

LEBANON

Polity5 regime codes:

fac	scode	polity	pers	bmon	bday	byear	emon	eday	eyear	exec	exconst	polcomp
1X	LEB	1	27	11	22	1943	8	17	1970	7	3	6
1Xa	LEB	3	5	8	18	1970	5	25	1975	7	4	6
1Xb	LEB	-77	15	5	26	1975	9	21	1990	-77	-77	-77
1Xc	LEB	-66	14	9	22	1990	4	26	2005	-66	-66	-66
1Xd	LEB	6	14	4	27	2005	99	99	9999	7	6	7

PITF Problem Events:

- 1) 05/58-07/58 (REV 05/58-07/58)
- 2) 04/75-07/91 (ETH 04/75-07/91; ARC 05/75-09/90)

1X) Date of Change to Factional-Democratic: November 22, 1943 (independence)

Brief Explanation of Change To:

Lebanon's strategic location made it a valuable target during World War II, leading to conflict in the region between German and British forces during the occupation of France. After German forces were expelled in 1941, General Charles de Gaulle visited the country and agreed to recognize its independence. Elections were held in 1943 and on November 8 the newly elected government suspended its fealty to the Free French government, which responded by arresting several prominent Lebanese politicians, including the president, the prime minister, and other cabinet members. Christian and Muslim leaders united to end French power in Lebanon, and with the support of the United States, Britain and Arab countries, French authorities released the prisoners on November 22, 1943, officially recognizing Lebanese sovereignty. Political positions were distributed on the basis of religious sect, per the terms of the unwritten 1943 National Pact. Seats in Parliament were distributed on a 6-5 ratio of Christians to Muslims, with the three most powerful political positions of president, prime minister, and speaker of parliament being assigned to the Maronites, Sunnis, and Shi'a sects, respectively. The terms of the pact favored the Christian communities by granting them representation disproportionate to the size of their population and a large measure of control in the military; it also favored the Sunni community over the Shi'a population. No population census has ever been conducted in Lebanon so as not to provide a basis for challenging the terms of the pact. Large numbers of Palestinian refugees have established long-term residence in Lebanon, but they have not been accorded citizenship or direct participation in politics. Their presence, status, and the consequences of the continual provocation of Palestinian militants against Israel have been a major source of tension and dispute among and within Lebanon's various sects, particularly since the mid-1960s when the Palestinian Liberation Organization took on a more activist and militant stance in promotion of Palestinian claims against Israel.

Revolutionary War: May 1958 – July 1958

The 1956 Suez Crisis escalated tensions between Christians and Muslims in Lebanon, with the former supporting the western powers and the latter Egypt. Between May and July 1958 Muslim opposition groups rebelled against the Christian-dominated government; the crisis was ended when 14,000 U.S. troops occupied Beirut and western diplomats secured the resignation of Christian President Camille Chamoun in favor of more moderate figure Fuad Chehab, quelling the Muslim opposition.

Identify Main Factions:

- *Maronite Christians* — Christians, including the dominant Maronites but also Greek Catholic and Orthodox populations, are dominant in the central coastal region. The Phalange, National Bloc, National Liberal Party, Lebanese Forces and Free Patriotic Movement (FPM) are Christian dominated parties. The presidency is reserved for a Maronite Christian.
- *Sunni Muslims* — Sunni Muslims, living in concentrated pockets dispersed across the central and northern regions, were initially represented by the Amal party. The prime minister is designated to be a Sunni Muslim
- *Shi'a Muslims* — Shi'a Muslims are concentrated in the lesser developed and poorer southern region; the speaker of parliament is designated to be a Shi'a Muslim.
- Other Minor Factions:

Druze — The Druze are an Islamic sect concentrated southeast of Beirut and are represented by the Progressive Socialist Party.

Palestinians — Palestinian refugees have maintained a substantial and prolonged presence in Lebanon, particularly in the southern region. Palestinian refugees have been represented primarily by the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO).

Changes within Factional-Democratic Period:

1Xa) August 17, 1970 (presidential election) – On August 17, 1970 the Lebanese Parliament, per the terms of the constitution, held an unruly election for president marred by repeated recounts, invalid balloting, and brawling deputies. Sulayman Franjiyah, who had the backing of the National Bloc Party and the center bloc in the Chamber of Deputies, was elected president by one vote over Ilyas Sarkis, head of the Central Bank, who had the support of the Shihabists, those favoring a strong executive with close ties to the military. This election marked a distancing of the relationship between the executive and the military and a reduction in Maronite control over the political agenda.

Ethnic War: April 1975 – July 1991

Religious tensions were exacerbated beginning in 1969 with the establishment of PLO military operations against Israel in southern Lebanon, causing an influx of Palestinian refugees, weakening of government institutions in the region, and leading to Israeli counter attacks against both PLO and Lebanese forces. While the Sunni and Druze population supported the PLO, the Christian and Shi'a population, living in direct contact with the refugees, opposed government support of PLO activities. In the spring of 1975 minor clashes between Christian militias and Palestinian guerilla groups began to escalate in a spiral of retribution killings and massacres, leading to social polarization and geographic segregation of religious sects throughout the country.

1Xb) May 26, 1975 (collapse of central authority)

Adverse Regime Change: May 1975 – September 1990

On May 26, 1975 a military government, ruling under the appointment of President Franjiyah, was forced to resign, effectively collapsing government authority. The war continued, with periodic calms and foreign interventions by Syria in 1976 and Israel in 1985, until gradually diminishing after the Taif Agreement of 1989.

1Xc) September 22, 1990 (new constitution; foreign occupation) – On September 21, 1990, President Elias Hrawi signed into law constitutional amendments that codified a series of significant political reforms and effectively created Lebanon’s Second Republic. These amendments were first endorsed during the Taif Agreement meetings of 1989, which had brought an end to decades of sectarian civil war but had also authorized the Syrian government to maintain a 35,000-troop occupation force in the country. The new constitution divided parliamentary seats evenly between Muslims and Christians and strengthened the post of prime minister (reserved for Sunni Muslims). The Syrian government continued to occupy and politically dominate Lebanon until the Cedar Revolution of spring 2005.

1Xd) April 27, 2005 (withdrawal of foreign military) – In September 2004 the National Assembly, under pressure from Syria, voted to amend the constitution to allow pro-Syrian President Emile Lahoud to remain in office an additional three years. Opposition to the amendments by prominent leaders, including Sunni Prime Minister Rafiq Hariri, who resigned in protest, led to international pressure on Syria to withdraw its troops and end its manipulation of Lebanese politics. On February 14, 2005 former-Prime Minister Hariri was assassinated by a car bomb, leading to widespread protests calling for Syria’s withdrawal and blaming President Lahoud and the Syrian government for the murder, a chain of demonstrations known as the Cedar Revolution. On February 28 the pro-Syrian government of Prime Minister Omar Karami resigned, calling for new elections. Opposition from both domestic and international forces continued to increase throughout March and in April Syria began a phased withdrawal of its forces. On April 26, all remaining Syrian troops were withdrawn.