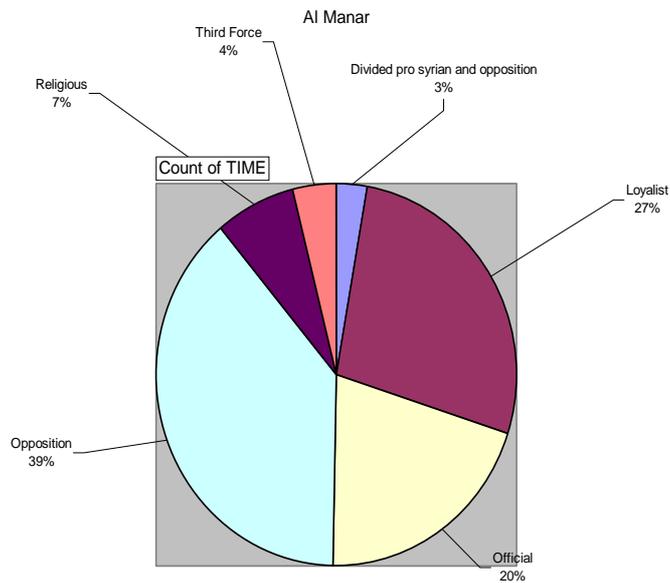
Quantity of airtime in percentage shares amongst political forces for each TV station.

DATE (All) Region of Election National



Average of tone per station and for each political force for the whole period of the electoral process.

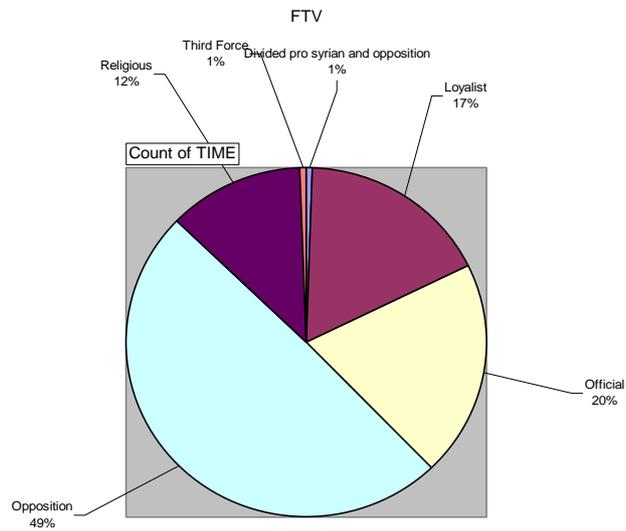
DATE (All) Region of Election National



Political affiliation
 Divided pro syrian and opposition Loyalist Official Opposition Religious Third Force
 CHANNEL

Quantity of coverage (time) that each political force received on Al Manar TV

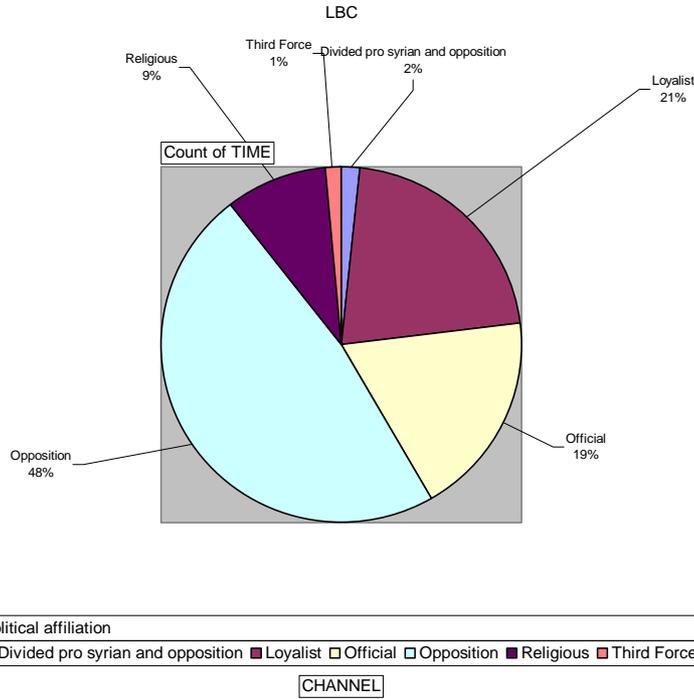
DATE (All) Region of Election National



Political affiliation
 Divided pro syrian and opposition Loyalist Official Opposition Religious Third Force
 CHANNEL

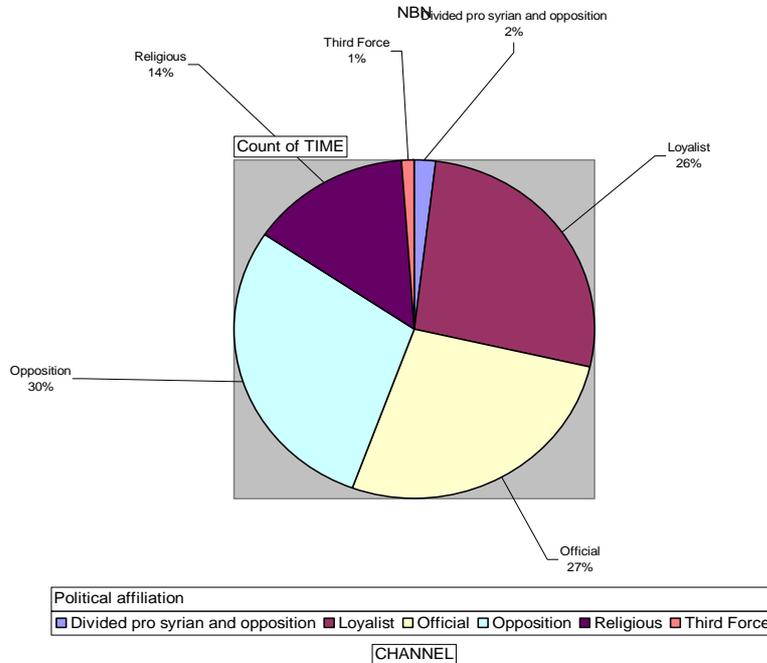
Quantity of coverage that each political force received on Future TV

DATE (All) Region of Election National



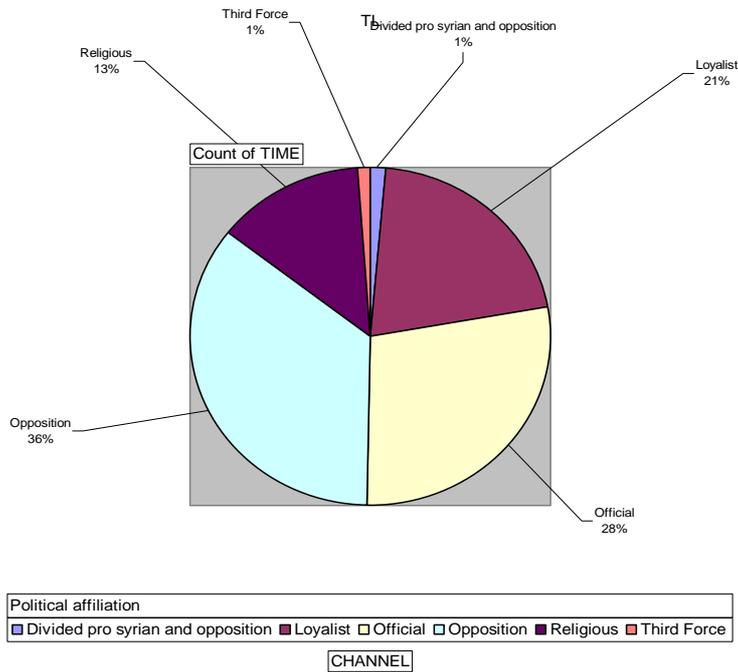
Quantity of time that each political force received on LBC TV

DATE (All) Region of Election National



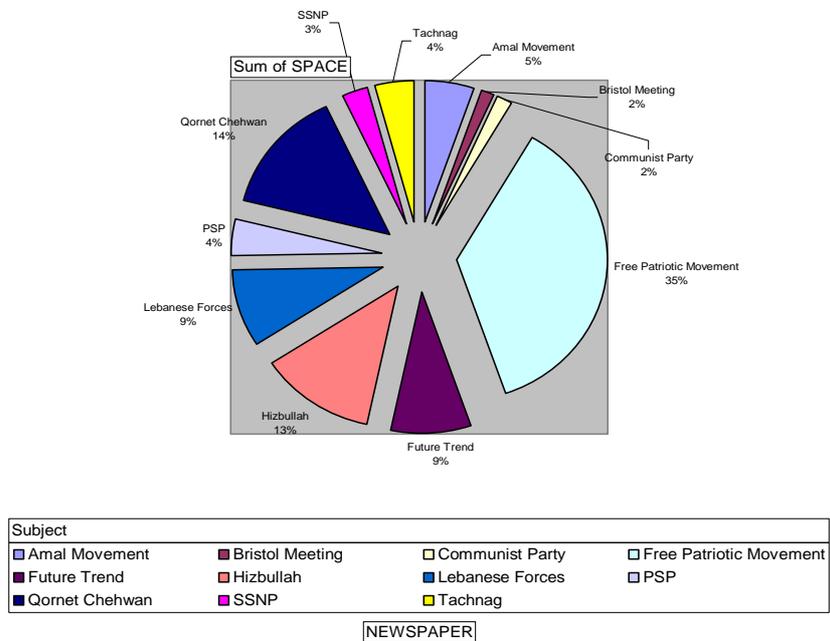
Quantity of time that each political force received on NBN TV

DATE|(All)|Region of Election|National



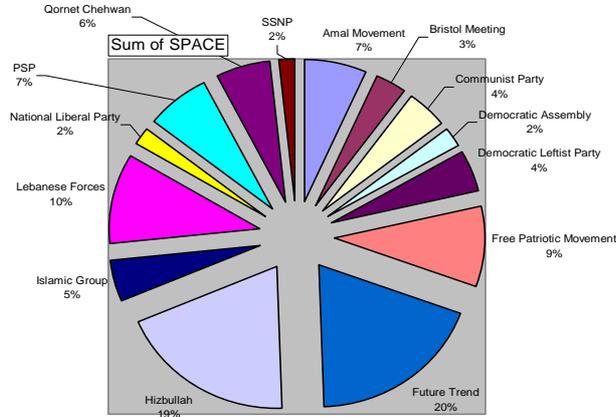
The quantity of time that each political force received on Tele Liban TV

DATE|(All)|Region of Election|National|Sex|Party/Group



Share of the main Political Parties at National level for all elections in the newspaper An Nahar

DATE (All) | Region of Election | National | Sex | Party/Group

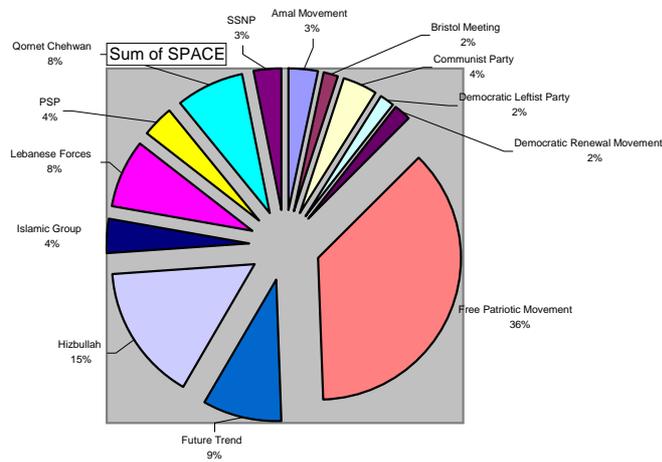


Subject			
Amal Movement	Bristol Meeting	Communist Party	Democratic Assembly
Free Patriotic Movement	Future Trend	Hizbullah	Islamic Group
National Liberal Party	PSP	Qornet Chehwan	SSNP
Democratic Leftist Party	Lebanese Forces		

NEWSPAPER

Share of the main Political Parties at National level for all elections in the newspaper Al Moustakbal

DATE (All) | Region of Election | National | Sex | Party/Group



Subject			
Amal Movement	Bristol Meeting	Communist Party	Democratic Leftist Party
Democratic Renewal Movement	Free Patriotic Movement	Future Trend	Hezbollah
Islamic Group	Lebanese Forces	PSP	Qornet Shehwan
SSNP			

NEWSPAPER

Share of the main Political Parties at National level for all elections in the newspaper As Safir