

Comprehensive Updated Legal and Policy Analysis for Electoral Reform in Lebanon



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Introduction

Lebanon has undergone numerous electoral experiences since the mid 19-th century, specifically since 1860. Over time, elections and their regular occurrence have become a defining feature of Lebanese political life and a hallmark of the political system. Elections continued to be held regularly over the decades, with the exception of certain critical periods – most notably during the civil war (1992–1972), when the electoral process came to a halt due to armed conflict, and again with the 2009 parliament, whose term was extended three consecutive times as a result of complex political and security conditions.

Despite the challenges facing the electoral process in Lebanon, elections have often provided a genuine arena for competition among diverse political currents and reflected the ongoing struggle between those in power and the opposition. This has lent them a relatively democratic character compared with many neighboring countries. While elections in several other Arab republics have often taken on a more symbolic form – resembling mere endorsements for rulers or dominant parties – Lebanese elections, to varying degrees, have remained a platform for expressing divergent political choices and a means of reshaping the political landscape in line with societal shifts and evolving internal power balances.

This distinctiveness has helped entrench the concept of political participation, as elections were contested by forces with diverging visions and interests, allowing parties and political movements the opportunity to compete and influence decision-making. Nevertheless, despite the continuity of the electoral process, it has not been immune to structural flaws – such as the sectarian and confessional allocation of seats, foreign interference, and the adoption of electoral laws that often reflect the interests of political elites and ruling powers more than they serve as tools for enhancing genuine democratic representation.

Thus, despite the complexities surrounding them and the imbalances they embody, elections in Lebanon have remained one of the most prominent instruments of political action and one of the key factors distinguishing the Lebanese system from others in the region.

The Lebanese electoral system has undergone significant transformations that reflect the country's sectarian and political complexities. From independence in 1943 until 2017, Lebanon relied primarily on a majoritarian electoral system. Although designed to preserve stability, this system often resulted in political exclusion and deepened sectarian divisions. Mounting demands for fairer representation, coupled with the shortcomings of the majoritarian system, paved the way for the need for electoral reform.

Historical Evolution of Electoral Laws in Lebanon: From the Majoritarian to the Proportional System

Electoral systems play a fundamental role in shaping political representation and governance structures, and they embody the will of the people in any society. There are two dominant electoral systems across democratic frameworks worldwide: the majoritarian (winner-takes-all) system and proportional representation.

Majoritarian systems, also referred to as majority or plurality systems, date back to the earliest parliamentary democracies in England and other European countries, such as the “First Past the Post” model. This system is based on the principle that the candidate or party with the largest number of votes wins. While it ensures political stability by bolstering large parties and facilitating the formation of cohesive and stable governments supported by a parliamentary majority, such systems often marginalize smaller parties and underrepresented groups. This leads to “disproportionate political representation, particularly in pluralistic societies.”¹ In practice, the nature of majoritarian systems tends to concentrate representation in the hands of the majority, thereby excluding other groups – especially minorities – and “rendering political representation less accurate and less equitable.”² For this reason, criticisms of majoritarian systems have intensified over time, particularly in societies divided along ethnic, religious, or linguistic lines. These criticisms have fueled calls for electoral reforms and for the adoption of more representative and equitable laws.

As a result of the limitations of majoritarian systems, proportional representation began to spread in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. “Belgium became the first European country to adopt proportional representation in 1899.”³ In its simplest form, proportional representation is based on the principle of distributing parliamentary seats in accordance with the percentage of votes obtained by each party (or list) – that is, the percentage of votes is translated into a corresponding number of seats. This approach “ensures fairer representation of different political orientations”⁴ and has become increasingly prevalent in ethnically diverse and ideologically varied societies. The growing demand for more just and effective representation has allowed for greater political pluralism and the formation of more diverse coalition governments.

1- Reynolds, A. (2006). Electoral systems and the protection and participation of Minorities. Minority Rights Group International, p.2.

2- Lijphart, A. (2006). “The case of Power-Sharing”, in Electoral Systems and Democracy (ed. Diamond, L.). Johns Hopkins University Press, p.46.

3- Colomer, J. (2004). Handbook of Electoral System Choice. Palgrave Macmillan, p.51.

4- Gallagher, M., & Mitchell, P. (2008). The Politics of Electoral Systems. Oxford University Press, p.11.

Adoption of the Majoritarian System in Lebanon

Lebanon adopted a majoritarian electoral system within multi-member districts, heavily influenced by the country's sectarian political structure. From independence in 1943 until the most recent electoral reforms in 2017, all electoral laws were designed to preserve the delicate sectarian balance among the country's religious communities. Parliamentary seats were therefore distributed among sectarian groups rather than being "determined purely by party competition."⁵

Despite efforts made under the Taif Agreement (1989) to rebalance sectarian and political representation by increasing the number of Muslim members of parliament, the majoritarian system continued to face problems. As a result, parliamentary elections up to 2009 did not bring about any fundamental changes. Although the primary objective of the majoritarian system was to ensure stability, it frequently led to entrenched electoral practices such as gerrymandering,⁶ clientelism, and the dominance of traditional parties and political elites. This in turn limited the emergence of new political figures – a phenomenon widely referred to in Lebanon as the lack of political elite turnover.

The 2009 elections were the last to be held under the majoritarian system before Lebanon shifted to proportional representation in 2018. Although new elections were initially scheduled for 2013, they were repeatedly postponed due to political deadlock, security concerns, and regional instability – particularly the repercussions of the Syrian crisis. Instead of holding new elections, Lebanon's parliament extended its term three consecutive times (in 2013, 2014, and 2017), citing "logistical and security reasons."⁷ This prolonged extension drew widespread criticism from civil society and opposition groups, who saw it as a democratic setback that allowed traditional elites to remain in power without electoral accountability.

These repeated extensions intensified public discontent and revived calls for electoral reform. Civil society organizations, independent political movements, and international actors exerted pressure on the Lebanese authorities to adopt a more representative electoral framework. Meanwhile, a consensus gradually emerged among the political elite in favor of shifting to a proportional system with a preferential vote – seen as a "compromise that would allow them to maintain their influence while responding to reformist demands."⁸ Consequently, the transition from a majoritarian to a proportional system was driven by several key factors.

Shortcomings of the majoritarian system: This system disproportionately favored traditional political elites and sectarian leaders, making it difficult for emerging parties, independent movements, or unaffiliated candidates to compete effectively.

Public and civil society pressure: Civil society organizations and opposition groups launched campaigns calling for electoral reform, arguing that the existing system failed to reflect Lebanon's political diversity.

Power-sharing deals and reproduction of influence: Although many traditional political actors were reluctant to adopt proportional representation, they ultimately viewed it as a mechanism to safeguard their influence while appearing responsive to demands for reform.

5- Diss, M., & Steffen F. (2017). The Distribution of Power in Lebanese Parliament Revisited. <https://shorturl.at/Mjadu>.

6- Drawing the boundaries of electoral districts in a way that gives one party an unfair advantage over its rivals.

7- Abbas, A., & Worall J. (2015). Stable instability: the Syrian conflict and the postponement of the 2013 Lebanese parliamentary elections. *Third World Quarterly*, 36 (10). pp. 1944-1967, p.2.

8- ElGhossein, A. (2017). One Step Forward for Lebanon's Elections. Carnegie Endowment. <https://shorturl.at/OnjPI>

This shift paved the way for a relatively more diverse political landscape in the 2018 elections. However, the extent to which it effectively advanced genuine democratic reform remains a matter of debate. The new law maintained sectarian quotas and allowed the redrawing of electoral districts according to the interests of political forces dominating parliament, thereby preserving their influence and control over the political process. The 2022 elections witnessed a “modest breakthrough” by non-traditional political forces, accompanied by an increase in the number of women elected to parliament (eight out of 128 members, or %6.25). Nevertheless, the reform represented an important yet incomplete step toward more inclusive representation, highlighting both the potential and the constraints that shape electoral change within Lebanon’s deeply entrenched sectarian political framework.

Despite these limited reforms, the electoral system has, since the 1920s, continued to rest on a fixed, unchanging foundation: the presence of a “single unified electorate” in “all districts.” This electorate is organized around a shifting and variable basis, whereby voters from different sectarian and confessional groups cast their ballots for candidates drawn from across these groups, each within their own electoral district, which may expand or shrink geographically and may gain or lose seats.

I. Analysis of Law No. 2017/44 in Light of International Standards



Lebanon’s 2017 Electoral Law (Law No. 44/2017) was welcomed as a long-awaited reform, marking the country’s transition from a majoritarian to a proportional system. The aim of this shift was to enhance political inclusivity, reduce electoral distortions, and improve the representation of smaller parties and independent candidates. Despite introducing some structural improvements, the law still falls short of meeting international standards for democratic elections, as set out by the Venice Commission, the OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR), the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR), and local civil society organizations, most notably the Lebanese Association for Democratic Elections (LADE).

Several fundamental flaws in the law continue to undermine the prospects of developing a genuinely democratic political life, as it still reinforces existing sectarian and confessional, regional, and elite structures rather than promoting fair electoral competition and genuine representation:

1- The Preferential Vote System and Its Impact on Proportional Representation

The preferential vote system is one of the law’s most significant weaknesses, as it distorts the very principle of proportionality. It allows voters to choose a single candidate within the minor district in addition to voting for a list. Instead of strengthening proportional representation, this mechanism reproduces majoritarian dynamics, “enabling traditional political forces to maintain dominance within their sectarian strongholds.” Rather than fostering programmatic competition between political parties and encouraging competition among lists based on their programs, the preferential vote (as demonstrated in the 2018 and 2022 elections) has shifted the focus of competition from lists to individual candidates within the same list.

2- Persistence of the Sectarian Nature of the Electoral System

In addition to the problems posed by the preferential vote, the law has failed to dismantle Lebanon’s rigid sectarian framework. While proportional representation is typically associated with political pluralism and broader ideological representation, parliamentary seats in Lebanon continue to be allocated based on predetermined sectarian quotas. “This entrenched sectarianism contradicts international democratic principles,”⁹ which emphasize equal representation based on political preferences rather than religious identity.

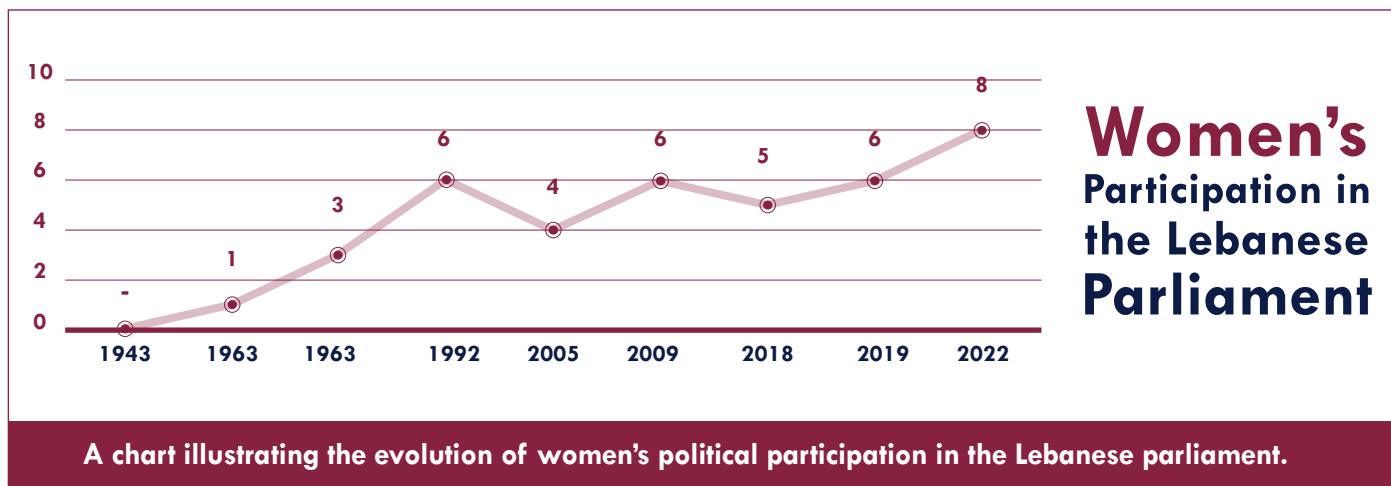
⁹ International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) (1966), Article 25: Right to Participate in Public Affairs and Elections, United Nations.

3- Manipulation of Electoral Districts (Gerrymandering)

The process of delineating electoral districts remains under the control of parliament – and more specifically, under the influence of the dominant parliamentary blocs. As a result, the primary concern guiding the delineation of district boundaries is how they serve the interests of those in power. Consequently, elections in many districts are often effectively decided in advance, thereby diminishing the potential benefits of proportional representation. International electoral standards stress the importance of preventing any possibility of electoral manipulation and require that district boundaries be drawn by a neutral and transparent body to ensure fair competition – a principle that remains unfulfilled in Lebanon’s electoral system.¹⁰

4- Low Representation of Women in Parliament

Although the number of women in parliament increased in 2022 (from just one female MP in 1963 to eight MPs in 2022) the law has failed to address the issue of women’s underrepresentation in Lebanese politics. Despite repeated calls for the introduction of a quota for women (whether for candidacy, seats, or results) to ensure women’s participation in political life, Law No. 44/2017 introduced no “legal mechanisms to enhance women’s representation in parliament.”¹¹ As a result, Lebanon continues to lag behind in achieving gender inclusivity. The absence of a gender quota has allowed traditional patriarchal structures to persist, significantly limiting women’s opportunities to enter political life on an equal footing with their male counterparts.



5- Lack of an Independent and Neutral Electoral Administration

Moreover, the electoral process in Lebanon is administered by the Ministry of Interior and Municipalities, which has raised (and continues to raise) concerns regarding political interference, weak transparency, and limited efficiency. In the absence of a permanent, independent electoral management body with clearly defined powers, the administration of elections (by the Supervisory Commission for Elections and the Ministry of Interior and Municipalities) remains temporary, relying on “ad hoc electoral committees that are dissolved after each electoral cycle.”¹²

Ultimately, the persistent problem of electoral corruption continues to undermine the legitimacy of Lebanese elections. Although the 2017 law introduced oversight mechanisms, including the establishment of the Supervisory Commission for Elections, it “failed to impose strict measures to combat vote buying, political bribery, and electoral fraud.”¹³ In a system entrenched in clientelist networks, electoral corruption remains widespread, with vote buying and voter intimidation continuing to play a decisive role in shaping electoral outcomes.

¹⁰- Venice Commission (2003), Code of Good Practice in Electoral Matters, Council of Europe, p.23.

¹¹- LADE Election Observation Report (2022).

¹²- LADE Election Observation Report (2022).

¹³- European Union Election Observation Mission (EU EOM) (2022), Lebanese 2022: Final Report, p.5.



Between 1922 and 2017, Lebanon enacted a total of eleven electoral laws, distributed across three distinct phases: the Mandate period, the post-independence period, and the post-Taif Agreement period. Two electoral laws were enacted during the French Mandate, four during the post-independence era, and five after the Taif Agreement, reflecting the political transformations Lebanon experienced during these periods. Despite this multiplicity of legal frameworks, the core of the electoral system remained largely unchanged, with the exception of Law No. 44/2017, which introduced significant changes by replacing the majoritarian system with proportional representation.

Despite these changes, many of the conditions and factors that have shaped electoral processes since their inception remain in place, continuing to shape the electoral environment and influence its dynamics. This continuity has contributed to the reproduction of political and electoral behaviors among voters, as sectarian, regional, and partisan considerations continue to play a decisive role in shaping electoral lists and influencing voter choices and outcomes.

Furthermore, despite the passage of more than a century since the first representative elections, Lebanese electoral laws still rely in many respects on principles established during the formation of the first representative councils. These principles continue to generate recurring problems that resurface with each electoral cycle. Questions are raised during every election about the democratic nature of the process and its ability to achieve fair and inclusive representation, in a system that imposes challenges related to the equitable sectarian, confessional, and regional distribution of seats, as well as the influence of political money and party power.

The search for the optimal mechanisms to ensure genuinely democratic elections in Lebanon remains one of the key issues under debate. Achieving this requires far-reaching reforms that address structural weaknesses accumulated over decades, both in terms of the electoral laws themselves and in terms of practices that circumvent these laws, as well as the mechanisms for managing, organizing, and supervising the electoral process.

1- Continuity and Change in Electoral Laws

Successive Lebanese electoral laws have been dominated by a fixed principle: the alteration of electoral districts up to 2008 according to the interests of political forces and parties, in order to align them with specific political calculations and thereby enable those forces to maintain and/or secure parliamentary seats. As a result of such practices, the laws lacked provisions that would regulate electoral competition with transparency and/or ensure a level playing field.

However, with the adoption of Law No. 25/2008, followed by Law No. 44/2017, significant transformations began to emerge. The 2008 law introduced a set of reforms that were further developed under the 2017 law, which incorporated substantial structural improvements governing the conduct of the electoral process. Nevertheless, Lebanese experts and civil society organizations have consistently emphasized the ongoing and urgent need for additional reforms in order for elections to meet the criteria of being truly democratic, free, and transparent.

2- Reforms Introduced by Law No. 25/2008 and Further Developed in Law No. 44/2017

Key general reforms:

1. Holding elections simultaneously in all districts across Lebanese territory on the same day.
2. Introducing provisions to regulate electoral media coverage and advertising.
3. Establishing the Supervisory Commission for Elections.
4. Introducing an electoral silence period.
5. Codifying the right of local civil society organizations to monitor the electoral process.
6. Setting both fixed and flexible caps on electoral spending.
7. Introducing provisions enabling Lebanese citizens residing abroad to vote.

Additional logistical measures introduced by the law:

1. Use of transparent ballot boxes.
2. Use of indelible ink.
3. Mandatory voting inside a private booth.
4. Prohibition of delegates from interfering in the voting process.
5. Ban on electoral campaigning in and around polling centers.
6. Ban on the publication of surveys and opinion polls within ten days of the election.

These reforms have been implemented in three electoral cycles (2009, 2018, and 2022). However, after each election, gaps in the legal texts, deliberate violations, and shortcomings in the performance of the organizing authorities (the Ministry of Interior and Municipalities and the Supervisory Commission for Elections) have repeatedly surfaced. These issues have had a direct impact on the integrity, transparency, and democratic nature of the electoral process, highlighting the urgent need to further develop existing reforms and introduce new ones.

3- Proposed Reforms

Among the reforms¹⁴ that continue to be highlighted in the reports of civil society organizations, as well as regional and international bodies concerned with electoral democracy, are the following:

Constitutional Amendments

Subject	Article		Proposed text
Lowering the voting age	Amendment to Article 21		Every Lebanese citizen who has reached the age of 18 on election day shall have the right to vote, provided that they meet the conditions stipulated by the applicable electoral law.
Parliamentary term	Addition of a new article		A new constitutional article ¹⁵ shall be added to clearly stipulate that the term of the parliament is four years, non-renewable and non-extendable. ¹⁶
Electoral Law	Addition of a new article		Prohibit the amendment and/or enactment of any electoral law within one year prior to the scheduled election date.

Amendment to the Electoral Law | Electoral process management

Subject	Article	Reform	New text
Supervisory Commission for Elections It is preferable to issue a separate law from the electoral law itself	Chapter III Articles 9–23 and all articles related to the Commission's work and powers	Establish an independent and permanent electoral commission with both financial and administrative autonomy (legal personality). This commission shall be responsible for managing all types of elections: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parliamentary elections • Voting by non-residents • Municipal elections • Any future administrative electoral bodies • Referenda (if adopted) 	

14- The methodology of these amendments does not delve into the details of the justifications (for these, see the reports of the Lebanese Association for Democratic Elections – LADE). Rather, it is limited to proposing a set of recommendations ranging from the implementation of many provisions of the current electoral law (Law No. 44/2017), to proposing legal amendments to several articles of the law. The final section proposes the establishment of an independent electoral commission in Lebanon, which may be created by a dedicated law and/or as a special section within the electoral law.

15- This aims to prevent any future attempts to extend and/or renew parliamentary terms. Several countries around the world explicitly stipulate in their constitutions the timeframe and schedule for holding elections, including:

- Costa Rica: The constitution stipulates that legislative and presidential elections are held on the first Sunday of February every four years (Article 138).
- Honduras: The constitution stipulates that general elections (including legislative elections) are held on the last Sunday of November every four years (Article 237).
- Nicaragua: The constitution stipulates that general elections (including for the National Assembly) are held on the first Sunday of November every five years (Article 178).
- El Salvador: The constitution stipulates that legislative elections are held on the first Sunday of March every three years (Article 73).
- Dominican Republic: The constitution stipulates that presidential and legislative elections are held on the third Sunday of May every four years (Article 209).

16- The French constitution sets the term of the National Assembly (parliament) at five years. Article 12 stipulates that the term cannot be extended except in the case of war and with the approval of parliament itself. Even in that case, the extension must take place within a clear constitutional framework, as the principle is non-extension. The Italian constitution, in Article 60, sets the term of both houses of parliament at five years, requiring new elections at the end of the term, with extensions permitted only in the event of war.

Amendment to the Electoral Law | **Miscellaneous**

Subject	Article	Reform	Proposed text
Electoral threshold		Establish a unified electoral threshold of %5 across all electoral districts, independent of the electoral quotient.	
Abolishing the preferential vote	Article 98: Amendment to Paragraph 1 Repeal of Paragraphs 2/3/4	Each voter shall vote for one list among the competing lists.	
Magnetic card	Repeal of Article 84	By a decree issued by the Council of Ministers with a two-thirds majority based on a proposal by the minister, the government shall take the necessary steps to adopt a magnetic electronic card for the next electoral process and propose to parliament the necessary amendments to this law to enable its adoption.	It is worth noting that it would be preferable to continue using the identity card or passport as stipulated in Paragraph 1 of Article 95 of the electoral law, ¹⁷ and to move toward adopting an electronic identity card (eID). The eID is not merely a card: it serves as a gateway to government and financial services, a tool for digital signatures, and a fundamental component of a modern state's digital infrastructure. Moreover, the budget allocated for introducing the magnetic card, which would be used for a single purpose (voting), could be more effectively invested in adopting an eID for voters and all citizens.
Delegates	Amendment to Paragraph 1 of Article 90	Each candidate on a list shall have the right to appoint voters from the electoral district to serve as their delegates inside polling stations, at a rate of no more than one fixed delegate per polling station. The list shall also have the right to appoint roaming delegates to enter all polling stations in the district from among the voters in that district, at a rate of one delegate for every two polling stations in rural areas and one delegate for every three polling stations in urban areas.	Each list shall have the right to appoint voters from the electoral district to serve as their delegates inside polling stations, at a maximum rate of two fixed delegates per polling station. The list shall also have the right to appoint roaming delegates to enter all polling stations in the district from among the voters in that district, at a rate of one delegate for every two polling stations in rural areas and one delegate for every three polling stations in urban areas.

17- Article 95 – On the Voting Process:

1.Upon entering the polling station, the head of the station shall verify the voter's identity based on their valid Lebanese national identity card or ordinary passport. In the event of any discrepancy in the personal details between the identity card or passport and the electoral rolls, the identity card number or passport number shall prevail.

Amendment to the Electoral Law | Voting

Subject	Article	Reform	Proposed text
At polling centers	Addition	Appointment of a civilian head for each polling center.	
Voting: Elimination of the envelope	Amendment to Paragraph 2 of Article 95	“... in an envelope sealed with the official stamp after being signed.”	After the polling station committee verifies that the voter’s name is included in the voter register for that polling station, the head of the station shall provide the voter with the ballot paper, after signing its back together with the clerk. The voter shall then be required to proceed compulsorily behind the voting booth to exercise their electoral right freely, failing which they shall be prohibited from voting.
Counting and tabulation	Amendment to Article 100	Counting shall take place inside the polling stations.	The counting shall be conducted at the polling center after merging the ballot boxes from all polling stations, under the supervision of the head of the polling center and with the assistance of all polling station heads.
Voting by non-residents – six seats	Repeal of Article 122	Six seats shall be added for non-residents, increasing the number of members of parliament to 134 in the electoral cycle following the first election held under this law. In the subsequent cycle, six seats shall be deducted from the 128 members of parliament from the same sects allocated to non-residents in Article 112 of this law, by a decree issued by the Council of Ministers based on a proposal by the minister.	

Amendment to the Electoral Law | Voting by persons with disabilities

Subject	Article	Reform	Proposed text
Polling centers and polling stations	Addition of a new article	All polling centers and polling stations must be equipped to receive voters with disabilities.	Application of Law No. 2000/220.

Amendment to the Electoral Law | Electoral financing and spending

Subject	Article	Reform	Proposed text
Electoral spending ceiling		New Article 61: On the electoral spending ceiling (from Law No. 2021/8)	Reduce the electoral spending ceiling.

In-kind assistance	Repeal of Paragraph 2 of Article 62	Consider in-kind assistance a form of bribery, whether or not it had been traditionally provided.	The aforementioned donations and assistance shall be prohibited if offered by candidates, or by institutions owned or managed by candidates or political parties, even if such contributions had been regularly and customarily provided in the same size and quantity for years prior to the start of the electoral campaign period. In this case, any payments or assistance provided during the campaign shall be deemed part of the electoral spending ceiling stipulated in Article 61.
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The voluntary work of delegates shall be deemed part of the electoral expenses.	Amendment to Paragraph 4 of Article 60	The services of individuals volunteering without remuneration shall not be considered a contribution under this law. The services of individuals volunteering without remuneration shall not be considered a contribution under this law.	The services of individuals (delegates) volunteering without remuneration shall be deemed a contribution under this law.
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Amendment to the Electoral Law | **Mega-centers (comprehensive polling centers)**

Subject	Article	Reform	Proposed text
<p>Mega-centers</p>	<p>Addition of a provision on mega-centers</p>	<p>Amendments to certain articles related to voting in the place of residence (for those who wish to do so)</p> <p>Article 32: On the publication and circulation of electoral rolls</p> <p>Before the first of February of each year, the Directorate-General of Personal Status shall send copies of the preliminary electoral rolls to municipalities, local mayors (mukhtars), and the governorate and district centers for the purpose of publishing and circulating them to facilitate their final revision. The recipients must receive these lists no later than the first of February so that they can invite voters to check them and revise them based on the documented information available to them.</p> <p>Amendment to Article 33 (addition of a new paragraph)</p>	<p>A number of mega-centers shall be established across governorates and/or district centers according to specific mechanisms.</p> <p>Voters must register in advance and such pre-registration shall be mandatory.</p> <p>Article 32:</p> <p>Before the first of February of each year, the Directorate-General of Personal Status shall send copies of the preliminary electoral rolls (including the lists of voters who have decided to vote in their place of residence) to municipalities, local mayors (mukhtars), and governorate and district centers for publication and circulation to facilitate final revisions. These recipients must receive the lists no later than the first of February so they can invite voters to review them and update them based on the verified information available to them.</p> <p>Article 33:</p> <p>Addition of a new paragraph:</p> <p>The Ministry shall publish the preliminary electoral lists of voters who have chosen to vote in the mega-centers within the same timeframe on its official website and shall issue CD-ROMs containing these lists.</p>

Amendment to the Electoral Law | **Electoral media and advertising**

Subject	Article	Reform	Proposed text
Electoral media and advertising	Implementation of Chapter VI (Articles 68–83)		
Electoral silence period	Amendment to Article 78	Addition of a new paragraph on candidates' activities	From midnight on the day preceding election day until the closure of the ballot boxes, it is prohibited for: 1. Candidates to carry out any electoral activity or campaigning. 2. All media outlets to broadcast any advertisement, campaign material, or direct electoral appeal – except for unavoidable audio and/or visual appearances during live coverage of the electoral process. On election day, media coverage shall be limited to reporting on the electoral process itself.
Independent Regulatory Authority for Audiovisual and Print Media (Media Regulatory Authority)	An independent authority shall be established with legal personality and financial and administrative autonomy.	Tasks: Safeguarding the freedom and plurality of audiovisual, print, and digital media and communications	Establishment of the authority. Mandate includes: • Monitoring and overseeing electoral media, advertising, and campaigning. • Coordinating with the independent electoral commission during the electoral process.

Amendment to the Electoral Law | **Women's political participation**

Subject	Article	Reform	Proposed text
Gender quota	Addition of a new article	Introducing a provision in the Electoral Law stipulating a percentage quota for women between %30 and %50 of parliamentary seats.	Over three consecutive electoral cycles. It shall be permissible to gradually increase the percentage of seats reserved for women in the Lebanese Parliament as follows: First electoral cycle: %30 Second electoral cycle: %40 Third electoral cycle: %50

Amendment to the Electoral Law | Voting by non-residents

Subject	Article	Reform	Proposed text
Six seats	Repeal of Article 122	Six seats shall be added for non-residents, increasing the total number of Members of Parliament to 134 in the electoral cycle following the first election held under this law. In the subsequent cycle, six seats shall be deducted from the 128 members of parliament from the same seats allocated to non-residents under Article 112 of this law, by a decree issued by the Council of Ministers based on a proposal by the minister.	
Counting and tabulation	Application of Article 120: On the submission of envelopes and other electoral documents	Each polling station shall prepare two copies of the electoral process report, indicating the number of registered voters, voters who cast their ballots, and the number of ballots. This record shall be signed by the polling station committee and by the accredited delegates present, if any. One copy shall remain at the embassy or consulate under the custody of the ambassador or consul, and the second copy, along with the sealed envelopes containing the ballots and other electoral documents, shall be sent immediately to the Central Bank of Lebanon through the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Emigrants. At the end of the electoral process on the Sunday designated for parliamentary elections in Lebanon, these envelopes and other electoral documents shall be sent to the Higher Registration Committee in Beirut for counting and verification of the results. The process shall comply with the provisions of this law regarding the secure transport and monitoring of the counting process.	Results shall be counted, compiled, and verified in Beirut and then sent electronically, along with their scanned copies, to the electoral district centers to be included in the final results.

Conclusion

The proposed reforms aim to align Lebanon's electoral law with the rapid societal and technological developments that the country, like the rest of the world, is experiencing. It is important to stress that there is no such thing as a perfect electoral law; rather, there are electoral laws that attempt to respond to the transformations societies undergo. It should also be noted that no law or successful experience in one country can be transplanted in isolation from that country's broader system of values, cultural practices, social norms, and political experiences. Conversely, an electoral law that has proven successful in a given country during a particular period is not necessarily suitable for all times.



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