

PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS

Law No. 44

Election of the Members of the Parliament

Issued on 17 June 2017

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Parliamentary Elections

Law No. 44 Election of the Members of the Parliament Issued on 17 JUNE 2017

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Single article:

- The draft law submitted for immediate enforcement by virtue of decree no. 883 of 14/6/2017 on the "Law for the election of the members of the parliament" as amended by the general assembly of the parliament is hereby approved.

- The present law shall enter into force immediately after its publication in the official gazette, subject to expeditious promulgation in accordance with the first paragraph of Article /56/ of the Constitution.

Baabda, on June 17, 2017

The President of the Republic, Michel AOUN (signature)

The Prime Minister, Saadeddine HARIRI (signature)

Chapter I

The Voting System, Number of Deputies and Constituencies

Article 1: The voting system and number of deputies

The Parliament is composed of 128 deputies elected for four years through a system of proportional representation. Elections shall be organized in one round and based on the principles of universal suffrage and secret ballot.

Article 2: Parliamentary seats and constituencies

a. The number and confessional distribution of parliamentary seats by constituency are determined according to the table attached to the present law (Appendix I) and shall be the basis for the nomination of candidates. The attached table is an integral part of the present law.

b. All voters of different confessions in the electoral constituency shall vote for the candidates of that constituency.

Chapter II

Eligibility of Voters and Candidates

Article 3: The right to vote

Every resident or non-resident, male or female Lebanese citizen may exercise their right to vote, provided that they have attained the legal age stipulated in the Constitution, enjoy their civil and political rights and are not in any of the non-eligibility situations set forth in the present law.

Article 4: Voter disenfranchisement or the revocation of the right to vote

Disenfranchisement shall apply to:

1. Persons who are under an interdiction of civil rights.
2. Persons who are permanently barred from public office and posts.
3. Persons who are under temporary disqualification from office and post levels, until their re-qualification.
4. Persons who are convicted of a felony offense.
5. Persons who are convicted of any of the following major offences: burglary, fraud, bad credit, embezzlement, bribery, perjury, rape, intimidation, forgery, the use of forged documents, false testimony, crimes against

public morals listed in Chapter Seven of the Penal Code and crimes related to the cultivation, production and trafficking of narcotics.

6. Persons who are placed under judicial interdiction, throughout the duration of the interdiction period.

7. Persons who have been fraudulently declared bankrupt or sentenced to the penalties specified in Articles 689 to 698 of the Penal Code.

8. Persons who are sentenced to the penalties provided for in Articles 329 to 334 of the Penal Code.

The abovementioned persons may not vote until after their rehabilitation.

Article 5: Voting and nomination requirements for naturalized citizens

Naturalized Lebanese citizens may only vote or run for office ten years after the execution of their naturalization decree.

The present article shall not apply to non-Lebanese women who obtain the Lebanese citizenship as a result of marrying a Lebanese male.

Article 6: Military voters

Non-retired military personnel of all ranks and divisions including the Lebanese Armed Forces, the Internal Security Forces, General Security, State Security, Parliament Police, Customs Police and other similar positions, may not vote.

Article 7: The right to stand for Parliamentary elections

The right to stand for Parliamentary elections is restricted to Lebanese citizens who have completed the age of twenty-five, are registered in the voter registry and exercise their civil and political rights.

Article 8: Ineligibility to stand for elections

1. The persons mentioned below may not stand for elections, neither during their tenure of office nor during the time intervals that

follow the date of their service termination or acceptance of resignation:

(a) The Constitutional Council members and all types and levels of judges serving in the judicial, administrative, financial, spiritual, confessional or religious courts, unless they resign and effectively disengage from their posts, at least two years prior to the end date of the Parliament's mandate.

(b) First and second-grade civil servants, unless they resign and effectively disengage from their posts, at least six months prior to the end date of the Parliament's mandate.

(c) Military personnel of all ranks and divisions including the Lebanese Armed Forces, the Internal Security Forces, General Security, State Security, Customs Police, Parliament Police, and other similar positions may not stand for parliamentary elections unless they retire or resign and have their resignation accepted at least six months prior to the end date of the Parliament's mandate.

(d) The chairs and members of boards of directors who hold full-time positions in public institutions and bodies, mixed economy companies, public capital companies and public right institutions and their general managers, unless they resign and effectively disengage from their posts at least six months prior to the end date of the Parliament's mandate.

(e) The presidents and vice-presidents of municipal councils and presidents of unions of municipalities, unless they resign in accordance with the provisions of the Municipalities Law and effectively disengage from their posts at least two years before the end date of the Parliament's mandate.

On an exceptional basis and for one time only, the presidents of municipal councils and unions of Municipalities wishing to run in the parliamentary elections shall submit their resignation from both the presidency and membership of municipal councils within thirty days from the date of publication of the law in

the Official Gazette.

(f) The president, vice-president and members of the Supervisory Commission for Elections.

2. Notwithstanding any provision to the contrary, a resignation submitted for the above reasons shall be considered as accepted on the date of submission thereof to the competent authority and the resignee's effective disengagement from post.

3. The provisions of the present Article do not apply to the faculty members holding a cadre, full-time or contractual position at the Lebanese University.

Chapter III Election Supervision

Article 9: The Supervisory Commission for Elections

A permanent body called the "Supervisory Commission for Elections", hereinafter referred to as the "Commission", shall be established.

The Commission shall supervise the elections in accordance with its functions set forth in this law, independently and in coordination with the Minister of Interior and Municipalities, hereinafter referred to as the "Minister".

The Minister shall monitor the works of the Commission, choose its headquarters, make such independent private headquarters available, and attend its meetings when necessary, without participating in the voting.

Article 10: The composition of the Commission

1. The Commission is composed of eleven members according to the following:

(a) An honorably retired ordinary judge who has exercised judicial duties for over 20 years, selected from among three candidates

nominated by the Supreme Judicial Council.

(b) An honorably retired administrative judge who has exercised judicial duties for over 20 years, selected from among three candidates nominated by the State Council (Shura Council).

(c) An honorably retired financial judge who has exercised judicial duties for over 20 years, selected from among three candidates nominated by the Court of Auditors.

(d) A former president of the Bar Association selected from among three former Bar Presidents nominated by the Beirut Bar Council (as member).

(e) A former president of the Bar Association selected from among three former Bar Presidents nominated by the Tripoli Bar Council (as member).

(f) A representative of the Press Syndicate selected from among three candidates nominated by the syndicate Council (as member).

(g) A media and advertising expert selected from among three candidates nominated by the National Council for Audiovisual Media (member).

(h) A former president of the Lebanese Association of Certified Public Accountants selected from among three candidates nominated by the Association (as member).

(i) Two members who are senior experts in elections-related matters (including elections management, campaign financing or electoral advertising) selected from among 6 candidates nominated by the Minister.

(j) A representative of the civil society organizations that meet the requirements stipulated in Article 20 of the present law, selected from among three candidates who are experienced in elections and nominated by the said organizations through a selection procedure decided by the Minister.

2. Gender representation shall be considered when candidates are selected for membership of the Commission.

3. The Commission shall be presided over by either the judicial or the administrative judge, whoever holds the higher position. However, if both judges hold equal positions, the older judge shall preside over the Commission. The older of the two Bar Presidents shall automatically become Vice-President.

The nominating bodies referred to in this Article shall nominate candidates within one month from the date of their notification of the request to submit the names.

In the event of failed or overdue nomination of a candidate from a specific category, the Council of Ministers may, at the suggestion of the Minister, appoint a substitute from the same category.

Article 11: Appointment and mandate of the Commission members

The Commission members shall be appointed by virtue of a decree to be issued by the Council of Ministers at the suggestion of the Minister.

The Commission members for the upcoming elections shall be appointed within a maximum period of three months from the date of publication of this law.

The mandate of the Commission members shall commence on the date of issue of their appointment decree pursuant to the Council of Ministers' decision, and end six months after the completion date of the general parliamentary elections.

The Council of Ministers shall appoint the Commission members one month prior to the end of the mandate of the existing Commission. The existing Commission shall continue the exercise of its functions until a new Commission is appointed.

Article 12: Vacancy in the Commission

If the position of any Commission member becomes vacant for any reason, the Commission shall announce the vacancy, and the Commission President shall inform the Minister, within one week, for their information and necessary action to appoint a substitute.

The substitute member shall be appointed within a maximum period of fifteen days starting from the date of notification of the Minister, through the same procedure of appointment of the original member and for the remainder of their term of office.

Article 13: Oath-taking

The members of the Commission shall take the following oath before the President of the Republic, prior to assuming their duties, and within a maximum period of fifteen days starting from the date of their appointment:

"I swear by God, the Almighty, to fulfill my duties in the Supervisory Commission for Elections with utmost integrity, impartiality, dedication and independence, and to strictly comply with the laws and regulations, especially those that regulate the elections to guarantee their freedom, integrity and transparency".

Article 14: Rules of procedure of the Commission

The Commission may draft and amend its rules of procedure that regulate its activities pursuant to the provisions of the present law.

The rules of procedure and amendment thereof shall be approved by virtue of a decision to be taken by the Council of Ministers within fifteen days from the date of submission thereof to the General Secretariat of the Council of Ministers.

Article 15: Incompatibility of offices

a. Prime ministers, ministers, speakers and members of parliament, board chairs and

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members of public institutions, presidents and members of municipal councils, and holders of any other public functions may not, at the same time, hold the position of member, president or vice-president of the Commission, except for faculty members who hold cadre, full-time or contractual positions at the Lebanese University, in addition to the incompatibility cases indicated in Article 8 (d) and (e), and in the second paragraph of Article 109 of the present law.

b. The president, vice-president and members of the Commission may not stand for municipal or local elections during their term of office and the year following the end thereof.

c. If any of the persons mentioned in paragraph (a) above is appointed as member of the Commission, they shall decide, within a period of two weeks, whether to keep their current position or become member of the Commission; otherwise, they shall be considered to have resigned from the membership of the Commission.

Article 16: Prohibited acts

During their term of office, the president and members of the Commission shall refrain from carrying out any acts or activities that run counter to the Commission's functions and impartiality.

During their term of office, the president and members of the Commission shall refrain from giving any lectures or participating in any seminar or making any statement related to elections, in their personal capacity, unless authorized by the Commission.

The Commission shall decide to terminate the term of office of any of its members who violates the obligations provided for in the present law, subject to approval by a two-thirds majority vote of Commission members, and subject to the application of the adversarial system and

the right to counsel in accordance with the rules of procedure of the Commission, and provided that the decision of the Commission is approved by the Council of Ministers.

Article 17: Criminal prosecution

No criminal proceedings, penal action or arrests may be initiated without the authorization of the Commission against the members of the Commission, during their term of office, for acts related to their work in the Commission. And no provisional arrest decisions may be taken against the members of the Commission for acts not related to their work in the Commission, unless they are caught in the act of committing the offence.

The Minister of Justice shall submit to the Court of Cassation a request for authorization to prosecute or take appropriate legal action pursuant to a warrant of the Public Prosecutor specifying the type, time and place of the offense and providing a summary of the evidence warranting the prosecution of the offender and the initiation of the necessary punitive measures.

The request for authorization to prosecute shall be submitted to the Minister, and the Commission shall be convened within a one-week period to look into the request and decide thereon after hearing the accused member who may not participate in the vote. And within a similar period, the Commission shall issue its decision on the prosecution by absolute majority and submit it to the Minister.

Article 18: Compensation of Commission members

The President of the Commission shall receive, for the duration of their mandate, a monthly allowance to be specified in the decree establishing the Commission, provided that they discontinue any other occupation. All other members of the Commission shall discontinue

any other occupation during the electoral process period, and shall receive, during said period, a fixed allowance to be specified in the decree establishing the Commission.

Article 19: The functions of the Commission

The Commission shall assume the following functions and powers:

1. Issuing decisions and circulars that fall within the framework of its functions and submitting the proposals it deems appropriate to the Minister.
2. Receiving the applications of the audiovisual, print and electronic media wishing to participate in covering the voting and counting process, delivering the required permits to such media and establishing the code of conduct for media coverage.
3. Receiving the applications of the private audiovisual and print media wishing to participate in the paid electoral advertising in accordance with the provisions of this law.
4. Monitoring the compliance of all candidate lists, candidates and media outlets with the laws and regulations that regulate the electoral competition in accordance with the provisions of this law.
5. Determining the terms and conditions of conducting opinion polls as well as the dissemination, broadcast or distribution of results thereof during the electoral campaign and monitoring compliance with the pre-election silence period.
6. Receiving and auditing the financial statements of the electoral campaigns within one month from the date of the elections.
7. Receiving the candidates' applications for the registration of their financial commissioner for the electoral campaign, and issuing them a receipt proving that their application has been filed.
8. Exercising control over the election campaign spending in accordance with the provisions of this law.

9. Receiving and processing the applications of local and international electoral observers, issuing their permits and establishing a code of conduct for them.

10. Promoting electoral knowledge, guiding voters and encouraging democratic practice by all means available.

11. Receiving and adjudicating complaints of alleged violations in matters related to the functions of the Commission. Where such violations are proven, the Commission may automatically take action and initiate the appropriate measures.

12. Recruiting electoral experts when necessary.

At the end of its mandate, the Commission shall submit a report on its work and submit it to the President of the Republic, the Speaker of the Parliament, the Prime Minister, the Minister of Interior and Municipalities and the President of the Constitutional Council. The said report shall be published in the Official Gazette.

Article 20: Election Observation

a. The competent civil society organizations may observe the elections and monitor their progress, under the supervision of the Commission, provided that they meet all of the following requirements:

- To be non-political and have a proof of registration issued at least two years prior to the submission of the application to the Commission.
- To neither be associated with any political side or party nor have in their general or administrative bodies any candidate standing for elections.
- To have in their statute, at least in the past two years, objectives related to democracy, human rights, elections, transparency or a training component related thereto.
- To declare their funding sources to the Commission.
- To submit to the Commission the closing

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balance of its account dedicated for its election observation activities, not later than one month after the end of the electoral process.

-To have at the date of submission of the application at least 100 members affiliated to the organization in accordance with the regulations duly deposited with the competent official authorities.

-To have its administrative board comply with the code of ethics established by the Commission.

The Commission shall look into the accreditation applications submitted thereto, verify the fulfillment of the above-listed requirements, and decide whether to approve or reject each application.

The Commission shall determine the principles and procedures of election observation and monitoring by virtue of decisions that it may issue at least one month prior to Election Day.

b. The Commission shall look into the applications of international elections organizations wishing to observe the electoral process in accordance with the terms and conditions established by the Commission at least one month prior to Election Day.

c. The Commission reserves the right to revoke the accreditation of any organization or organization member authorized to observe the electoral process, should they violate the conditions set forth in the laws and regulations.

Article 21: The decisions of the Commission

The meetings of the Commission shall be considered legal only in the presence of at least seven members. The decisions of the Commission shall be taken by an absolute majority of its legal members and may be appealed to the State Council (Shura Council) within three days from the date of notification or publication thereof. The State Council shall decide on the appeal within three days from the date of submission thereof.

Article 22: The delegation of powers

The Commission may decide to delegate to one or several of its members a specific task that falls within its remits. It may also form committees to carry out such specific tasks.

The President of the Commission may delegate certain powers to their deputy or a Commission member.

Article 23: The administrative body and budget of the Commission

a. The financial and administrative regulations of the Commission shall be determined by virtue of decrees to be adopted by the Council of Ministers at the Minister's suggestion solicited by the Commission.

b. The Commission shall have an administrative body and may contract with whoever it deems competent and fit to support it in the exercise of its functions. The Commission may also request that a number of employees who hold grade-four or otherwise equivalent positions in public administrations and institutions be temporarily seconded to it in return for compensation to be determined by the Minister. The secondment shall be effected by a decision of the competent minister at the Minister's request solicited by the Commission. The said decision shall also specify the duration of the secondment.

c. The Commission shall prepare its draft budget. Special appropriations for the Commission's budget shall be allocated in the budget of the Ministry of Interior and Municipalities, at the suggestion of the Minister.

Chapter IV

Preparations and Voter Lists

Article 24: Voter registration

Registration in the voter lists is mandatory for voters. A voter may not be registered in more than one voter list, subject to the application of

the provisions of Article 461 of the Penal Code.

Article 25: The permanent and amendable nature of the voter lists

The voter lists are permanent; however, they may be periodically updated in accordance with the provisions of the present law.

Article 26: Voter lists

The Directorate General of Personal Status (DGPS) shall prepare for every electoral constituency automated lists containing the names of voters as extracted from the personal status records. The voter lists shall contain the names of all voters who, on the start date of the voter lists' updating period, i.e. the 20th of October every year, would have been registered in the electoral constituency for at least one year.

Article 27: Voter list entries

The voter lists shall include: the voter's full name, mother's name, register number as extracted from the personal status records, gender, date of birth and confession. On each list, a column shall be reserved to note, where appropriate, the amendments made to the entries in terms of correction or replacement, and make reference to the supporting legal document.

The names of persons whose date of birth indicates that they are a hundred years old or older shall be removed from the voter list.

The removal of the names of the persons above shall not prevent their re-registration, provided that the concerned person submits an application for re-registration to the Ministry within one month from the date of publication of the voter lists.

Article 28: The obligations of the Personal Status Registration Offices

The heads of regional personal status offices and departments shall submit to the Directorate

General of Personal Status, on an annual basis, between November 20 and December 20, preliminary lists containing the names of registered persons who are eligible for registration in the voter lists or who would have become eligible for registration on the voter list freeze date, as well as the names of persons whose registration has been omitted, who have died or whose names have been removed from the personal status records for any reason whatsoever.

Article 29: The obligations of the Criminal Record Department

The regional Criminal Record Departments shall submit to the Directorate General of Personal Status, on an annual basis, between November 20 and December 20, a list containing the names of persons convicted of offenses that would prevent them from exercising their right to vote in accordance with the provisions of Article 4 of the present Law.

Article 30: The obligations of the courts of justice

The courts of justice shall submit to the Directorate General of Personal Status on an annual basis, between November 20 and December 20, a list containing the final decisions that the courts have issued with regard to judicial interdiction and crimes provided for in Article 4 of the present law.

Article 31: Updating the voter lists

The Directorate General of Personal Status shall verify the information submitted to it by the authorities mentioned in the preceding articles and update the voter lists accordingly.

Each voter list shall include an empty column where the reasons for the update and the details of registration transfers from one list to another may be recorded. It is mandatory, in the case of transfers, to indicate the register place

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and number and transfer date.

For the purposes of the present law, any elective transfer of personal status registration occurring during the year leading up to the start date of the voter lists' updating period shall not be taken into consideration. Registration transfer due to marriage is not elective; the wife shall have the right to vote if the transfer of her registration occurred during the year mentioned above.

Article 32: The publication and circulation of the voter lists

Before the first of February of each year, the Directorate General for Personal Status shall send copies of the preliminary voter lists to the municipalities, mukhtars as well as the governorate and district centers, with the aim of publishing and circulating them in preparation for their final updating, provided that the recipient authorities take delivery of these lists by the first of February, at the latest, so that they may invite the voters to view them and request their correction according to the documents available to them.

Article 33: The publication of the voter lists on the media

The Ministry of Interior and Municipalities shall announce through the audio-visual and print media between February 1 and March 10 that the voter lists are ready, and shall invite voters to view them.

To this end, too, and within the same period, the Ministry shall publish the preliminary voter lists on its website and on compact discs (CDs). Any person is entitled to purchase the preliminary voter lists on CD in return for a price determined by the Ministry.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Emigrants may also publish the preliminary voter lists within the same period on its website and on

compact discs (CDs).

Article 34: The correction of voter lists

1. Starting the first of February of each year, any interested party may submit to the competent registration committee provided for in this law, a request for the correction of any inaccuracy in their registration data on the voter list, including omissions or wrong name spelling due to negligence or factual error or any other reason. The request for correction shall be submitted to the registration committee before the 1st of March of the same year, provided that documents and evidence validating the request are submitted therewith.

The request for correction may be filed free of charge.

The requests for adding omitted names shall be submitted together with a recent criminal record, not older than one month.

2. Any voter registered in a voter list may request the competent registration committee to remove or add the name of any person whose name is illegally registered or omitted in the same list.

The competent Governor (Muhafiz), District Commissioner (Qaimqam) and Mukhtar may exercise this right too, during the one-month period ending on the first of March of every year.

3. Non-resident voters may submit the same requests provided for in paragraphs 1 and 2 of this Article to the Lebanese embassies and consular offices who shall immediately refer such requests to the Directorate General of Personal Status through the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Emigrants.

The Directorate General of Personal Status shall, in turn, refer such requests to the competent registration committees for action as appropriate.

Article 35: The voter lists freeze

While in the process of preparing the final voter

lists, the General Directorate of Personal Status shall take into consideration the registration updates and transfers provided for in this Law. The voter lists shall be frozen on March 30 of each year and remain valid until March 30 of the following year.

The Minister shall send a copy of the final voter lists received from the Directorate General of Personal Status to the Directorate General for Political Affairs and Refugees to be used in any elections taking place between March 30 of the current year and March 30 of the following year.

Article 36: The Primary Registration Committees

One or several primary registration committees shall be established in each constituency.

A registration committee is composed of a President who shall be a working ordinary or administrative judge, in addition to two members with the first member being president or member of a Municipal Council within the electoral constituency, and the second an officer from the Directorate General of Personal Status. Each registration committee shall have one or several DGPS employees from the Directorate General of Personal Status, appointed to serve in it by virtue of a decision of the Minister.

Article 37: The Functions Of The Primary Registration Committees

The primary registration committee shall assume the following functions:

1. Looking into the requests for correction of voter lists in accordance with the provisions of the present law, deciding on each request within three working days from the date of submission thereof and informing the concerned persons and the Directorate General of Personal Status of such decision.

The decisions of the primary registration committees may be appealed to the competent High registration committee referred to later in this Law within three days of notification

thereof.

The request for correction and the appeal shall be filed free of charge. The requester and appellant shall be exempt from the obligation to hire a lawyer.

2. Receiving the ballot boxes immediately after the closing of polling stations, verifying the reports and documents and taking the appropriate decisions thereon.

3. Sorting and counting the votes, preparing the general table detailing the results obtained by each candidate list and candidate and submitting it to the competent high registration committees.

Article 38: The High Registration Committees

One high registration committee shall be established in each constituency for the duration of one electoral session.

A high registration committee is composed of one President who shall be President of a Chamber or Counselor at the Court of Cassation, or President of a Chamber at the Court of Appeal, or President of a Chamber or Counselor at the State Council, and two members with the first being a working ordinary or administrative judge, and the second an inspector from the Central Inspection Board, in addition to a rapporteur who shall be head or member of department at the Directorate General of Personal Status.

Article 39: The functions of the High Registration Committees

The high registration committee shall assume the following functions:

1. Looking into the requests to appeal the decisions of the registration committees and deciding thereon within three working days from the date of receipt thereof.

2. Receiving and verifying the reports of results issued by all the primary registration committees operating under the high registration committee, together with the tables attached thereto,

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counting the votes, preparing the general tables detailing the results obtained by each candidate list and candidate and immediately submitting such tables to the Minister through the Governor or his representative.

3.The Committee shall submit the results of its activities described in paragraphs 1 and 2 above to the Supervisory Commission for Elections.

Article 40: The mandate of Registration Committees

The presidents, members and rapporteurs of primary and high registration committees shall be appointed for one electoral cycle only, before the first of February of the year during which the general parliamentary elections are held, by virtue of decrees issued at the suggestion of the Minister of Justice and the Minsiter of Interior and Municipalities.

Article 41: Scheduling the elections

Parliamentary elections shall be held in one day, for all constituencies, within the 60 days preceding the end of the term of office of the parliament, unless the parliament has been dissolved, in which case the elections take place within the three months following the issuance of the dissolution decree.

The term of office of the current parliament shall exceptionally end on May 21, 2018 to allow the government to take the necessary measures for the implementation of the new provisions and procedures regulating the parliamentary elections set forth in the present law.

Article 42: The Call for Election

The voters are called to vote by virtue of a decree published in the official gazette. A minimum ninety-day interval between the date of publication of the Call for Elections and Election Day shall be observed.

Article 43: By-elections

1.If a parliament seat becomes vacant following

the death, resignation or dismissal of the incumbent, or any other reason, elections shall be conducted to fill the vacant seat within two months from the date of the vacancy or the date of publication of the Constitutional Council's decision of dismissal of the incumbent in the official gazette.

However, if such vacancy occurs in the last six months of the Parliament's mandate, no successor shall be elected.

2.The voters are called to vote by virtue of a decree published in the official gazette. A minimum thirty-day interval between the date of publication of the Call for Elections decree and Election Day shall be observed.

3.The deadline for candidate nomination for parliamentary by-elections shall be at least 15 days prior to the by-elections date, and the deadline for nomination withdrawal shall be at least 10 days prior to the by-elections date.

4.By-elections to fill the vacant seat at the level of the minor constituency whose seat had fallen vacant shall be held using a one-round majoritarian system, and the polling centers within the said constituency shall be designated by virtue of a decision of the Minister of Interior and Municipalites; However, if more than two seats are vacant in the major electoral constituency, the proportional voting system shall apply in accordance with the provisions of the present law.

5.Resident and non-resident voters may participate in the voting process on condition that they exercise their right to vote on the Lebanese territory.

6.The term of office of a deputy elected through by-elections shall not exceed the term of office of the replaced deputy.

7.Notwithstanding the provisions of Article 8 (c) of the present Law, the persons mentioned in the said Article may be nominated provided that they resign and effectively discontinue the practice of their functions within fifteen days from the date of issue of the Call for Elections

decree.

8.The provisions of the Parliamentary Elections Law No. 25 of 8-10-2008 pertaining to the application of the majoritarian voting system shall exceptionally apply to the provisions of this Article, in a manner consistent with the provisions of the present law.

Article 44: Candidate nomination for the electoral constituency

All persons eligible for election to the parliament may nominate themselves in any electoral constituency. A candidate may not nominate themselves concurrently in more than one electoral constituency.

Article 45: Candidate nomination applications

All candidates standing for parliamentary elections shall submit the following:

1.An application form prepared by the Ministry of Interior to be filled out by the candidate and submitted to the Directorate General of Political Affairs and Refugees at the Ministry of Interior and Municipalities, signed by the candidate and authenticated by a notary and including the following information:

- the full name of the candidate.
- the seat, and the minor constituency or constituency not composed of minor constituencies where the candidate wishes to be elected.

2.The following documents to be attached to the application:

- A recent individual civil status record not older than one month.
- A recent criminal record not older than one month.
- Two passport photos authenticated by the Mukhtar.
- A financial receipt issued by the financial department of the Ministry confirming the deposit of eight million Lebanese pounds as nomination fee by the candidate.

- A bank statement confirming that the candidate has opened a bank account for the electoral campaign, as required in the present law, and mentioning the name of the person authorized by the candidate to perform transactions on the said account.

- A copy of the final voter lists proving the registration of the candidate, signed by the DGPS officer serving as rapporteur in the primary registration committee in the concerned constituency.

- A statement by the candidate prepared at the notary's office and stating the name of the candidate's auditor, provided that the candidate submits a certified copy of this statement to the Supervisory Commission for Parliamentary Elections.

- A statement by the candidate prepared at the notary's office and authorizing the Commission to access and check the bank account related to the candidate's electoral campaign.

Article 46: Closing the nomination period and deciding on applications

1.The nomination period shall be closed sixty days prior to Election Day.

2.Candidates shall submit their nomination application with all the required documents to the Ministry no later than the closing date of the nomination period.

3.The Ministry shall issue the candidate a temporary receipt in acknowledgement of receipt of their application and documents.

4.The Ministry shall either approve or reject each nomination application within a period of five days from the date of receipt thereof. For approved applications, the Ministry shall issue the candidate a final receipt confirming the registration of their nomination. For rejected applications, the Ministry shall inform the candidate of the reasons for their rejection.

5.If the five-day period used by the Ministry to decide on the nomination application expires without any decision announced by

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the Ministry, the nomination application shall be considered as approved. The Ministry shall issue the candidate a final receipt confirming the registration of their nomination.

6. Candidates whose nomination applications have been rejected by the Ministry may, within three days of notification of such express rejection, lodge a non dutiable appeal to the State Council who shall decide on the appeal in the deliberation room within three days of receipt thereof. The State Council's decision, in this case, shall be final and not subject to any ordinary or extraordinary legal recourse.

Article 47: Extension of the nomination period

1. If the nomination period expires without any candidate submitting a nomination application for a particular seat, the nomination period is automatically extended for seven days and the Ministry shall either approve or reject the nomination applications within 24 hours from the date of receipt thereof. For approved applications, the Ministry shall issue the candidate a final receipt confirming the registration of their nomination. For rejected applications, the Ministry shall inform the candidate of the reasons for their rejection.

2. If the abovementioned period expires without any decision announced by the Ministry, the nomination application shall be considered as approved. The Ministry shall issue the candidate a final receipt confirming the registration of their nomination.

3. Candidates whose nomination applications have been rejected by the Ministry may, within 48 hours of notification of such express rejection, lodge a non dutiable appeal to the State Council who shall decide on the appeal in the deliberation room within 48 hours of receipt thereof. The State Council's decision, in this case, shall be final and not subject to any ordinary or extraordinary legal recourse.

Article 48: Uncontested winners

1. If the nomination period expires with only one candidate nominated for a particular seat in a minor electoral constituency, such candidate shall be declared uncontested winner and the candidate lists, in this case, shall include the remaining seats in the constituency.

2. Candidate lists shall be registered at least forty days before Election Day. If the deadline for the registration of candidate lists expires with only one complete list nominated for the seats of a particular constituency, the said candidate list shall be declared uncontested winner.

3. In both cases, the Ministry shall immediately inform the Speaker of Parliament and the President of the Constitutional Council in writing.

Article 49: Discarding nomination applications

Nomination applications found inconsistent with the provisions of the preceding articles or submitted by the same candidate in multiple constituencies shall be discarded. However, if multiple applications have been submitted by the same candidate on different dates, the most recent application shall be processed and the preceding ones discarded.

Article 50: Withdrawal of nomination

Candidates may not withdraw their nomination unless by virtue of a legal statement authenticated by the notary and submitted to the Ministry at least 45 days before Election Day. A withdrawal of nomination announced by the candidate after the said deadline is not recognized in the electoral process.

If such withdrawal precludes the election of the required number of candidates in the concerned constituency, new nomination applications for the constituency may be accepted within seven days from the date of the nomination withdrawal. The deadlines provided for in Article 47 of the present law shall apply to the submission and administrative and judicial

processing of nomination applications.

Article 51: Announcing the names of accepted candidates

After the expiry of the deadline for candidate nomination, the Ministry shall announce the names of accepted candidates, transmit them, without delay, to the Governors, District Commissioners and the Supervisory Commission for Elections, and publish them where necessary.

Article 52: Candidate lists

Candidates shall organize themselves into lists at least forty days before Election Day. Each list shall include at least 40% of the number of seats in the constituency- that is a minimum of 3 seats- including one seat at least for each of the minor constituencies in constituencies composed of multiple minor constituencies. The largest remainder shall be used in the calculation of the minimum number of seats in single-seat constituencies.

The candidate list shall take responsibility for wasting the seat for which they fail to nominate a candidate.

Such seat shall be transferred to the candidate nominated in other lists for the same confessional seat and having the highest preferential vote in the same minor constituency.

The Ministry shall keep the order of the names on the candidate lists according to which the candidates have organized themselves in the minor constituencies, and shall not take into account the withdrawal of any candidate from the list after its registration.

The Ministry shall as well commit to placing the lists on the ballot paper according to their date of registration.

The applications of candidates who have failed

to organize themselves in lists in accordance with the provisions of this Article shall be discarded.

Article 53:

In the event of death of a candidate after the registration of their list, the concerned list may nominate a replacement within a period of ten days before Election Day. Post-deadline nominations are strictly allowed in this case.

Article 54: Candidate list registration

Candidates must organize themselves into lists and authorize one of them by virtue of a power of attorney signed by them all at the office of the notary, to submit the registration application of the list to the Ministry within a maximum period of forty days before Election Day. No lists may be registered or amended after the said deadline. The authorized representative of the candidate list shall submit the following for the list registration:

- The full names of all candidates of the list
- The nomination approval receipts of all candidates of the list
- The order of candidate names on the list of the minor constituency
- A specification of the constituency for which the list is nominated
- The name and representative color of the list
- One color passport photo for every candidate
- A statement of appointment of a financial auditor in accordance with the provisions of the present law, and the appointed auditor's acceptance of such appointment.
- A bank statement proving the existence of a bank account opened for the list, in the name of its authorized representative.

If the application meets all legal requirements, the Ministry shall issue (within 24 hours) a receipt confirming the registration of the list; however, if the application is found lacking all or part of the legal requirements, the Ministry may

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give the members of the list a 24-hour time limit to correct the application for registration, or otherwise have their application rejected. The time limit shall start on the date of notification of the list representative referred to in the above paragraph.

The Ministry's decision to reject the registration may be appealed to the State Council within a 24-hour time limit from the date of notification of the list representative referred to in the above paragraph. The State Council shall decide on the appeal within a similar time limit and its decision, in this case, shall be final and not subject to any ordinary or extraordinary legal recourse.

Article 55: Announcing the names of accepted candidate lists

Immediately after the expiry of the deadline for candidate list registration specified in Article 52 of the present Law, the Ministry shall announce the names of accepted candidate lists and their members, transmit them to the Governors, District Commissioners and the Supervisory Commission for Parliamentary Elections and publish them where necessary.

Chapter V

Campaign Financing and Spending

Article 56: Campaign financing

The provisions of the present law shall apply to the campaign financing as well as to the spending of candidates and candidate lists during the electoral campaign period which starts from the opening date of the candidate nomination period and ends at the closing of the ballot boxes.

Article 57: Campaign contributions

All donations, contributions, gifts in cash or in kind, loans, advance payments, early payments or anything of material value provided for the

candidate or candidate list.

Article 58: Campaign spending

In the present law, the term "campaign spending" shall indicate all expenses paid by the list or candidate and all expenses paid for the account or benefit of either one of them, with their express or tacit consent, by natural or legal persons, political parties, associations or any other bodies, provided that such expenses directly serve the electoral campaign, voting process or legitimate communication between the candidate list or candidate and the voter, including:

Securing the rent and other expenses of campaign offices; organizing campaign-related rallies, events, public meetings and banquets; expenses related to equipment used in the campaign; preparing, publishing and disseminating media and advertising material through books, brochures, bulletins, leaflets, printed letters, or through post and electronic mail; preparing, disseminating and posting pictures, stickers, posters and billboards; paying compensation or allowances in cash or in kind to the campaign staff and candidate agents; campaign staff and voter transport and relocation expenses; travel expenses of non-resident voters; expenses related to electoral advertising and opinion polls; any other expenses paid for the purposes of the campaign to any radio or television broadcasting station, newspaper, magazine or any other means of publication, including electronic means.

Article 59: Campaign Bank Account and Auditor

1. Each candidate and candidate list shall open a bank account known as the "electoral campaign account", at any bank operating in Lebanon, and submit along with the nomination statement, a statement from the bank confirming the opening of such account and indicating the account number and owner.

2. The legal requirement of bank secrecy shall

not apply to the electoral campaign account. The candidate and candidate list shall be deemed to have waived their right to bank secrecy as regards the said account as soon as it is opened.

3.All contributions shall be collected and all campaign expenses paid exclusively through this account during the entire campaign period.

4.Each candidate and candidate list may establish their own procedure for the collection of funds and contributions for campaign financing purposes and the validation of electoral expenses, subject to the provisions of the present law.

Amounts above one million Lebanese pounds shall only be collected and paid by cheque.

5.When submitting their nomination statement, each candidate and candidate list must declare the name of their auditor by virtue of a letter registered at a notary's office and submitted to the Commission.

6.In cases whereby candidates or candidate lists are unable to open a bank account and perform transactions thereon, for reasons beyond their control, the funds dedicated for the electoral campaign of the candidate or list shall be deposited with in a public fund established by the Ministry of Finance, which shall replace the bank account in all aspects.

Article 60: Campaign spending and financing

1.Candidates may spend sums of their own money for their electoral campaign. The money of the spouse or any of the ascendants or descendants of the candidate shall be regarded as the candidate's own money.

All expenses incurred or paid by the candidate from their own money for their election campaign shall be subject to the election campaign spending limit.

2.Campaign contributions to a candidate or candidate list may only be made by Lebanese natural or legal persons.

3.It is strictly forbidden for candidates and candidate lists to accept or receive contributions

or donations from a foreign country or a non-Lebanese natural or legal person, whether directly or indirectly.

4.Contributions, in the sense of this law, do not include the services of volunteers.

5.The campaign finance contribution made by a single natural or legal Lebanese person in favor of a candidate or candidate list shall not exceed 50% of the electoral spending limit specified in Article 61 of the present Law, and shall always be made through a bank transaction (transfer, cheque, Credit card...) subject to Article 59 (4) of the present law.

6.The sum of contributions received by any candidate shall not exceed the electoral spending limit specified in Article 61 of the present Law. Contributions through an intermediary may not be accepted.

Article 61: Campaign spending limit

The maximum amount that each candidate may spend during the campaign period shall be determined according to the following:

The limit amount is composed of a fixed lump sum of one hundred and fifty million Lebanese pounds and a variable sum determined by the number of voters in the major constituency in which the candidate may be elected, on the basis of five thousand Lebanese pounds per voter registered in the voter lists in the major constituency.

The campaign spending limit of a candidate list is a fixed lump sum of one hundred fifty million Lebanese pounds per candidate.

This spending limit may be reconsidered at the opening of the campaign period in light of the economic conditions, by virtue of a decree adopted by the Council of Ministers at the suggestion of the Minister of Interior and Municipalities and following consultations with the Commission.

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Article 62: Prohibited activities

1. During the electoral campaign period, commitments and disbursements that involve the provision of services or payments to voters shall be prohibited, including but not limited to: gifts and cash and in-kind donations to individuals, charities and social, cultural, family or religious organizations, sports clubs and all public institutions.

2. The above-mentioned gifts and donations shall not be prohibited if they are provided by candidates or institutions owned or managed by candidates or parties who have been providing such gifts and donations in the same amounts and quantities on a regular and consistent basis for at least three years before the campaign period. In such case, the payments and donations offered during the election campaign are subject to the spending limit provided for in Article 61 above.

Article 63: Obligations of the authorized auditor

The authorized auditor of each candidate and candidate list shall submit to the Commission periodically and within one week after the end of each month of the campaign period a monthly statement of accounts including the receipts, payments and financial obligations of the previous month, together with a statement of the electoral campaign bank account issued by the authorized bank. At the end of their mission, the auditor shall also submit to the candidate a statement of account and management report.

Article 64: The overall balance sheet

1. After the elections, each candidate and candidate list shall prepare an overall balance sheet authenticated by the authorized auditor and showing, in detail, the total of proceeds and contributions in kind, according to their sources and dates, and the total of expenses paid or due, according to their nature and dates, since the beginning of the electoral campaign.

2. The overall balance sheet shall be submitted

to the Commission within thirty days from the date of publication of the official election results, together with the documents supporting all account items including receipts, disbursement orders, etc., and a comprehensive bank statement of the electoral campaign bank account showing all transactions executed on this account from the date of its opening until the date of submission of the balance sheet.

3. A statement signed by the candidate and registered at a notary's office shall be submitted with the balance sheet. In this statement, the candidate acknowledges, on their own responsibility, that the balance sheet is true and comprehensive and includes all the proceeds collected and expenses paid or incurred for the campaign, and confirms the absence of any other cash or in kind expenses or amounts paid in cash, from other bank accounts or through third persons.

4. If the balance sheet does not include any campaign-related proceeds or expenses, the authorized auditor shall write a report on the subject.

5. The Commission shall examine and audit the balance sheet of each candidate and carry out the necessary investigations to verify its accuracy or the accuracy of some of its elements, and may, for this purpose, recruit experts and judicial police officers, upon the approval of the competent Public Prosecutor's Office.

6. The Commission shall decide on the validity of the abovementioned balance sheet within thirty days from the date of submission thereof. It shall decide whether to approve it or, after due consideration of the adversarial system and the right to counsel, reject it or request its adjustment or correction in whole or in part. The Commission shall submit its reasoned decision in writing, together with the balance sheet, to the Constitutional Council.

If after one month from the date of submission of the balance sheet the Commission has not issued its decision thereon, the balance sheet

shall be deemed to have been approved.

7.The Commission may reject balance sheets that are found inaccurate or exceeding the spending limit even after correction or adjustment thereof. The Commission shall inform the Speaker of Parliament and the President of the Constitutional Council of such cases.

8.If the Commission finds that the value of one of the electoral expenses declared in the balance sheet and its annexes is less than the common and usually approved value for a similar expense, the Commission shall, after due consideration of the adversarial system and the right to counsel, estimate the difference by comparing prices from different sources and noting such difference with the expenses. The difference shall thus be subject to the spending limit provided for in this Law.

9.The provisions of paragraph 8 above shall apply to direct or indirect benefits and all in-kind contributions and services from which the candidate has benefited.

Article 65: Complaints and criminal prosecution

1.The Commission shall refer the cases of violation of the provisions of this Chapter to the competent Public Prosecution Office where it finds that such violation may be described as criminal offense.

2.Any person who intentionally commits a violation shall in accordance with the provisions of the first paragraph be liable to a term of imprisonment not exceeding six months and/ or a fine of 50 to 100 million Lebanese pounds, without prejudice to the penalties of criminal offenses stipulated in the Penal Code and special penal laws.

3.The disbursement of prohibited electoral expenses mentioned in Article 61 of the present Law shall be considered as bribery under the Penal Code.

4.The penalties provided for in paragraph (2) above shall apply to legal persons in accordance with Article 210 of the Penal Code.

5.Criminal and civil actions relating to offenses set out in paragraph (2) above shall be dismissed on grounds of prescription after six months from the date of publication of the election results.

6.The Constitutional Council's decisions on electoral appeals shall have the force of res judicata that is binding on all judicial and administrative courts and state departments. The claim and criminal prosecution shall be processed based on the decision of the Constitutional Council.

Article 66: The penalties applicable to balance sheet violations

1.Candidates who failed to submit the comprehensive balance sheet provided for in Article 64 of this Law shall be liable to a fine of one million Lebanese pounds per day of delay. The said fine shall be imposed by the Ministry at the request of the Commission.

2.Candidates who exceed the electoral spending limit shall be liable to a fine equivalent to three times the amount in excess of the limit, to be paid to the Treasury. And the Commission shall refer the case to the Constitutional Council.

Article 67: The fine

Non-winning candidates who failed to submit the balance sheet shall be liable to a fine of one million Lebanese pounds per day of delay to be imposed by the Ministry pursuant to a report issued by the Commission.

Non-winning candidates who have exceeded the electoral spending limit shall be liable to a fine equivalent to three times the amount in excess of the limit.

Chapter VI

Electoral Media and Advertising

Article 68: Definitions

For the purposes of this law, the terms below, whether in singular or plural form, shall have the following meanings :

Electoral media:

Any media material such as news, analyses, statements, interviews, debates, discussions, reports, press conferences and meetings, directly or indirectly related to the elections and transmitted without charge during the regular or special programs of a media outlet.

Electoral advertising:

Any media material related to the candidates' platforms, electoral campaigns and electoral and political positions, filmed at the media outlet studios or elsewhere, and that the candidates wish to communicate to the voters and thus pay a fee to have it transmitted during the media outlet programs dedicated to that end.

Electoral broadcast:

Any material or publication promoting a candidate and transmitted or published in exchange for a fee during the breaks and in the slots reserved for commercial advertisement in media and advertising outlets.

Electoral material:

The term electoral material covers the three notions of electoral media, electoral advertising and electoral broadcast.

Media outlets:

Any public or private, visual, audio, printed or electronic media outlet, whatever its technology.

Article 69: The electoral platform

Each candidate or candidate list may organize

a variety of legitimate events to present their electoral platform in an appropriate approach and manner consistent with the laws and regulations.

Article 70: The electoral campaign period

During the electoral campaign period which, as provided for in the present law, starts from the date of submission of a candidate nomination and ends at the closing of the ballot boxes, all electoral material communicated through the various media and advertising outlets shall be subject to the provisions of this Chapter.

Article 71: Paid electoral advertising and broadcast

a. Paid electoral advertising and broadcast through media and advertising outlets shall be allowed in accordance with the following provisions:

1. Media and advertising outlets wishing to participate in electoral advertising and broadcast activities shall submit to the Commission at least ten days prior to the beginning of the electoral campaign period, a declaration of intent to participate, in addition to a price list and a specification of the slots that they wish to dedicate for electoral advertising or broadcast.
2. Media and advertising outlets shall abide by the price list and specification of slots provided by them and may not reject any electoral broadcast required by a list or candidate.
3. Media and advertising outlets that fail to submit their declaration of intent within the specified period may not engage in any election-related advertising or broadcast during the entire campaign period.
4. Media and advertising outlets shall clearly state during the transmission or publication of electoral advertisements that such advertisements are paid, and specify the client who requested their transmission or publication.
5. Media and advertising outlets shall not accept free advertising or advertising for a fee not consistent with the price list provided by them.

6.The candidate and their legal representative shall submit to the Commission and the media and advertising outlets a copy of the electoral broadcast or advertisement film, together with a transmission or publication booking request in writing, at least three days prior to the date specified for the first run or printing of the broadcast or advertisement.

7.Every media or advertising outlet shall submit a weekly report to the Commission, including a list of all electoral advertisements and broadcasts that have been transmitted or published during the past week, along with the transmission times or publication dates of each, and the fee incurred.

8.No candidate may allocate to one media or advertising outlet more than 50% of their total advertising or broadcast spending dedicated for each category of media or advertising outlets.

b.The Commission shall determine the maximum slot size allowed for every media or advertising outlet to transmit or publish informative or promotional programs on the candidates or candidate lists, and specify the time for transmitting or publishing such slots.

c. In the determination and distribution of the maximum slot sizes, the Commission shall take into account the requirements of fairness as well as the candidates' right to equal media visibility within the limits of the law and the legitimate electoral competition according to the criteria set forth above.

Article 72: The Commission's monitoring of media outlets

1.The Commission shall monitor the commitment of the media in Lebanon to the provisions governing electoral advertising in this Law and the decisions taken in application of such provisions.

2.The Commission shall ensure respect for freedom of expression of various opinions and ideologies in the media programs during the

electoral campaign period, by issuing binding recommendations to the media, so as to ensure a fair, balanced and impartial treatment for all candidates and candidate lists.

3.Paragraph (1) above shall apply to all political and general news programs, including news bulletins, political talk shows, interviews, meetings, dialogues, round tables and live coverage of electoral events, which remain free of charge.

4.The Commission shall ensure equal media visibility for all candidates and candidate lists, and shall thus request the media outlet that hosts a candidate or list representative to secure in return the hosting of their opponents in similar conditions in terms of timing, duration and program type.

5.The Commission shall have the authority to decide whether it is required to have the appearance of candidates on satellite media accounted for as part of the media or advertising slots allocated by the Commission to each list or candidate, and the extent to which this consideration shall apply.

6.The Commission shall initiate prompt investigation in any complaint submitted by the affected list or candidate and decide to refer such complaint to the competent Court of Publications within 24 hours from the date of submission thereof.

Media outlets are required to keep a recorded archive of all the programs aired during the campaign period for six months after the date of the end of the elections.

7.Prior to the start of the electoral process, the Commission shall determine the criteria that allow the distinction between electoral media and electoral advertising. The Commission may at all times verify whether a media show or program hides any illegal electoral advertising under the guise of electoral media, and shall take all legal measures to put an end to such illegal practices.

Article 73: The obligations of public media outlets

1.A candidate or candidate list may use the public media outlets free of charge to present their electoral platform in accordance with the provisions of this law and the rules established by the Commission.

2.Each candidate or candidate list wishing to use this right shall submit a request to the Commission in writing. The Commission shall draw up a list of the names of candidates and candidate lists authorized to use public media outlets.

3.The Commission shall prepare a schedule specifying the dates and conditions for the distribution of broadcasting times between the various lists and candidates, while maintaining balanced broadcasting times, to ensure fair and equal opportunities for all candidates and candidate lists.

4.Public media outlets shall commit to remaining neutral at all stages of the electoral process. Neither they nor any of their agents or employees shall carry out any activity that may be construed as supporting a candidate or candidate list at the expense of another candidate or candidate list.

Article 74: The obligations of private media outlets

1.Private media outlets may not declare their support for any candidate or candidate list. Subject to the principle of independence, private media outlets shall make a clear distinction between facts on the one hand, and opinions and comments on the other, in their various news bulletins or political programs during the electoral campaign period.

2.During the electoral campaign period, private media outlets as well as candidates and candidate lists shall:

-Refrain from committing defamation, libel and slander against any of the candidates and candidate lists.

-Refrain from broadcasting any material that incites confessional, sectarian or ethnic strife, provokes violence or riots, or promotes terrorism, crime or subversive acts.

-Refrain from broadcasting any material that would constitute a means for exercising pressure, intimidation, intimation of disloyalty, accusation of unbelief, hint of bribery or promise of material or moral gain.

-Refrain from distorting, obscuring, falsifying, omitting or misrepresenting information.

-Refrain from relaying or rerunning any material containing the above violations under the penalty of holding the media outlet liable for violating the provisions of the present law.

Article 75: Electoral education programs

During the electoral campaign period, the audiovisual media outlets shall devote at least three hours per week to air electoral education programs co-produced by the Ministry of Information and the Ministry of Interior and Municipalities in coordination with the concerned media outlets.

Article 76: Spots and locations reserved for electoral advertisement

1.The competent local authority shall designate, under the supervision of the administrative authority, the spots and locations in every city or town where electoral advertisements and images may be posted and placed during the electoral campaign period.

2.Posting or placing any electoral advertisement or pictures of candidates or candidate lists outside the designated spots and locations is prohibited. A candidate or candidate list may not post or place advertisements or pictures on spots or locations allocated to other candidates or candidate lists. It is the responsibility of the candidate or candidate list to remove the abovementioned violations.

3.The competent local authority shall distribute the spots and locations specified in accordance

with paragraph 1 of this Article between the candidates and candidate lists according to the order of submission of their nomination applications.

The local authorities and the companies investing in the spots and locations designated for electoral advertising shall cooperate with the Commission for the proper implementation of the provisions of this Article.

4.No candidate or candidate party may transfer the spots and locations allocated for their own electoral advertisements to other candidates or candidate lists.

Article 77: Prohibitions

1.Public facilities, government departments, public institutions, universities, colleges, institutes, public and private schools and places of worship shall not be used for holding electoral events, meetings and rallies or for campaigning.

2.Civil servants and employees of public institutions, municipalities, unions of municipalities and other similar persons may not promote a specific candidate or candidate list. They may not distribute leaflets that are in favor of or against any candidate or candidate list.

3.It is prohibited to distribute leaflets or any other documents in favor of or against a specific candidate or candidate list throughout Election Day at the gates of polling centers or any other place inside the polling center, subject to confiscation thereof, without prejudice to the other penalties provided for in this law.

Article 78: Pre-election silence period

Starting at exactly 24 hours before Election Day and until the closing of the ballot boxes, all media outlet shall be prohibited from broadcasting any electoral advertisement or live campaigning, except for unavoidable voices and / or images captured in the live coverage of the electoral process.

On Election Day, media coverage shall be limited

to reporting on the progress of the electoral process.

Article 79: Opinion polls

1.The Commission shall determine the conditions for carrying out opinion polls during the electoral campaign and specify the principles to be followed in order to ensure the credibility, impartiality and neutrality of the poll.

2.The Commission shall determine the terms and conditions for publishing broadcasting and distributing opinion poll results during the electoral campaign period. It shall be fully empowered to verify the conformity of the opinion polls with the laws and regulations and the decision of the Commission, and shall take all necessary measures against the media, poll institutions or any other person to stop or correct the violations.

3.The institution that conducted the poll, shall clarify at least the following information, at the announcement, publication, transmission or distribution of the poll results:

-Name of the institution that conducted the poll.

-Name of the institution that requested and funded the poll.

-The dates on which the poll was conducted in the field.

-The polled sample size, opinion and method of selection and distribution.

-The technique used in the survey.

-The verbatim text of the questions asked.

-The limits of interpretation of the results and the margin of error, where applicable.

4.It is prohibited during the ten days leading up to Election Day and until the closing of all ballot boxes, to publish, broadcast or distribute in any way, any opinion poll and comments made thereon.

Article 80: Media coverage of the voting and counting processes

Media outlets wishing to participate in the media

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coverage of voting and counting processes shall turn to the Commission to obtain written permits for this purpose in accordance with the provisions of the Article 19 (2) of the present law, and shall adhere to the Code of Conduct established by the Commission.

Article 81: Penalties and fines

1. Subject to the provisions of the Penal Code, the Publications Law and the Audiovisual Media Law, the Commission may take any of the two actions below that it deems appropriate against any media or advertising outlet that breaches the provisions of this Chapter:

a. Addressing a warning to the media outlet in breach or obliging it to transmit an apology or allow the breached candidate to exercise the right of reply;

b. Referring the media outlet in breach to the competent Court of Publications who may take any of the measures below, as it deems appropriate:

- Imposing a financial fine of fifty to one hundred million Lebanese pounds on the media outlet in breach.

- Imposing a partial interruption of operation of the media outlet in breach, for a period not exceeding three days, provided that such interruption applies to all political and news programs, bulletins, interviews and debates.

- In the event of recurrent breach, imposing a total interruption of operation of the media in breach and closing all of its programs for a maximum period of three days.

The Public Prosecutor may take legal action against the media outlet in breach, either on its own motion, before the Court of Publications, or at the request of the affected party. The media outlet in breach shall submit its response to the Court within 24 hours from the time of notification thereof.

The Court of Publications shall issue its decision within 24 hours at the most. Each of the Public Prosecutor and sentenced media outlet may

appeal the decision to the Court of Cassation within 24 hours starting, for the former, from the time of issue of the decision, and for the latter, from the time of notification thereof.

- The appeal shall not suspend the execution of the decision unless the Court of Cassation decides to suspend its execution within 24 hours starting from the time of filing of the appeal.

2. Subject to the provisions of the Penal Code, the Commission may take any of the measures below, as it deems appropriate, against any institution that conducts opinion polls or any other person who violates Article 79 of the present Law:

a. Addressing a warning.

b. Imposing an obligation to transmit an apology or correction through the media.

c. Imposing a fine of ten to twenty-five million Lebanese pounds, by virtue of a payment order issued by the Ministry of Interior and Municipalities at the request of the Commission. This fine shall be doubled if the offense occurs during the pre-election period of silence.

Article 82: Claims of damage

Persons who are affected by any of the violations above may claim damages.

Article 83: Correction and the right of reply

The media outlets shall broadcast and publish the corrections and replies received from candidates and candidate lists within 24 hours of dissemination of the protested news. The media outlets reserve the right to refuse to broadcast the reply if it is against the law.

Chapter VII Voting

Article 84: The electronic magnetic card

The Government shall, by virtue of a decree

to be issued by the Council of Ministers at the suggestion of the Minister and with the approval of a two-thirds majority of the Council members, take the necessary measures to approve the use of the electronic magnetic card in the next elections and submit to the Parliament the amendments to this law required for the adoption of the electronic magnetic card.

Article 85: Polling centers and stations

The electoral constituency shall be divided by virtue of a decision of the Minister to several polling centers that contain several polling stations. Every village containing between one hundred and four hundred voters shall have one polling station.

More than four hundred voters may be assigned to one polling station if so required for ensuring the integrity of the electoral process, provided that the number of voters per polling station does not exceed six hundred voters. The number of polling stations in each polling center shall not exceed twenty.

The Minister's decision on the distribution of polling stations shall be published in the Official Gazette and on the Ministry's website at least twenty days prior to Election Day. The distribution may not be amended during the week leading up to Election Day except on substantial grounds and by virtue of a reasoned decision.

Article 86: Polling station officers and their functions

1.The Governor (Muhafiz) or District Commissioner (Qaimqam) shall appoint, each within their own region, one head officer and one or several clerks for each polling station, to be selected from lists containing the names of civil servants sent to them by the Directorate General for Political Affairs and Refugees at the Ministry, not later than one week before Election Day, and provided that the appointed

civil servants are informed of their assignment station in the governorate or caza only five days before Election Day.

2.The head officer of the polling station shall have two assistants, one of whom shall be chosen by the head officer from among the voters present at the opening of the polling station. Other voters shall choose one of them to be the second assistant. Both assistants shall be literate. The head officer shall write the names of both assistants in the polling station report provided for in this law, and have them sign it. The Muhafiz or Qaimqam may appoint reserve staff when needed.

3.The head officer and clerk shall be present in the polling station throughout the electoral process.

4.The head officer shall have the exclusive authority to maintain order inside the polling station. Security forces may only stay inside the polling station at the request of the head officer, temporarily, and for the strict purpose of ensuring the integrity of the electoral process.

5.The head officers may not, in any case, prevent candidates or their authorized agents and observers from exercising the right to monitor the electoral activities, nor may they force any candidate or list agent out of the polling station, unless they have been disturbing the order despite warnings given and noted in the report.

6.If the head officer takes such a measure, they shall write a report on the incident whereby they state the facts and reasons that called for such measure and the time of its occurrence. The report shall be signed by the head officer and other agents present and immediately submitted to the competent registration committee.

7.Any employee who without a legitimate excuse fails to join the polling station to which they had been appointed as head officer or clerk shall be liable to imprisonment for a period of one month or a fine of one million Lebanese pounds. In such case, only medical reports

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prepared by the official medical committee are accepted.

8. Head officers and clerks who violate their obligations and act in breach of the principles specified in the present law shall be liable to three months to three years imprisonment or a fine of one to three million Lebanese pounds. In such case, and contrary to the provisions of Article 61 of the Civil Servants Law promulgated by virtue of Legislative Decree No. 112/59 on 12/6/1959, public prosecution may be initiated by a personal claim filed by the candidate, by the Public Prosecutor, or at the request of the president of the competent registration committee, and does not require the approval of the department to which the civil servant reports.

Article 87: Voting schedule

Polling shall start at 7:00 am and end at 7:00 pm in all Lebanese regions, and last for one day, always a Sunday.

Article 88: Early voting

The Ministry shall organize early voting for polling officers in all constituencies, on the Thursday preceding Election Day.

Once the number of ballots contained in every ballot box has been counted, all ballot boxes used in the polling officers' polling stations shall be sealed and immediately sent- while sealed- with security forces escort, to the Banque du Liban or any of its branches. At the end of the voting process on Sunday, these ballot boxes shall be sent to the competent registration committee who shall sort them and combine their results with those of the other ballot boxes. This process shall be subject to the regulations provided for in Chapter Eleven of the present Law.

Article 89: Voters checklists

1. The Directorate General of Political Affairs and Refugees at the Ministry shall extract from the

voter lists the checklists to be used in all polling stations in Lebanon and abroad. Each checklist shall contain, in addition to the voter lists' data, the voter's ID card number and passport number if available on the date of preparation of checklists, and three empty columns: the first being for the voter's signature, the second for the signature of the polling officer in charge of verifying the vote, and the third for possible remarks on the voting process.

2. All the pages of a polling station's checklist shall be bound together, numbered and marked with the stamp of the Ministry.

3. Only voters who have their name included on the checklist of the polling station or have obtained a decision from the registration committee to have their name registered before March 25 upon consultation with the Ministry, may vote.

Article 90: Candidate agents

1. Each candidate shall have the right to appoint voters from the electoral constituency as permanent agents allowed to enter the polling station, by reason of one permanent agent per polling station. They may also appoint voters from the electoral constituency as mobile agents allowed to enter all the polling stations of the constituency, by reason of one mobile agent for every two polling stations in the villages and one agent for every three polling stations in the cities.

2. The Muhafiz or Qaimqam shall issue special permits for the candidate agents in accordance with the rules to be determined by the Ministry.

Article 91: Security

Security forces shall maintain order at the entrances and near polling centers. Electoral activity and propaganda, especially the use of loudspeakers, loud music, party flags and motorcades shall be prohibited near the polling center.

Article 92: Polling station supplies

1.The Ministry shall provide each polling station with all that the electoral process requires in terms of supplies, stationery and printed material, in addition to a single-slot ballot box made of solid transparent material.

2.The Ministry shall provide the head officers of polling stations with an amount of official pre-printed ballot papers and stamped envelopes equivalent to the number of registered voters, and an extra amount of official ballot papers and unstamped envelopes equivalent to 20% of the number of registered voters.

3.Each polling station shall have one or several voting booths.

4.Voting in the absence of the voting booth is prohibited and shall lead to the invalidation of the voting process in the concerned polling station.

Article 93: Ballot papers

1.Voters shall use the official ballot papers provided for in the present Law, which are prepared in advance by the Ministry for each minor constituency and distributed with the electoral materials to the polling station officers.

2.The official ballot papers shall contain the names of all candidate lists and members thereof, in addition to the specifications presented in the model ballot prepared by the Ministry, namely: the representative color and name of the list and an empty box next to each list, the full name and confession of each candidate and either the minor constituency or the constituency that is not composed of minor constituencies, for which the candidate is nominated. A passport photo of each candidate shall be placed next to their name together with a small empty box where the voter may mark their preferential vote in accordance with the provisions of this law.

3.Voters may only use such official ballot papers to vote and may not use any other forms of ballot papers to exercise their right to vote.

Article 94: Pre-election preparations

1.Prior to the commencement of the voting process, the head officer shall open the ballot box and verify with other polling officers and candidate agents that it is empty before sealing it properly, in accordance with the instructions of the Ministry.

2.An official copy of the voter list specific to the polling station and a copy of the Minister's decision establishing the polling station shall be posted at the entrance of each polling station for the duration of the electoral process. A copy of the electoral law and a list containing the names of candidate agents shall be placed on a table inside the polling station, and posters and informative materials explaining the course of the electoral process shall be made available to the voters, candidates and their agents.

3.The head officer of the polling station shall be responsible for removing all types of pictures, symbols, writings or slogans, other than the informative material provided by the Ministry, from the polling station before the commencement of the voting process until its completion.

4.Prior to the commencement of the voting process, the head officer of the polling station shall ensure that the number of ballot papers provided is equal to the number of registered voters.

In the event of a shortage of ballot papers due to a force majeure that affects the validity of the voting or to any other reason, the head officer shall replace the lacking ballot papers with the extra ballot papers that they had been delivered, after dating and marking them with the stamp of the polling station date and documenting the grounds for such replacement in the polling station report. Unused extra ballot papers shall be attached to the report.

5.Permanent and mobile candidate agents are allowed to use computers, tablets and mobile phones inside polling stations.

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Article 95: The voting process

1. When the voter enters the polling station, the head officer shall verify their identity by checking their identity card or valid ordinary Lebanese passport. If a material difference is noticed between the identity card or passport data and the checklist data, the identity card number or passport number shall be the basis for verification.

2. After the polling station officers have verified that the name of the voter is included in the polling station checklist, the head officer shall hand to the voter a ballot paper signed on its back side by the head officer and clerk, and an envelope officially signed and stamped by the head officer, and request the voter to mandatorily go behind the booth and freely exercise their right to vote, under penalty of being prevented from voting.

3. The voter shall mark the list or candidate name of his choice in accordance with Article 98 of the present law.

The voter shall return toward the polling station officers and show the head officer that they hold one sealed and folded ballot paper only. The head officer of the polling station shall verify that without touching the paper before allowing the voter to personally cast the ballot in the ballot box.

4. The head officer of the polling station shall make sure that the voters use the voting booth under penalty of preventing them from voting. The voters may not disclose their ballot after exiting the voting booth.

5. A voter's vote is validated by the voter's signature on the checklist and by having their thumb marked with a 24-hour indelible ink supplied by the Ministry to all polling stations. Voters who already have their thumb marked shall thus be prevented from voting again.

6. The head officer of the polling station shall be responsible for preventing any voter from casting their vote should they act in breach of the provisions of paragraph (4) of this Article.

7. The voter may not delegate any other person to vote on their behalf.

Article 96: Voters with special needs

1. In accordance with the provisions of the law on the Rights of People with Disabilities, voters with special needs or suffering from disability preventing them from marking their choice and placing the ballot paper inside the envelope and casting it in the ballot box may be assisted by another voter of their choice, under the supervision of the polling station officers. Such occurrence shall be noted in the "comments" column on the checklist.

2. The Ministry shall take into account the needs of people with disabilities when organizing elections and facilitate the procedures allowing them to exercise their right to vote unobstructed.

The Ministry shall establish the implementation regulations of the present Article upon consultation with the specialized associations for people with disabilities.

Article 97: Conclusion of the voting process

The head officer of the polling station shall announce the end of the voting process at 7:00 pm. However, if there are voters present in the polling center, who have not yet voted, the voting period shall be extended so as to allow them to vote. Such occurrence shall be noted in the polling station report.

Chapter VIII

The Electoral System

Article 98: The list-based voting and the preferential vote

1. Each voter is entitled to vote for one of the competing lists, and may as well give one preferential vote for a candidate from the minor-constituency and the same list they have voted for.

2.If no preferential vote is marked by the voter, the list vote remains valid and shall count. However, if the voter marks more than one preferential vote on the list, none of the preferential votes but only the list vote shall count.

3.If a voter votes for one list but give their preferential vote on another list or on the list of a minor constituency to which they do not belong, the preferential vote shall not count and only the list vote shall count.

4.If the voter does not vote for any list but marks one preferential vote on one list, the preferential vote and a list vote shall count.

Article 99: The proportional representation system

1.The number of seats obtained by each list is determined based on the electoral quotient.

2.The electoral quotient is obtained by dividing the number of the voters in each of the major constituencies by the number of seats to fill in each.

3.Lists that do not achieve the electoral quotient are excluded from the seat allocation, and the electoral quotient is re-calculated after deduction of the votes obtained by such lists.

4.The remaining seats are allocated, one after another, to the qualifying lists that have obtained the largest remainder after the first division, and this process is repeated in the same way until all the remaining seats have been filled.

If one seat is remaining and two qualifying lists have an equal largest remainder, the seat shall be allocated to the list that had obtained the higher number of seats. And if both lists had obtained an equal number of seats, the remaining seat shall be allocated to the list whose first-placed candidate has obtained the higher percentage of preferential votes. And if the first-placed candidates of both lists have obtained equal percentages of preferential votes, the seat shall be allocated to the list whose second-placed candidate has obtained the higher percentage

of preferential votes, and so forth.

5.After having determined the number of seats obtained by each qualifying list, the names of candidates shall be combined on one comprehensive list, in descending order on basis of the percentage of preferential votes obtained by each candidate either in their minor constituency or their constituency that is not composed of minor constituencies.

The percentage of preferential votes obtained by each candidate is calculated by dividing the sum of preferential votes obtained by them by the total number of preferential votes obtained by the qualifying lists in the minor constituency or the constituency that is not composed of minor constituencies. If two candidates have equal percentages of preferential votes, the older candidate shall be placed higher on the list, and if both candidates are of the same age, the higher registration committee shall decide on the matter by drawing lots.

6.The allocation of seats to the winning candidates shall start from the top of the comprehensive list that contains the names of all candidates of various lists. Thus, the first seat is allocated to the candidate who has the highest percentage of preferential votes, and the second seat to the candidate ranked second on the comprehensive list, irrespective of the list of their nomination. The third and all subsequent seats are allocated in the same manner until all the seats of the constituency are allocated to the candidates of other qualifying lists.

7.The allocation of seats to candidate lists shall be subject to the following two conditions:

-The seat to be allocated should be vacant according to the confessional distribution of seats and/or seat distribution in the minor constituency, since after the share of seats of a given confession and/or minor constituency within the electoral constituency is filled, the remaining candidates of the same confession and/ or minor constituency are automatically removed from the competition.

-The list should not have filled its share of seats. When the seat allocation process reaches the name of a candidate who belongs to a list that has already filled its share of seats, the said candidate shall be skipped.

Chapter IX

Vote Counting and Publication of Results

Article 100: Vote counting inside polling stations

Upon conclusion of the voting process, voting is closed and only the polling station officers, permanent and/or mobile candidate agents, accredited observers and media representatives authorized by the Commission to cover and film the voting process inside polling stations shall be allowed to stay inside the polling station.

The head officer of the polling station shall open the ballot box and empty the ballot papers contained in it. If the count of the ballot papers exceeds or falls below the count of actual voters according to the checklists, the difference shall be noted in the polling station report.

The head officer of the polling station shall open each ballot paper separately and read out loud the name of the voted list and the name of the candidate who received the preferential vote, under the effective supervision of the candidates or their agents, and accredited observers, if any.

Article 101: Polling station equipment

The Ministry shall equip the polling stations with special cameras and television sets so that cameras may be used to display the content of ballot papers on the television screen, thus allowing the polling officers, candidate agents and accredited observers to have easy access to the lists and the names marked on the ballot paper during the counting process.

Article 102: Invalid ballot papers

Non-official ballot papers and ballot papers containing additional marks that are not provided for in the present law shall be considered invalid.

The head officer of the polling station shall have the invalid ballot papers signed by the polling station officers, attach them to the report and mention the grounds for such action. The number of invalid ballot papers shall be deducted from of the total number of voters.

Article 103: Blank ballots

Ballot papers that do not include any list vote or preferential votes are considered blank ballots and shall be counted with the valid votes.

Article 104: The publication of polling station results

1. After the official ballot papers have been counted, the head officer shall announce and sign the preliminary results and immediately post a report of such results at the entrance of the polling station, and issue a true copy thereof to candidates or candidate agents at their request.

2. The results report shall include the number of votes obtained by each list and the number of preferential votes obtained by each candidate.

Article 105: The polling station report

After having announced the preliminary results of the polling station, the head officer of the polling station shall organize the polling station report, on two copies, and have all of its pages signed by the polling station officers.

The head officer of the polling station shall put the checklists signed by the voters as well as all the ballot papers, the polling station report, and the vote tally sheet containing the votes obtained by the lists and candidates in a special envelope.

This envelope shall be sealed with red wax and delivered by the head officer and their assistant with security escort to the registration committee office and handed with the documents it contains to the president of the registration committee or his representative who shall open it in the presence of candidate representatives.

The head officer and clerk of the polling station shall be held liable if the envelope has been delivered open or inconsistent with the results report.

Article 106: Vote counting by the Registration Committees

1.The competent registrations committee shall receive the reports of all polling stations located within their jurisdiction. Report delivery shall be made through the head officer by virtue of a report organized for this purpose. The Ministry shall provide the registration committees with the necessary supplies, namely, a large transparent container for the ballot papers, computer software, a large screen to display the results, and any other equipment items that would ensure a proper computerization of the electoral process.

2.The registration committees shall look into the reports and documents and take the necessary decisions thereon.

The votes of each polling station shall be counted using the computer software that processes the count automatically.

A manual re-count shall be made if the polling station report results are found inconsistent with the the computer-based results.

Upon verification of the count of votes obtained by each list and each candidate, the vote count result shall be submitted to the higher registration committee in the major constituency in schedules and reports prepared by the registration committee, in two copies, and signed by all committee members.

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and Refugees at the Ministry of Interior and Municipalities shall designate an employee to receive the polling station envelopes, ballot papers and documents consecutively appended thereto after being processed by the registration committee. The designated employee shall sign a statement of receipt upon receiving the envelope and documents of each polling station.

Article 107: The publication of final results

The higher registration committee in each electoral constituency shall receive the figures submitted to it by the registration committees of the same constituency.

The higher registration committee shall verify the schedules and reports and may only correct material and calculation errors, if any, and adjust the result accordingly.

It shall count the votes received from the primary registration committees using computer software designed for this purpose and note the final result of the constituency on the final schedule, in numbers and letters followed by the word “only”, and have all its members sign the report and final general schedule.

The higher registration committee shall then announce before the candidate or candidate agents the final results or the number of seats obtained by each list and the names of winning candidates.

The high registration committee shall submit to the Muhafiz or Qaimqam, each according to their responsibility, the final report and general schedule of results, and shall prepare a receipt and delivery report to be signed by the Muhafiz or Qaimqam and a member of the higher registration committee designated by the president of the higher registration committee.

The results shall be sent immediately with the final report and general schedule attached thereto to the Ministry of Interior and Municipalities who shall announce the final official results and the

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names of the winning candidates. The Minister shall immediately communicate the results to the Speaker of Parliament and the President of the Constitutional Council.

Article 108: Ballot paper storage arrangements

The ballot papers shall be confidentially stored at the Banque du Liban in packages, each indicating the polling station they had been received from, for a period of three months from the date of the publication of the results. At the end of the said period, the ballot papers shall be destroyed by the Ministry of Interior and Municipalities by virtue of a duly organized report, unless they are the subject to review or appeal before the Constitutional Council.

Chapter X

The Incompatibility between Parliamentary Office and other Functions

Article 109: Special incompatibility cases

1.A member of parliament may not at the same time hold the position of board chair or member in any public institution or public right institution or employee at any public administration, public institution, municipality, union of municipalities, franchise, mixed economy company or public capital company.

Members of parliament may not simultaneously hold any religious position the holder of which receives a salary or compensation from the State treasury.

Any of the persons above who is elected as member of parliament shall be automatically deemed to have been dismissed from office unless they notify their rejection of parliament membership within a month following the announcement of the result of their election.

2.A member of parliament may not at the same time legally represent the State or any

of its public departments and institutions, or municipalities or unions of municipalities or any of the institutions or companies mentioned in paragraph (1) of this Article.

Any of the persons above who is elected as member of parliament shall have their legal agency deemed to have been automatically terminated.

Article 110: Prohibited professional activities

A member of parliament shall not be granted any exclusive or concession rights or contracts by the State or public institutions or municipalities. The same prohibition applies to the spouse and children who shall be regarded as one person.

Chapter XI

Out of Country Voting

Article 111: The non-resident citizens' right to vote

Any non-resident Lebanese citizen shall be entitled to exercise the right to vote in polling centers established in embassies, consulates or other places specified by the Ministry in accordance with the provisions of the present law and in coordination with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Emigrants, provided that their name is registered in the personal status records and that there is no legal impediment to their right to vote pursuant to the provisions of Article 4 of the present law.

Article 112: Non-resident candidates

The parliament reserves six seats for non-residents candidates, equally divided between Christians and Muslims on the basis of one seat for each of the Maronite, Orthodox, Catholic, Sunni, Shiite, Druze confessions, and equally distributed to the six continents.

Article 113: Voter registration

In a framework of coordination with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Emigrants through the Lebanese embassies and consulates abroad, the Ministry shall invite the Lebanese citizens who meet the abovementioned eligibility requirements to declare their wish to vote abroad by registering their names either in person, or by virtue of a duly signed and authenticated letter, or through electronic registration if available.

The Ministry shall establish, in cooperation with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Emigrants, the regulations for non-resident voter registration at the embassies or consulates of their choice and specify all the information required regarding their identity card, register number, confession and normal Lebanese passport number, if available.

The deadline for registration must not exceed the twentieth of November of the year leading up to the parliamentary elections date, after which the right to vote abroad shall be withheld. The embassies shall send the registration lists to the Directorate General of Personal Status through the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Emigrants before the twentieth of December.

Article 114: Separate voter lists

The competent departments at the Directorate General for Personal Status shall verify that the names on the lists are registered in the Personal Status Register and prepare, after the expiration of the deadline for registration, separate voter lists for each embassy or consulate, containing the names of eligible voters, provided that the minimum number of registered voters per electoral center is 200. They shall also mark the names of such voters and mention the place of their registration outside Lebanon to prevent them from voting in their original place of residence.

Article 115: Publication and revision of separate voter lists

1. Before the first of February of each year, the Ministry shall send to the embassies and consulates of Lebanon abroad, through the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Emigrants, the preliminary voter lists on CDs, containing the names of persons who have expressed their wish to vote abroad in accordance with the provisions of the present law.

2. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Emigrants shall publish and circulate the above lists using all possible means and invite the voters to review and revise them as necessary. Each embassy and consulate shall provide copies of such lists at its offices and publish them on its website if available.

3. Any interested party may submit an objection to the voter lists before the embassy or the consulate, and enclose the required documents and papers therewith. The embassy or consulate shall verify the documents and send them to the Ministry through the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Emigrants before the twentieth of February of each year. The revision of voter lists and correction and removal of registration entries shall be subject to the principles and procedures set forth in Chapter Four (IV) of this law.

Article 116: The designation of polling stations

The Ministry shall send through the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Emigrants, the number of voters eligible to exercise the right to vote in each embassy or consulate, each of which shall designate one polling station or more if the number of voters registered in the polling center exceeds four hundred voters.

The polling stations shall be designated by virtue of a decree issued by the Council of Ministers at the suggestion of the Minister of Interior and Municipalities after coordination with the Minister of Foreign Affairs and Emigrants, at least twenty days prior to the scheduled date of the elections. The polling stations may

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not be changed during the week preceding the scheduled date of the elections except on substantial grounds and by virtue of a reasoned decree.

The decree establishing the polling stations shall be published in the Official Gazette and on the websites of the Ministry of Interior and Municipalities and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Emigrants.

Article 117: The polling station officers

The ambassador or the consul shall appoint the polling officers of each polling station, in coordination with the Ministry and through the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Emigrants. Each polling station shall have at least one head officer and one clerk to be selected from among the embassy or consulate staff or contracted if necessary, provided that they are Lebanese and subject to all applicable Lebanese laws, and that their respective powers are specified.

Candidate agents may attend the voting process provided that they obtain the permits issued for this purpose by the embassy or consulate.

Article 118: The voting process

Out of country voting shall be conducted on the basis of the proportional system and one single constituency at least fifteen days before the scheduled date for elections in Lebanon, and shall use the ballot papers printed and stamped in advance by the Ministry.

Polling stations are open from 7 am to 10 pm.

When the voter enters the polling station, the head officer shall verify their identity by checking their identity card or valid ordinary Lebanese passport and locating their name on the separate voter list provided for in the present law. If a material difference is noticed between the data of the identity card or passport and the data on the separate voter list of the polling station, the identity card number or passport number shall be the basis for verification.

After the polling station officers have verified that the name of the voter is included in the separate voter list of the polling station, the head officer shall hand to the voter a ballot paper and an officially stamped envelope signed by the head officer.

The voting of non-resident Lebanese citizens shall be subject to the general provisions that regulate the voting of resident Lebanese citizens and are consistent with the provisions of the present law.

Article 119: Vote counting

After the conclusion of the voting process, the polling station officers shall open the ballot box or boxes in the presence of the ambassador or consul, or their representative if they are unable to attend.

The polling station shall count the ballot papers in the presence of candidate delegates and accredited observers and media representatives, if any. The ballot papers of the polling station shall then be put in a large envelope marked with the name of the polling station and sealed with red wax.

Article 120: Submission of envelopes and other electoral documents

Each polling station shall organize a report on the voting process, in two copies, containing the number of registered voters, actual voters and the number of ballot papers. The report shall be signed by the polling station officers and authorized candidate agents present, if any. One copy shall be kept by the ambassador or consul at the embassy or consulate, while the other copy shall be sent immediately with the large envelopes that contain the ballot papers and other electoral documents to the Banque du Liban through the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Emigrants.

At the end of the voting process on the Sunday scheduled to hold parliamentary elections in Lebanon, these envelopes shall be sent

with other electoral documents to the Higher Registration Committee in Beirut to be counted and their results documented. This process shall be subject to the regulations provided for in the present law regarding secure transportation of material and vote count monitoring.

Article 121: Vacancy of seats of non-resident citizens

If any parliament seat in the non-resident citizens' constituency becomes vacant following the death or resignation or revocation of membership of a deputy, or any other reason, by-elections shall be held to fill the vacant seat, on the same basis adopted for the election of resident candidates.

No successor shall be appointed if the vacancy occurs in the last six months of the parliament's mandate.

Article 122: The six seats reserved for non-resident citizens

Six seats reserved for non-resident citizens shall be added to the total number of deputies thus becoming 134 members in the elections that will follow the first elections to be held in accordance with this law.

In the next elections, the total number of 128 members of parliament shall be reduced by six seats to be taken from the same confessions to which the non-resident seats have been allocated to in Article 112 of this Law, by virtue of a decree of the Council of Ministers at the suggestion of the Minister.

Article 123: The implementation of the provisions of this chapter

A joint committee with members from the Ministry of Interior and Municipalities and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Emigrants shall be formed pursuant to a decision issued by both ministers entrusted with the detailed implementation of the present chapter.

Article 124: The detailed implementation of the law

The details of implementation of the present law shall be determined by virtue of decrees issued by the Council of Ministers, at the suggestion of the Minister of Interior and Municipalities.

Article 125: Repeal of contradictory laws

All provisions contrary to the provisions of this law, in particular Act No. 25 of 8-10-2008, shall be repealed except for the provisions of Articles relating to parliamentary by-elections where the majoritarian system applies, and to municipal and local (mukhtar) elections.

Article 126: Enforcement

The present law shall enter into force immediately after its publication in the official gazette, subject to expeditious promulgation in accordance with the first paragraph of Article 56 of the Constitution.

The Electoral Districts



Table Attached to Law 44 dated 17/6/2017 (Official Gazette no.27 dated 17 June 2017)
Distribution of Seats to the Confessions and Districts

Beirut

Major Districts	Minor Districts	No. of Seats	Sunni	Shiaa	Druze	Maronite	Greek Catholic	Greek Orthodox	Evangelical	Armenian Catholic	Armenian Orthodox	Minorities
Beirut 1	Ashrafieh Rmeil, Saifi, Medawar	8				1	1	1		1	3	1
Beirut 2	Ras Beirut Mina El Hosn, Ain El Mreisseh, Mazraa, Mseitbeh, Zkak El Blat, Bashoura, Marfaa	11	6	2	1			1	1			
	Total	19	6	2	1	1	1	2	1	1	3	1

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Mount Lebanon

Major Districts	Minor Districts	No. of Seats	Sunni	Shiaa	Druze	Maronite	Greek Catholic	Greek Orthodox	Evangelical	Armenian Catholic	Armenian Orthodox	Minorities
Mount Lebanon 1	Jbeil	3		1		2						
	Kesserwan	5				5						
Mount Lebanon 2	Metn	8				4	1	2			1	
Mount Lebanon 3	Baabda	6		2	1	3						
Mount Lebanon 4	Chouf	8	2		2	3	1					
	Aley	5			2	2		1				
	Total	35	2	3	5	19	2	3			1	

South Lebanon

Major Districts	Minor Districts	.No of Seats	Sunni	Shiaa	Druze	Maronite	Greek Catholic	Greek Orthodox	Evangelical	Armenian Catholic	Armenian Orthodox	Minorities
South Lebanon 1	Saida	2	2									
	Jezzine	3				2	1					
South Lebanon 2	Tyre	4		4								
	Saida Villages	3		2			1					
South Lebanon 3	Bint Jbeil	3		3								
	Nabatieh	3		3								
	Marjayoun Hasbaya	5	1	2	1			1				
	Total	23	3	14	1	2	2	1				

Bekaa

Major Districts	Minor Districts	No. of Seats	Sunni	Shiaa	Druze	Maronite	Greek Catholic	Greek Orthodox	Evangelical	Armenian Catholic	Armenian Orthodox	Minorities
Bekaa 1	Zahle	7	1	1		1	2	1			1	
Bekaa 2	West Bekaa Rashaya	6	2	1	1	1		1				
Bekaa 3	Baalbek Hermel	10	2	6		1	1					
	Total	23	5	8	1	3	3	2			1	

North Lebanon

Major Districts	Minor Districts	No. of Seats	Sunni	Shiaa	Druze	Maronite	Greek Catholic	Greek Orthodox	Evangelical	Armenian Catholic	Armenian Orthodox	Minorities	Alawite
North Lebanon 1	Akkar	7	3			1		2					1
North Lebanon 2	Tripoli	8	5			1		1					1
	Minnieh	1	1										
	Dinnieh	2	2										
North Lebanon 3	Zgharta	3				3							
	Bcharreh	2				2							
	Koura	3						3					
	Batroun	2				2							
	Total	28	11			9		6					2
Grand Total		128	27	27	8	34	8	14	1	1	5	1	2