



Armenian International Policy Research

G r o u p

Dual Citizenship, Experience from Abroad, *A case study from Lebanon*

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Dual Citizenship: Alternative Arrangements, Economic Implications,
and Social Dimension

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Outline

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 - Geographical Situation
 - Chronological Facts
 - The Political System

- 2- Lebanese Experience
 - Right for citizenship
 - Voting
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 - Tax Issues

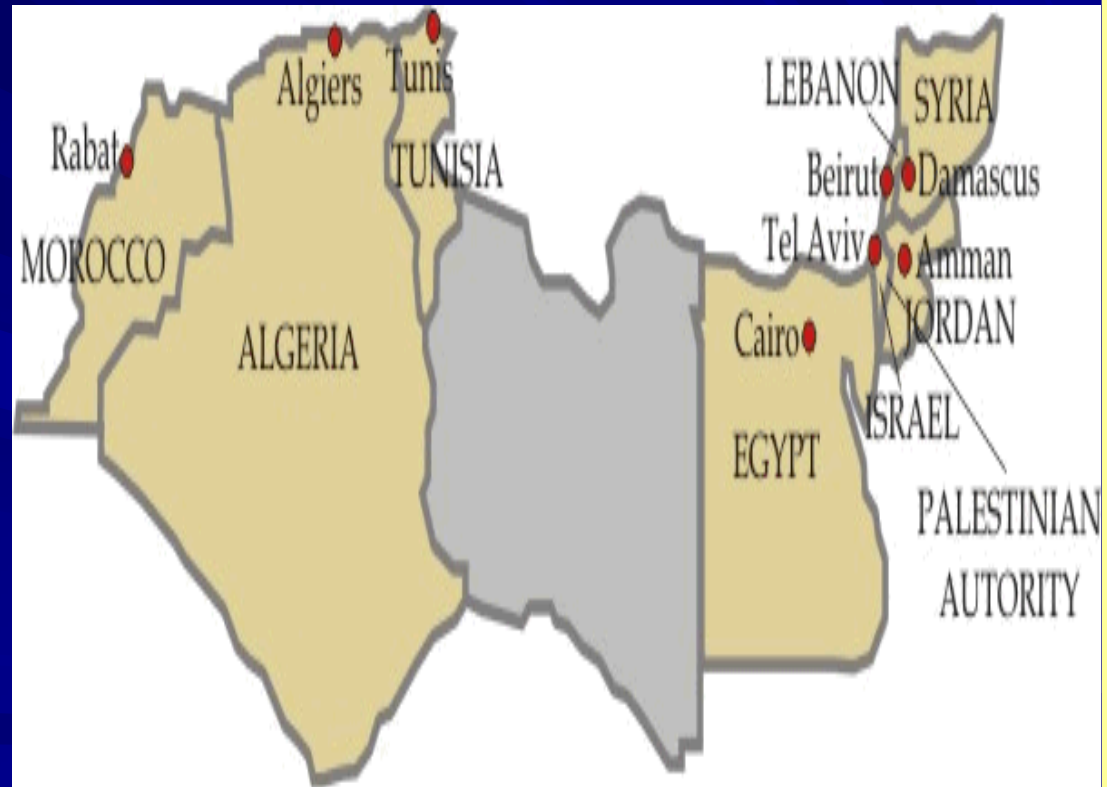
- 3- Armenians in Lebanon

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- 5- Recommendations

1- Lebanon a land of Emigration / Immigration

Geographical situation



Chronological Facts

- Ottoman Empire & French Mandate
- 1923 Lausanne Treaty
- 1924 National Registration in the civil records
- 1925 (January 19) Law on Citizenship
- 1926 Announcement of the “State of Grand Lebanon”
- 1932 Unique National Census
- 1943 Independence
- 1975 War Period – Interdependence
- 1976 Syrian Forces enter Lebanon
- 1990 Taef Agreement (Neo-Constitution)
- 1994 Citizenship is granted to more than 300.000 (Law)
- 2005 Prime Minister Hariri Assassination and Departure of Syrian Forces
- 2006 “Diaspora Card”

Political System

- One of the first Democracies in the Region
 - Founding Member of the UN
 - Founding Member of the Arab League
- Parliamentary Presidency;
- The President of Republic, a Christian Maronite, is elected for 6 years. His mandate is non-renewable. He is elected by the Absolute Majority of the Deputies.
- The Parliament is elected for 4 years according to a law (171 of 2000); 50 % of the deputies are Christians & 50 % Muslims; The President of the Parliament is a Chiite.
-
- The **Highest Executive Authority is in the hands of the Council of Ministers** (since 1990); The Council of Ministers requires a vote of 2/3 for important questions (not the Prime Ministers). The Council of Ministers is appointed by the President, following Mandatory Consultations with the Parliamentary Groups. A vote of Confidence from the Parliament is Mandatory. The President of Republic “**can**” preside the Council of Ministers if “**he wants**”.

2- Lebanese & the Diaspora

Lebanon – Facts & Figures

- Area of 10452 square kilometers
- Population 3,5 Million
- Lack of Natural Resources
- Midway between Europe & the Middle East (Geographically & Culturally)
- Continuous Political Instability

Lebanon – Facts & Figures

■ Traditional Liberalism

- Impact on Organizations (dynamic SME's)

 - Entrepreneurship Culture

 - The role of women in Organizational Life

■ Multicultural & Multiethnic Society

- Cultural Mosaic: Innovative Idea Incubator

Lebanon - Against all odds

- Highest Income per Capita in the region beyond the oil Producer States (around 20 Billion dollars);
- Number of Tourists reached 1.5 million in the year 2004,
- One of the highest Deposits per capita;
 - around 72 Billion dollars in 2005, for 100 Billion for the UAE & 130 Billion for the KSA.

Lebanon – Its People

- The homo-libanicus
 - Is Educated
 - Has Competencies in 3 languages +
 - Is roaming the world (Africa, Australia, Latin-America, the Gulf, etc.)
 - Develops Networking & PR
 - Is realizing Global Achievements (Ghosn, etc.)
- The Human Resources, its Main Capital
 - At the Global level - Macro, Mezzo, Micro

Lebanese Diaspora (Wikipedia Enc.)

- Apart from the **three and a half million citizens** of Lebanon proper, there is a sizeable Lebanese diaspora. No accurate numbers are available, so estimates on the total size of the diaspora vary wildly, from conservative estimates of **4-5 million to a maximum, and probably inflated, figure of 15 million**. Most Lebanese emigrants and their descendants are Christian. Lebanese Christian families are economically and politically prominent in several Latin American countries, and make up a substantial portion of the Arab American community in the United States. **The largest Lebanese diaspora is located in Brazil, where about 7 million people have Lebanese descent** (see Arab Brazilian).
- The large size of Lebanon's diaspora may be partly explained by the historical and cultural tradition of sea-faring and travelling, which stretches back to Lebanon's ancient Phoenician origins and its role as a "gateway" of relations between Europe and the Middle East. It has been commonplace for Lebanese citizens to emigrate in search of economic prosperity. Additionally, several times in the last two centuries has the Lebanese population endured periods of ethnic cleansing and displacement (for example, 1840-60 and 1975-90). These factors have contributed to the geographical mobility of the Lebanese people.
- While under Syrian influence, Beirut passed legislation which prevented second-generation Lebanese of the diaspora from automatically obtaining Lebanese citizenship. This has reinforced the emigré status of many diaspora Lebanese. There is currently a campaign by those Lebanese of the diaspora who already have Lebanese citizenship to attain the vote from abroad. If suffrage was to be extended to these 1.2 million Lebanese emigré citizens, it would have a significant political effect, since as many as 80% of the them are believed to be Christians.

Lebanese Experience

- Lebanese get the Citizenship in case
 - They are born from a Lebanese Father
 - They are established in Lebanon for the last 10 years (this was applied once in 1990)
- Dual Citizenship is not forbidden by Lebanese Constitution
- A Dedicated Ministry (Directorate) for the Diaspora or Emigrants (Wazarat Al Moughtaribin)
- Elections & the Right to Vote
 - Local elections are organized every 6 years
 - Parliamentary elections are organized every 4 years
 - Voting is allowed only in Lebanon; No voting in Lebanese Embassies.
- Military Service
 - 1 year
 - No service for those leaving abroad
 - Exempted if they are married with a kid
 - No service if registered in a University (no service after 29 years)
 - **Abolished couple of months ago (It's a Professional Army now)**
- The Right to be Elected and Appointed to Civil Service Positions
 - **The only conditions, is that they should be Lebanese for the last 10 years.** In recent times, several Top Ranking Positions were occupied by Lebanese established abroad. .
- Taxing of Dual Citizens
 - Governed by Bilateral Agreements or Arbitrary basis

DC Advantages / Lebanon

- Strong Economic ties between Lebanese abroad & with their homeland;
- Lebanon is an Economic Hub (Social);
- Diaspora is considered a strong Lobbying & Advocacy element;
- Freedom of Mobility for Lebanese;
- Benefits drawn from Social Services in the host countries (Education, Medical, etc...);
- Lebanon became the Bank of All-Lebanese (around 72 billion dollars deposits in Lebanese Banks)

DC Disadvantages / Lebanon

- Lack of Patriotism as the homo-libanicus is a roaming Individual (lack of Ghettos abroad v/s Little Armenia, Alfortville, BH);



3- Armenians in Lebanon

Facts & Figures

- Armenian Diaspora in Lebanon: Around 100.000 citizens from Armenian origin;
- Organized Community in a very small Country: More than 20 schools, Clubs, Churches, Economic & Political Presence (5 deputies & 1 minister), several newspapers, etc...
- More than 200.000 Lebanese citizens from Armenian origin are established outside Lebanon;

Importance of dual citizenship

- High Interest for getting their Armenian Citizenship;
- They consider Lebanon as their “Pays natal” (Dzenentavayr) and not their “Mere-Patrie” (Hayrenik or Homeland); In their sub-conscience, they are at a “Stop”, and they are looking for the “terminus”, the political instability reinforced this feeling;
- A Moral tie;

4- Dual Citizenship for Armenians

Why Dual Citizenship for Armenians ?

- A small country, encountering non-friendly Geopolitics, with limited resources;
- An Opportunity for developing an Armenian Modern Nation;

Opportunities for DC /Armenia

- Availability of a structured and motivated Diaspora;
- Motivated Armenians interested in getting the citizenship;
- The existence of Competencies (Knowledge, skills & Abilities) abroad;
- The availability of Capital with Armenians established abroad;

Threats

- Depends on the Stakeholders
 - Present Armenian Citizens
 - Present Political Forces
 - Neighboring countries
 - Old Diaspora
 - New Diaspora
 - International Organizations
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5- Recommendations / Armenian Government & Parliament

- Encourage the Armenian citizens, repatriated during the postwar phase to Reestablish their Citizenship in the Countries where they came from (France, Greece, Lebanon, Syria, etc...);
- Initiate a Study for identifying the potential Armenians abroad interested in getting Dual Citizenship
- Vote the Citizenship Law

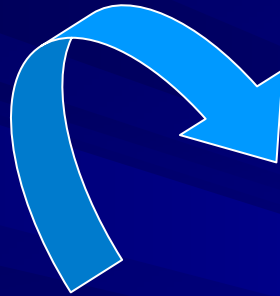
3/5 years DC

Full Fledged
Citizenship

Armenians only can apply

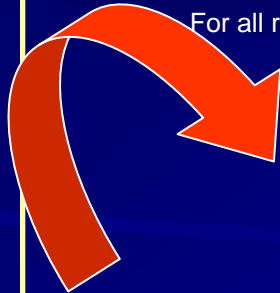


XYZ
Citizenship



For all residents (Armenians & Non-Armenians)

Special
Residency
Status



Dual Citizenship
is not allowed
by Constitution

Obligations/Responsibilities

- 1- Tax liability
 - 1.1 In a form of annual Lump Sum fee, in case they are not “resident”;
 - 1.2. Depends on bilateral agreements
- 2- Mandatory presence in Armenia for a certain period of time
- 3- Subject to military conscription in time of declared war on Armenia.

Rights

- All rights of Full-fledged citizens EXCEPT they vote for local & Municipal elections if they are IC

“Dual Citizenship”, AIPR