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Cooperation project on the social integration of immigrants, migration, and the movement of persons

Robert Schuman Centre for advanced studies

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Insecurity, Migration and Return: The Case of Lebanon following the Summer 2006 War

Research Reports 2007/01
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ROBERT SCHUMAN CENTRE FOR ADVANCED STUDIES

Insecurity, Migration and Return: The Case of Lebanon following the Summer 2006 War

GUITA G. HOURANI AND EUGENE SENSENIG-DABBOUS

CARIM

EURO-MEDITERRANEAN CONSORTIUM FOR APPLIED RESEARCH ON INTERNATIONAL MIGRATION

RESEARCH REPORT, CARIM–RR 2007/01

BADIA FIESOLANA, SAN DOMENICO DI FIESOLE (FI)

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[Full name of the author(s)], [title], CARIM Research Reports [series number], Robert Schuman Centre for Advanced Studies, San Domenico di Fiesole (FI): European University Institute, [year of publication].

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Acknowledgment

The authors acknowledge the assistance of Joelle Rahmé for keying in the data in SPSS and, with Elie El-Mir, for aggregating the data and producing all of the graphs; Rudy Sassine, with Elie Nabhan for conducting expert interviews; Rudy Sassine for his media report in summarizing related subjects, and with Ghada Khoury and Shadi Kayrouz for reviewing and clipping newspaper articles; Pascale Dahrouj for her report on human security – which was integrated into this study – and for conducting in-depth interviews along with Joseph Malkoun; and Sara Al Mokdad, Sana Tannouri, Dr. Elias El-Zein, Heba Tannous, Roland AbouJaoude, Roula Kassab and Laurence Ajaka for administering the questionnaires. The authors recognize Elie Nabhan for initial analysis of the data. The authors are also thankful to all those who have facilitated their field work at the following institutions of higher education: Holy Spirit University (Kaslik and Rmeich campuses); the Lebanese American University (Beirut campus); the American University of Beirut; the Lebanese University (Beirut and Tripoli campuses); Haigazian University (Beirut campus); Al Jinan University and Al Manar University (Tripoli campuses); and Notre Dame University (Zouk Mosbeh, Chouf and Barsa campuses). The authors are also grateful to all anonymous interviewees and to all of those who filled in the questionnaires in Lebanon and abroad, as well as to the Lebanese organizations and the Friends of LERC who sent out the call for participants. The authors are indebted to Debra Callaghan for editing the document under duress; however, the responsibility for the views expressed in it remains that of the authors.

Section I: Introduction and Methodology

A. Introduction

The significance of human security – or the lack thereof – on migration flows has been well established over the last two decades. In the following pages, the staff of the Lebanese Emigration Research Center (LERC) present the results of a survey carried out under circumstances that reflect the insecurity related not only to the topic at hand, but also to the working conditions and daily lives of the field researchers and academic personnel responsible for this project report. To the best of its ability, LERC has maintained an even-handed and unbiased approach to the issues of insecurity and migration while, at the same time, reflecting on the subjectivity of participants, whether students, interviewees, media surveyors, database operators, staff writers, or project administrators.

In essence, this project considers two closely-related questions. First, LERC has attempted to determine the extent to which the July/August 2006 war in Lebanon accelerated the emigration process, while simultaneously discouraging Lebanese abroad from returning to their country of origin. Second, we set out to ascertain whether Lebanon's post-war political crisis, which actually began in the last days of the Summer 2006 War, merely prolonged the war's migratory consequences, as we assumed when we began our research in late September and early October. By the end of 2006, we were more inclined to believe that the rise in mutual recriminations between rival confessional power elites, the radicalization of public political discourse, the assassination of a minister in the pro-Western Lebanese government – a minister who was also political heir to one of the country's most powerful Maronite dynasties – and the ongoing wave of pro- and anti-government demonstrations represented a unique, independent and self-sufficient emigration push factor and a deterrent to return migration. In other words, it seems likely that the most recent migration trends are less a result of the Summer 2006 War and more a distinct manifestation of a new political crisis in an already troubled land.

1. Impact of the Summer 2006 War on Migration

In the weeks immediately following the July/August 2006 military conflict between the Israeli Defense Forces (IDF) and Hezbollah, LERC carried out a study on the war's effects on human security in Lebanon. LERC's objective was to ascertain the extent to which five weeks of war had exacerbated the already considerable pre-war emigration process and to determine whether the war had also undermined return migration.

The research process built on LERC's experience in surveying evacuation during the war.[1] The basic assumption at the outset of the field research phase, which lasted two and a half months, was that the war itself would be the predominant factor in encouraging emigration from Lebanon and discouraging return-migration and expatriate remittances to the country. For this reason, emphasis was initially placed on war-related issues directly associated with physical violence and insecurity, such as future threats of military intervention, destruction of infrastructure and challenges in meeting primary human needs, including food, potable water, housing, utilities, health services and basic education for the young. In addition, war-driven emigration and a reduction in return-migration were assumed to be directly related to the economic crisis resulting from the war and the fear of renewed hostilities should the ceasefire not hold.

A rapid, if not unexpected, succession of destabilizing political events immediately followed the collapse of the wartime truce between Lebanon's two major political alliances. We soon realized that

1 Guita Hourani, The Impact of the Summer 2006 War on Migration in Lebanon: Emigration, Remigration, Evacuation and Return (Louaize: NDU Press, October 2006).

our initial survey parameters were being challenged as the political crises continued to escalate. Considered in hindsight, the post-war insecurity crisis may even prove to have played a more significant role than the war itself in driving outward-migration and forcing Lebanese abroad to reconsider their aspirations to rebuild lives in their home villages, towns and metropolitan neighbourhoods.

2. Immediate Effects of the Summer 2006 War

To date, various studies have been carried out on some aspects of the July/August 2006 war and its impact on the lives of the Lebanese population. While it has been relatively easy to survey the direct material destruction that resulted from five weeks of cross-border combat and the immediate effects on the domestic economy, it has been far more difficult to ascertain the emotional, psychological, 'spiritual' and overarching political ramifications of the hostilities for Lebanon's already weakened social and economic fabric.

In order to fill the gap in reliable empirical data on the impact of the war and the post-war political crisis on the Lebanese economy and on society more generally, LERC project staff methodically surveyed Lebanon's major daily newspapers from the commencement of hostilities to the completion of the survey phase on 11 December 2006.[2] While this data was being processed and evaluated, additional anecdotal and unsystematic media and personal insights were gathered to enrich the analysis of the post-war crisis. The following excerpts from the press were selected and compiled by LERC's research staff and represent only a fraction of all media data collected. By themselves, they do not fulfil the rigorous criteria for a proper content analysis of the entire Lebanese media landscape. Other excerpts and citations appear elsewhere in this report.

In an article on the Lebanese economy that appeared in Beirut's Arabic-language daily, *As-Safir*, it was reported that a total of 30 large factories and 150 small and mid-sized companies[3] in various parts of the country were physically destroyed by bombing during the Summer 2006 War. This led to widespread unemployment and urgent calls for government intervention to help the owners of these businesses to resume work and avoid permanent lay-offs of wage workers and salaried employees. A few days later, on 15 August, the newspaper also stated that 40% of all of Lebanon's hotel staff[4] were unemployed at the time of writing and that they faced an uncertain future since hotel owners were expected to set new employment policies in light of further political and economic developments.

In spite of the grim overall picture, another article in *As-Safir* gave a positive report on the continuous and overwhelming trust in the banking sector shown by non-resident depositors, who continued to maintain US$5.9 billion in Lebanese banks. Total deposits by residents and non-residents remained more or less constant at some US$50 billion, disproving rumours about heavy withdrawals from bank accounts and the general flight of investment capital.[5] Elsewhere in the same issue, the president of the Lebanese Association of Banks, François Bassil,[6] confirmed that the transfer of funds to points abroad was still limited and that Arab depositors and investors had apparently decided to keep their funds in Lebanese banks.

2 This media analysis was less comprehensive for the period between 1 and 11 December and was summarized by Research Assistant Rudy Sassine.

3 A. Hamdan, "Thirty Big Factories and One Hundred Fifty Small and Mid-Sized Companies are Destroyed… The First Estimates of the Damages Are One Hundred and Ninety Million Dollars [Arabic]," As-Safir, 11 August 2006.

4 A. Haidar, "A Thousand Workers in the Restaurant Sector in Solidere are Threatened by Unemployment…40% of Hotel Employees Are Working... Awaiting Settlement of Hotels' Work Policies [Arabic]," As-Safir, 15 August 2006.

5 "Financial Drain Recedes… and Human Hemorrhage Increases! [Arabic]," As-Safir, 3 August 2006.

6 Ibid.

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The war's effects on Lebanon's overall economic and financial situation were also reflected in the country's English-language newspaper, the *Daily Star*. Most ominously, Jean Fabre, spokesman for the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), observed that the Summer 2006 War had wiped out in a month the results of 15 years of reconstruction activity and other concerted efforts to re-establish faith in Lebanon's future.[7]

A few weeks after the ceasefire began, Kafalat, a financial company that lends money to small and mid-sized businesses, revealed that approximately 408 Lebanese restaurants had war-related and other debts totalling 51.159 billion Lebanese lira (LL) or US$34.106 million.[8] A month later, on the basis of a report issued by the Syndicate of Restaurant Owners in Lebanon, the newspaper was able to provide some facts and figures on physical destruction in the sector, noting that "67 restaurants in Beirut's southern suburbs, South Lebanon and Baalbek were destroyed during the war, causing material damage of [US]$15.4 million."[9] Some of the country's commercial woes were also related to events that occurred prior to the Summer 2006 War. Businesses and restaurants in central Beirut suffered significant losses in earnings during the preceding spring, when the process of National Dialogue was ongoing and the country's political leadership was meeting nearby. The extremely tight security measures accompanying these consultations discouraged or even prevented shoppers and diners from gaining access to the downtown commercial district and its environs.[10]

The *Daily Star* devoted considerable space to surveys of damage to the industrial sector, reporting the destruction of about 100 industrial sites of varying sizes in the south of the country, and to the agricultural sector in the predominantly Shiite areas south of the Litani River, where tobacco crops and livestock were neglected and often perished after farmers fled their homes and fields for safer locales.[11]

In addition to calls for Lebanese government assistance, donor and lending countries were asked to make individual contributions to help rebuild all that had been destroyed. The response has been good with some states adopting whole village infrastructures as their own private projects. Hopes of further investment and financial aid have continued to be high, spurred, in part, by meetings and forums in which Arab officials and businessmen and their counterparts in Lebanon have promised various kinds of support, for example, by giving preferential treatment, including tax exemptions, to Lebanese goods exported to their countries.

Perhaps the greatest optimism is attached to the Paris III Conference, which is scheduled for the end of January 2007. Despite concerns regarding the impact of the current Lebanese political crisis on the economy, the ability of the Lebanese government to implement structural and other economic reforms, the willingness of donor countries to help Lebanon and the broader issue of the international and regional investment climate, the Daily Star cited economist Dr Elie Yashoui[12] as saying that Lebanon will almost certainly receive as much as US$4 billion in grants and loans from the international community at the conference. Should this or a like sum materialize, it will be seen by some as indicative of international support for the current Lebanese government and as an initiative to prevent its collapse.[13]

Other press articles have touched on topics specifically related to the subjects of migration and return. Many Lebanese, some of whom were dual nationals evacuated by foreign governments during

7 "War Wiped Out 15 Years of Lebanese Recovery – UNDP," Daily Star, 23 August 2006.

8 L. Ohrstrom, "Hospitality Sector Reels in Aftermath of War, Seeks Financing to Help Recovery," Daily Star, 28 August 2006.

9 O. Habib, "Restaurant Owners Detail War Losses, Seek Government Help…," Daily Star, 28 September 2006.

10 L. Ohrstrom, "Downtown Beirut Braces for Another Political Siege," Daily Star, 6 November 2006.

11 A. Chaon, "Catastrophic Season for Tobacco," Daily Star, 24 August 2006.

12 O. Habib, "Donor Conference Takes On New Urgency," Daily Star, 23 November 2006.

13 Ibid.

the Summer 2006 War, have come back to the country since the war's end. A *Daily Star* report on airport activity quoted Hamdi Shouk, Director General of Civil Aviation, as stating that "90% of people coming to Beirut are Lebanese and the rest are from the Arab States.[14] This not only indicated the return of Lebanese, but also that few foreign nationals – and then largely Arabs – were risking travel to Lebanon. Three other articles in the same newspaper discussed the 'brain drain' from Lebanon. One confirmed that students pursuing specialized higher studies[15] or majoring in business administration were the most willing to migrate and suggested that many students intending to leave had already done so during or immediately after the war. Some young men voiced complaints about finding employment in Lebanon, contending that women were being favoured for jobs and talking about the necessity of pulling strings or going through this or that leader in order to land a good position. All of the major universities that use English as their primary language of instruction, including the American University of Beirut (AUB), the Lebanese American University (LAU) and Notre Dame University (NDU), experienced a delay in the start of the academic year, the flight of foreign teachers[16] and the cancellation of some courses. Anecdotal evidence gleaned from conversations with student affairs officers and university instructors at many of Lebanon's key English-, French- and Arabic-language universities corroborated these media reports.

Although it gave few sources, a November 2006 study (*Economic Impact of the July 06 War and Steps towards Recovery*) by the Beirut-based InfoPro Center for Economic Information, a research and publishing company, provided the best overview of the guarded optimism that reigned in Lebanon immediately prior to the escalation of political conflict later that same month. The conflict materialized with the resignation of all six 8 March coalition members from the Cabinet at the beginning of November and was exacerbated by the assassination of Pierre Gemayal, Industry Minister, member of parliament and a 14 March coalition member, just one day before scheduled celebrations to mark Lebanon's independence (on 21 November), as well as the announcement, by Hezbollah, which heads the 8 March coalition, of an indefinite occupation of the capital's economic and political centre, the downtown Solidere district, at the month's end. With these developments, hopes for a rapid economic recovery, so prevalent after the war, were dashed.

According to the *Daily Star*, the Gemayal assassination caused Lebanese hotels to empty[17] as dramatically as they had following the murder of Prime Minister Rafik Hariri on 14 February 2005. Hence, although tourists had begun to trickle back to Lebanon, in some cases to show solidarity with the country and its citizens after the war, the tourism and recreation sector enjoyed only a very short respite before being struck by another blow with repercussions for the end-of-year holiday season.

The development with the greatest impact, however, was the resignation of the 8 March coalition ministers from the government. Experts have concluded that the disagreement between the opposing coalitions will have a negative effect on efforts to raise funds and loans at the Paris III Conference and will also make the government's expected structural and economic reforms impossible to implement.[18] There is a parallel here to the circumstances that followed the Paris II Conference, when President Emile Lahoud, in disagreement with then Prime Minister Hariri, impeded implementation of the agreed reform mechanism, causing the government to fail to meet its obligations toward donor countries.[19] President Lahoud, who is informally allied with the 8 March coalition, will remain in power until his extended term expires in the fall of 2007. Moreover, Nabih Berri, the speaker of the

14 O. Habib, "Hariri Airport Buzzes with Activity as Thousands of Lebanese Return Home," Daily Star, 12 September 2006.

15 M. Bluhm, "Political Crisis Accelerates Brain Drain as MBAs Seek Career in Calmer Lands," Daily Star, 21 November 2006.

16 I. Azzi, "Universities Seek to Salvage Summer Session," Daily Star, 25 August 2006.

17 M. Bluhm, "Hotels Report Mass Exodus in Wake of Gemayel Assassination," Daily Star, 24 November 2006.

18 O. Habib, "Private Sector Fears Cabinet Crisis Will Scuttle Paris 3," Daily Star, 17 November 2006.

19 Ibid.

Lebanese parliament and head of the Amal Party, one of the members of the 8 March coalition, can delay efforts to convene parliament by virtue of his office. Hence, although some Lebanese, like former MP Mikhayel Daher, believe that a parliamentary vote supported by the governing majority will lead to the adoption of any necessary reforms or allocations,[20] there are numerous possible impediments to timely progress in the reform process.

3. Shifting Parameters of Human Security

The InfoPro survey of November 2006 concluded that "the future outlook of Lebanon's economic recovery depends to a large extent on the political environment." With respect to migration and diaspora involvement in the Lebanese economy, it expressed the view that "to retain financial and human capital, as well as to attract foreign investment back to Lebanon,"[21] political stability and good will are absolute prerequisites. However, neither political stability nor good will seems to be on the horizon for the year 2007. As this report was being completed, several of the key indicators for human security showed further deterioration of the current situation, which will potentially promote additional emigration by Lebanon's 'best and brightest' and discourage return migration and investment from Lebanese diaspora communities around the world.

As indicated above, the Paris III negotiations, scheduled for January 2007 and seen as essential to the ongoing stability of the Lebanese lira and the survival of the still thriving financial services sector, are gradually falling victim to the conflict between the 14 March governing majority and 8 March opposition coalition, led by Hezbollah.[22] Paris III is, however, an extraordinary event being organized in response to extraordinary circumstances. The everyday business of government is not extraordinary, even when dealing with the aftermath of war, yet it has also been blocked by internal political developments. To give one example, Lebanon's environmental crisis, which was only exacerbated by the Summer 2006 War,[23] most dramatically, by a large oil spill into the Eastern Mediterranean, is now even more dire because the domestic perpetrators of ecological destruction, namely, the operators of illegal quarries, are exploiting the political deadlock to recommence their activities.[24]

The few administrative and political reform projects that did make some progress during the brief grace period between the parliamentary elections of early 2005 and the Summer 2006 War are now languishing because of the current political stalemate. One significant example involves the radical reform of the utilities sector, which was initiated and partially carried out by Mohammad Fneish, Minister of Energy and Water and a member of Hezbollah, before he left the cabinet with other members of the 8 March coalition: the withdrawal of Fneish and his team from the ministry has halted the reform process despite its successes up until that time.[25] Another important example concerns the draft parliamentary electoral reform law, which was developed, negotiated and drafted in a unique civil society stakeholder process. Presented to the Cabinet on 1 June 2006, the draft law was supposed to receive first reading in parliament in mid-July, but this move forward was delayed owing to the outbreak of war. The draft law is currently being ignored or rejected by both coalitions – the government and the opposition – leading many analysts to predict political paralysis in this key area of

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20 Ibid.

21 InfoPro Center for Economic Information, Economic Impact of the July 06 War and Steps towards Recovery (Beirut: InfoPro, November 2006), 4.

22 H. Bathish, "Something New to Divide Beirut: Paris III Reforms," Daily Star, 6 January 2007.

23 M. Abi Habib, "War Added to Lebanon's Many Environmental Problems," Daily Star, 5 January 2006.

24 M. Zeineddine, "Owners of Illegal Quarries Exploit Political Crisis to Resume Work," Daily Star, 6 January 2006.

25 K. Wilson-Goldie, "Will Fneish's Resignation Kill Reform at the Energy and Water Ministry?," Daily Star, 27 November 2006.

democratic reform and, indeed, an end to the almost euphoric reform process initiated after the withdrawal of Syrian military forces from Lebanon in early 2005.[26]

Lebanon now faces an uncertain future.[27] The almost total lack of predictability with respect to political and economic developments will have one guaranteed effect, namely, the continuing brain drain that has long undermined the country's ability to recover from conflict and thrive in peace. If this flight of human capital is joined by an equally devastating drain on financial capital and other resources, the country may face a state of insecurity reminiscent of the late 1970s and 1980s – the early period of Lebanon's civil war.

B. Methodology

LERC's decision to study the interrelated issues of human security, migration and diaspora-return to Lebanon following the Summer 2006 War reflected a longstanding desire to focus on the correlation between war and migration and war and return in the context of a country traditionally characterized by international migration following internal and/or cross-border conflict, especially during the last three decades. This study builds on the experience that LERC has gained during four years of work in the fields of applied social science research (e.g., the Center's October 2006 study on the recent wartime evacuations), policy analysis (e.g., the 2005 white paper on absentee voting presented to the National Commission on Parliamentary Electoral Law) and alternative research methods (e.g., the Migration History Workshop Festival and 'dig where you stand' migration studies toolkit, based on Sven Lindqvist's innovative *Gräv där du star* grassroots history approach).

One of the principal periods of Lebanese overseas migration occurred between 1975 and 2001.[28] During this time, which also saw a huge internal displacement of the Lebanese population, approximately one million persons left the country, largely for destinations in the Arab Gulf, Australia, North and South America, and West Africa, as well as Western and, more recently, Eastern Europe. Livelihood strategies combined with severe political and societal insecurity in their country of origin caused most of these migrations to become permanent. These same factors came into play once again during the Summer 2006 War and in its aftermath. The conflict between the IDF and Hezbollah was very costly in terms of both the numbers killed and wounded and the socio-economic consequences to every Lebanese. About a quarter of a million citizens were left without proper housing; the country's infrastructure was significantly damaged, although by no means crippled; factories of all sizes were destroyed from the south to the Bekaa Valley; agricultural activity came to a halt and crops and livestock perished; and different parts of the service sector, especially those related to tourism and recreation, lost significant business, causing many companies to lay off employees forcing new graduates and the unemployed to migrate.

This research project was based on a literature review, surveys of existing data on Lebanese migration and the effects of the Summer 2006 War, and fieldwork in most parts of the country. To study the impact of the Summer 2006 War and the ensuing post-war political crisis on migration, we used two empirical approaches, one quantitative and one qualitative. Finally, in light of the ongoing theoretical debate on the motivational issues surrounding migration flows, we evaluated all results in an attempt to weigh the significance of both the war and the post-war political crisis as independent push/pull variables.

26 E. Sensenig-Dabbous, "Why Is Everyone Ignoring the Boutros Proposal?," Daily Star, 4 January 2006.

27 R. Ghazal, "Opposition Vows to Step Up Pressure on Siniora within Next Few Days," Daily Star, 6 January 2006.

28 There is no data available on the number of migrants after 2001.

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1. Quantitative Methods

Two questionnaires were developed for the first, largely quantitative part of this survey: one was for permanent residents of Lebanon and the second was for former residents now living abroad. Both did contain, however, a qualitative option at the end of the form that invited respondents to share their feelings, aspirations, hopes and fears. In questionnaire modules V and VI respectively, residents and migrants were asked the following questions: "*What will it take for you to stay in Lebanon / What are your conditions to return permanently to Lebanon? This is a very important part of the questionnaire. In this section you may write your views and opinions about the political, economic and societal conditions that will make you stay in Lebanon / will make you return to Lebanon.*" All English-language responses to these questions, as well as the quotations gleaned from the qualitative questionnaires described below, have been faithfully reproduced, when possible, in order to reflect the personal character of the texts. Arabic responses have been translated into English in styles similar to the originals.

It should be noted that all percentages below 4% were dropped from the graphs for clarity and legibility.

Residents of Lebanon and Lebanese Living Abroad

The questionnaire developed for residents of Lebanon was largely intended to discover whether the situation in the country was engendering further migration. It was administered in person to a sample of research subjects mainly composed of senior BA, MA and PhD students, members of the workforce and unemployed individuals living in greater Beirut, South Lebanon, Tripoli, Mount Lebanon, Zahle and North Lebanon between 1 October and 11 December 2006. Out of 510 questionnaires fill in, only the 444 questionnaires that were properly completed were accepted, keyed into the SPSS program and aggregated for the study. Our sampling frame consisted of two groups; first students, both advanced undergraduates and graduates from all universities in Lebanon who were chosen based on a convenience sampling approach; second the employable Lebanese workforce, also selected based on convenience sampling.

The questionnaire developed for migrants living abroad was intended to discover whether the situation in Lebanon had affected their decision to return permanently. It was sent to over 270 individuals who had expressed their interest and willingness to take part in the survey after learning about it through an announcement disseminated by various organizations, list-servs, alumni and the like. A total of 74 complete responses were keyed into the SPSS program. Although this sample cannot be considered statistically representative of the Lebanese and their descendants scattered around the globe, it does reflect the opinions of those willing to answer questions on the issue of migration and insecurity in Lebanon at that time. The results of this part of the survey are vulnerable because of the high level of non response. Those who participated could very well have been motivated by political, social or cultural considerations.

Every effort was made to ensure that the basic characteristics of Lebanon's population, whether in terms of gender, religious denomination, area of residence, or political affiliation, were matched by the survey sample. Contact with students was mediated by university officials. Senior university undergraduates and graduate students working on their MAs were generally asked to fill in the questionnaire in the presence of LERC's assistant researchers. Questionnaires were collected and data keyed into the SPSS program without any knowledge of the name of the persons who had filled them in. The questionnaires were anonymous.

Embassies and Migration Services

In the second part of the quantitative process, a questionnaire was developed for embassies and consular sections and was sent to the ones representing major destinations for Lebanese emigrants, namely, the United States, Canada, France, Sweden, the United Kingdom, Nigeria, Ivory Coast,

Ghana, Mexico, Venezuela, Brazil, Australia, Kuwait, the United Arab Emirates and Saudi Arabia. When this measure failed to elicit substantial data, LERC decided to alter the embassy questionnaire and to contact offices that provide immigration services by helping prospective migrants with their immigration applications. This study reports on responses from two embassies and two offices offering immigration services.

2. Qualitative Methods – Expert and In-Depth Interviews

As part of the qualitative phase, two questionnaires were developed, one for expert interviews and one for in-depth interviews. Most interviews were conducted in English, but sometimes they took place in Arabic and were later translated into English

Expert Interviews

Expert interviews were conducted with the Chief Executive Officers (CEOs) of privately-owned small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), high-level representatives of civil society organizations, including some focusing on women's issues and human rights, and specialists working in the financial services sector. The present study was substantiated by 11 expert interviews, which were largely conducted either by telephone or in person. A few questionnaires were filled in by the experts themselves due to the poor security situation which prevented our research assistants from conducting more face-to-face interviews. All of the expert interviews are attributable.

In-depth Interviews

Another series of in-depth interviews was conducted with residents of Lebanon to gather data indicating their thoughts on a variety of topics. Much like the experts interviewed, they were asked for their insights on insecurity and migration and their attitudes toward Lebanon's social, political and economic situation. A total of eight in-depth interviews provided information for this study. All of them were conducted in person, but the respondents remain anonymous.

Media Overview

Another element of the qualitative phase was the review of newspaper articles and reports to compensate for the shortfall in literature on the subject of war and migration, particularly in Lebanon. LERC's research assistants reviewed and clipped articles from five major newspapers: *AnNahar*, *AsSafir*, *l'Orient le Jour, Daily Star*, and *AlMustaqbal*; and three journals and magazines: *Le Commerce du Levant*, *Lebanon Opportunities*, *Al-Bayan*, *Iqtisad wa Amal*, *l'Hebdo magazine*, and *Executive.*

Finally, it should be noted that the Summer 2006 War had ended by the time we began implementing the questionnaire. However, as we carried out the survey, the situation in Lebanon worsened with the resignation of part of the Cabinet, the Gemayel assassination and the demonstrations turned sit-in aimed at bringing down the Siniora government. It would have been very interesting to study the impact of each of these events on our research, but time constraints made such incremental observations impossible.

C. Insecurity and Migration: Measuring Threats to Human Security

All threats are interrelated and one can lead to another. As noted above, forced migration is both an important threat to human security and one of the most significant consequences of human insecurity. Its relevance here as a threat is that it points to the fear that individuals have about remaining in their own country when it can no longer provide them with the security essential to their survival. Its consequences will be highlighted below. People exposed to human insecurity have only two options: either to accept the status quo or adopt an exit strategy. The latter may quite literally involve migration

to a better and more secure environment or rebelling against existing circumstances, which may lead, in turn, to civil conflict, crime and other forms of insecurity.

International Migration: "Contemporary international migration," according to Sirkeci, is "a complicated human movement involving different types of migrants, such as refugees, asylum seekers, family migrants, illegal migrants, migrant workers and professionals."[29] Elsewhere, Sirkeci defines it in terms familiar from the discussion above, as "a dynamic movement from the area of origin [which is] characterized by an environment of insecurity" to destinations that are "less insecure" or provide "relative security."[30] Indeed, individuals always try to ensure their own safety and improve their overall circumstances and will cross borders to do both if necessary. But migration is not only a consequence of human insecurity. Once begun, it can lead to further migration or even to conflict or other hazards.

In a 1995 study, Richmond[31] characterizes two types of migration. Voluntary migration is a decision freely taken for personal reasons, such as family reunification or labour migration. It is not caused by human insecurity because it is based on a rational decision; it does not have a negative effect because it tends to be slowly and carefully planned. That being said, human insecurity may stimulate hasty action on the part of individuals harbouring plans to migrate. Forced migration is based on intimidation, crisis and conflict. Armed conflict is, in fact, a major cause of forced migration since it often involves gross violations of human rights. Other causes include environmental degradation, shrinking resources, unequal treatment, failing states, weak governance, unchecked violence and in-country wars.

However, Bach warns that the voluntary-involuntary dichotomy in migration has become less distinct and that reasons for migration are complex and intertwined. As he tells us: "Motivations for moving cannot be reduced to categorical causes, but may be more effectively viewed as the result of the lack of alternatives in overcoming the mixture of difficulties and threats."[32]

Drawbacks of Migration: The absence of economic, societal, or political security gives rise to the movement of peoples. For those already planning to migrate, human insecurity may be viewed as an "opportunity framework."[33] According to a 1993 United Nations report: "Migration, both from within countries and across borders, is mounting. Political and economic disruption are important immediate causes of specific flows of migration, but demographic pressures and growing economic disparities create strong underlying forces for population movements which threaten to become a serious source of international conflict."[34]

Migration can be a grave problem for both the generating state and the receiving state. The generating state suffers the loss of skilled personnel, which hampers the development process and affects the social fabric. Since young workers migrate when they are most productive, it is the host country that benefits from their dynamism, lower wages and higher consumption. Migration changes people's mentality and migrants often come to possess multiple identities and become unsure of their loyalty to their home country. They may develop strong links and allegiance to the receiving state.

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29 I. Sirkeci, "War in Iraq: Environment of Insecurity and International Migration," International Migration 43, no. 4 (2005): 200.

30 I. Sirkeci, The Environment of Insecurity in Turkey and the Emigration of Turkish Kurds to Germany (New York: Edwin Mellen Press, 2006), 21.

31 A. H. Richmond, "The Environment and Refugees: Theoretical and Policy Issues," Population Bulletin of the United Nations, No. 39, 1995, 1-17.

32 Chen, Fukuda-Parr, and Seidensticker, Human Insecurity in a Global World, 72.

33 Sirkeci, The Environment of Insecurity in Turkey, 267.

34 International Development Research Center, Security and Mutual Vulnerability, chap. 4 ("Social Insecurity); available online at [http://www.idrc.ca/en/ev-25575-201-1-DO_TOPIC.html], accessed 27 November 2006.

Yet, forced migration can have a negative effect on receiving states. Tensions may arise owing to unreasonable fear of the migrants, ignorance about their customs, or worries that they will compete for sometimes scarce jobs. Migrants can also face discrimination because of their ethnicity, race, or religion.

Established migrant networks in receiving states have been major facilitators of migration mostly due to the belief that they are willing and able to assist new migrants owing to national, ethnic, or religious links that may actually deepen after migration since they provide migrants with a sense of belonging. However, receiving states are deporting larger numbers of illegal migrants and have often blocked entry to legal ones. In part, this increased caution has resulted from the association between terrorism and international migration, which is known to facilitate human trafficking, the smuggling of weapons and the accumulation of resources to implement terrorist plots. [35]

Section II: Findings of the Survey

This section of the report contains the results of the literature review and field research carried out after the Summer 2006 War in accordance with the methodology described in the introduction.

A. SURVEY RESULTS FOR RESIDENTS

1. Introduction

International migration from war zones and conflict areas may be regarded as 'voluntary' or 'forced,' 'temporary' or 'permanent,' 'political' or 'economic.'[36] Differentiating between these typologies is difficult, especially since they are frequently interdependent and mutually inclusive. As Dowty says, "economic hardship and political persecution" during periods of war or conflict "often go hand-in-hand and frequently interact with one another to compound migratory pressure."[37]

Studying migration from a country that is undergoing the transition from conflict to peace requires scrutiny not only of its economic conditions and infrastructure, but equally, if not more importantly, of its legislative system, especially regarding human rights and freedoms, the rule of law and due process. Transition periods are very fragile by nature and, if they are hampered, the resultant confusion can easily create new waves of migrants and restrict return migration.

When we consider population movements, it is vital to take into account such demographic factors as the age, sex and marital status of potential migrants, as well as socio-economic factors reflecting political, economic and societal conditions, in addition to family ties. But while statistical data is indispensable to the study of migration, it is equally important to study the 'physical' or 'material' and 'moral' or 'non-material' environments that push people to migrate and prevent expatriates from returning to their home country. Other critical factors are the way in which people perceive the 'push' environment, the actual decision of migrants to emigrate and their selection of a destination. Neither the decision to migrate nor destination selection is made in a haphazard manner. Resolving to migrate to another country for the purpose of residence is a complex phenomenon with diverse and intersecting motivations.[38] It can be triggered by political unrest; economic instability; social,

35 Chen, Fukuda- Parr, and Seidensticker, Human Insecurity in a Global World, 81.

36 See F. Adamson, "Crossing Borders: International Migration and National Security," International Security 31, no. 1 (Summer 2006): 165-99; S. Barakat and A. Strand, "Forced Migration and Dilemmas of Humanitarian Assistance: Challenges for Applied Research," Norsk Geografisk Tidsskrift 54, no. 3 (6 September 2000): 134-36.

37 Cited in J. Lundquist and D. Massey, "Politics or Economics? International Migration during the Nicaraguan Contra War," Journal of Latin American Studies, no. 37: 30.

38 Sirkeci, "War in Iraq: Environment of Insecurity and International Migration," 200.

ideological, or religious conflict; the lack of opportunities for self-development and self-improvement; or a combination of all of these factors and many more.

Migration from regions or countries in conflict is often the result of what has been called an 'environment of insecurity' (EOI), which has "two primary components. The first relates to the *material* environment of insecurity, which is characterised by poverty, deprivation, and armed conflict. The second refers to the *non-material* environment of insecurity, characterised by fear of persecution, discrimination, and practical constraints, such as language barriers."[39] In the case of Lebanon, the *material* environment of insecurity is distinguished by protracted conflicts, whether internally instigated or externally supported, and the *non-material* environment of insecurity is increasingly distinguished by fear or the perception of threats to freedom of movement, of thought, of conscience and religious conviction, and of expression, as well as the right to information, the right to petition and the right to assemble and to associate.

When people are faced with an EOI, they "have two options (1) status quo and (2) exit."[40] According to Sirkeci, "following heated conflict (i.e., war) the EOI facilitates a steady and continuous outflow of migration because people feel insecure, so the environment of insecurity stays as a reality in perceptions even if not in reality. This would lead to further migrations."[41]

There are many reasons for a migrant to select one particular country as a destination over all others. These 'pull' factors might include one or more of the following attractions: job opportunities; better pay; good social security system; dual citizenship; entrepreneurial environment for small businesses; family reunification possibilities; pre-existing ethnic, religious, or communal associations; education and human development opportunities; peace and stability; and tolerance of minorities. Needless to say, the entire list of possibilities is too great to enumerate here.[42]

To reach their chosen destination, migrants have proven very resourceful in employing their financial, human and social capital at every stage of the journey – before leaving home, while travelling and upon arrival in the host country. They are willing to invest money to reach their destination "if the discounted value of real income available at a destination exceeds that at the origin by more than the costs of migration [including administrative and emotional costs]."[43] Migrants also employ their human capital or their knowledge and experience and their social capital or their values and social networks (family, friends, associates and so on) to arrive at their objective.[44]

Migration from Lebanon is not a recent phenomenon. It ebbs and flows in accordance with the socio-political and economic environment in the country and the region. In the late decades of the nineteenth century and the first decade of the twentieth, Lebanese emigration was part of a global

39 Ibid.

40 Ibid.

41 This is a direct quote from a personal electronic communication with Dr. Ibrahim Sirkeci, professor at the European Business School, Regent's College, London, UK, and author of The Environment of Insecurity in Turkey and the Emigration of Turkish Kurds to Germany (New York: Edwin Mellen Press, 2006). The original communication is available in LERC's archive.

42 See F. Gubert, "Migration et gestion collective des risques: L'Exemple de la région de Kayes (Mali)" (Ph.D. diss., Université d'Auvergne Clermont Ferrand I/CERDI, 2000).

43 H. Herzog Jr. and A. Schlottmann, "Moving Back vs. Moving On: The Concept of Home in the Decision to Remigrate," Journal of Regional Science 22, no. 1 (1982): 74.

44 See D. Massey and M. Aysa, "Social Capital and International Migration from Latin America," Paper presented at the Expert Group Meeting on International Migration and Development in Latin America and the Caribbean, Population Division, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, United Nations Secretariat, Mexico, 30 November-2 December 2005; available online at [http://www.un.org/esa/population/meetings/IttMigLAC/P04_Massey_Aysa.pdf]; accessed 6 June 2006.

movement of people.[45] Immediately after World War I, it was a consequence of the calamities that had devastated Lebanon in the form of famine, epidemics and economic misfortune; after World War II, it was a result of the widespread unemployment that followed the retreat of British and French troops from the country.[46]

Before long, however, emigration largely ceased as Lebanon shared in the general prosperity of the post-World War II period, enjoying a fair amount of political stability and making impressive economic gains from the late 1950s until the start of the Lebanese civil war in 1975. A temporary migration was set in motion during this period when the booming oil economies of the Gulf needed skilled labour in all sectors, [47] but Lebanese migration only really rekindled during the succession of wars between 1975 and 1991. The migration momentum picked up after the war as peace brought less stability than had been expected. Both the Israeli and Syrian armies occupied parts of the country, with the IDF engaging in recurrent incursions north of its self-styled 'security zone.' It is estimated that the total number of emigrants from Lebanon between 1975 and 2001 was close to one million strong.[48] According to Kasparian, Lebanon's nationals abroad represent 16% of its current population.[49]

Lebanese migration since 1975 has been facilitated by the existence of migrant communities established in Australia, North and South America, West Africa, the Gulf States and Western Europe in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Advances in transportation and communication technology have strengthened transnational networks between these migrant communities and family members in Lebanon, making the migratory process easier for prospective emigrants. According to *An-Nahar,* Lebanon's leading newspaper and one of the most important Arabic-language dailies in the Middle East and diaspora, 90% of those who were evacuated from Lebanon during the recent Summer 2006 War had relatives abroad to receive them.[50]

The profile of Lebanese emigrants has changed with time. In the early days, these migrants tended to be artisans, skilled laborers, small landowners and peasants before leaving their homeland.[51] By the 1950s, they were mainly teachers, technicians, craftsmen and building contractors; and, at the start of the civil war, they were even more qualified – engineers, businessmen, bankers, medical specialists, craftsmen and other highly-trained personnel.[52] Starting in the early 1990s, the most salient characteristics of Lebanese migrants have been their youth and high levels of education.[53] Statistics show that, of the total number of migrants between 1975 and 2001,[54] 29.2% (273,694) were university graduates, 3.4% (31,887) had specialized diplomas and 18.4% (172,720) were high school graduates.[55]

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45 R. Owen, "Lebanese Migration in the Context of World Population Movements," in The Lebanese in the World: A Century of Emigration, edited by A. Hourani and N. Shehadi (London: Centre for Lebanese Studies in association with I. B. Tauris, 1992), 33.

46 E. Safa, L'Emigration libanaise (Beirut: Université Saint-Joseph, 1960), 191-92.

47 B. Labaki, "Lebanese Emigration during the War (1975-1989)," in The Lebanese in the World: A Century of Emigration, edited by A. Hourani and N. Shehadi (London: Centre for Lebanese Studies in association with I. B. Tauris, 1992), 605.

48 A. Abi Farah, "Lebanese Emigrants between 1975 and 2001 [Arabic]," As-Safir, 3 December 2001, 1.

49 Ch. Kasparian, "Liban: Démographie et Économie des Migrations" in Ph. Fargues, Mediterranean Migration 2005 Report, Cooperation Project on the Social Integration of Immigrants, Migration, and the Movement of Persons, 13; available online at [http://www.carim.org/publications/AR2005CARIM_lite01.pdf], accessed 21 December 2006.

50 The newspaper also said that 62% of evacuees were willing to emigrate for good and that 7% had already sold or begun to sell their properties and were not considering returning to Lebanon. Z. Al Naket Rahme, "The July War Changed the Minds of Those Who Never Thought of Emigrating [Arabic]," An-Nahar, 1 September 2006.

51 A.. Naff, Becoming American: The Early Arab Immigrant Experience (Carbondale and Edwardsville: Southern Illinois University Press, 1985), 112-13.

52 Labaki, "Lebanese Emigration during the War (1975-1989)," 613.

53 Abi Farah, "Lebanese Emigrants between 1975 and 2001."

54 There are no published studies measuring emigration from Lebanon after 2001.

55 Abi Farah, "Lebanese Emigrants between 1975 and 2001," 6.

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The overwhelming majority of these migrants were aged 20-34 (28.4% or 265,722) and 35-49 (28.1% or 263,065).[56]

Abi Farah found that those who emigrated between 1975 and 2001 headed to Australia, the United States, Canada, France, Saudi Arabia, Brazil, Syria and the United Arab Emirates.[57] Also noticeable, however, was increased migration to Eastern European and Scandinavian countries.[58]

Like all migrants, the Lebanese based their choice of destinations mainly on the social networks and personal contacts potentially helpful to them throughout the migration process. Networks enable and direct migration flows by providing at least two types of assistance: information and support. Networks made up of friends, family members, coreligionists or co-ethnics, former colleagues or classmates, business contacts and the like who are already living in the destination countries provide information to "help migrants reduce uncertainty and mitigate risk, and thereby help them overcome traditional barriers associated with moving."[59] Once they arrive at their destination, these networks "help support migrants financially by providing monetary support, psychologically through the provision of a social community and instrumentally by assisting migrants to assimilate into their new community."[60]

Migration from Lebanon is also facilitated by the lack of restriction on the movement of citizens, tolerance of dual citizenship, and active and liberal economic, financial and banking systems that endorse the free flow of capital and hard currency.[61]

According to Ch. Kasparian, the reasons that migrants gave for leaving between 1975 and 2001 were to find work (41.3%); the general situation and the war (21.4%); family reunification (21.1%); the economic situation (10.9%); and to obtain a second nationality (2.9%). Of the Lebanese migrants that he surveyed, 3.2% were too young at the time of leaving to give a specific reason.[62]

As stated in the introduction, the Summer 2006 War, the subsequent political unrest and the deterioration of the economy all created an environment of insecurity that increased the desire to migrate. The most recent war perfected Lebanon's 'environment of insecurity.' Next we will examine the impact of the war and its effect on the decision to emigrate by young and educated Lebanese.

2. Socio-Demographic Background of the Sample

It is important to emphasise here that the samples emerging below are not representative of the make up of the Lebanese population in all cases. The majority of the resident respondents to the recent LERC survey were between the ages of 21 and 30 (66.7%), which historically has been the prime age bracket for Lebanese migrants. For example, the results of a study conducted by the Université Saint-Joseph and published in 2003 found that most Lebanese who left the country between 1975 and 2001

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56 Ibid., 6.

57 Abi Farah, "Lebanese Emigrants between 1975 and 2001."

58 "Lebanese in the Ukraine [Arabic]," An-Nahar: Al-Ightirab al-Lubnani, February 2003; "Lebanese in Bulgaria [Arabic]," An-Nahar: Al-Ightirab al-Lubnani, December 2001; "Lebanese in the Czech Republic [Arabic]," An-Nahar: Al-Ightirab al-Lubnani, May 2002.

59 D. Leblang, J. Fitzgerald, and J. Teets, "Defying the Law of Gravity: The Political Economy of International Migration," Department of Political Science, University of Colorado, Boulder, November 2006, 3; available online at [http://socsci.colorado.edu/~leblang/Research_files/Defying.pdf], accessed 18 December 2006.

60 Ibid., 3.

61 N. Ghobril, "Expatriates' Remittances and the Lebanese Economy: Brain Drain or Economic Gain," Power Point presentation, Lebanese Emigration Research Center, Notre Dame University, 21 April 2004.

62 Ch. Kasparian, L'Entrée des jeunes libanais dans la vie active et l'émigration des libanais depuis 1975 (Beirut : Presses de l'Université Saint Joseph, 2003), 3:19.

were aged 20-34.[63] Of the remainder of the residents surveyed for the present work, 15.8% were 15-20 years of age; 10.4% were 31-40; 4.1% were 41-50; 2.7% were 51-60; and 0.5% were 61-70.

Respondents tended to be highly educated. Of those interviewed, the percentage holding a BA or its equivalent was 55.9%, with 26.4% possessing an MA or equivalent and 3.4% a PhD.

A slight majority (55.9%) of resident respondents were students. Housewives made up 1.8% of the total, pensioners another 0.2%, and the independently wealthy 0.7%. Another 5.9% of respondents were unemployed and 0.2% did not answer the question. Of the total number currently working, 2.9% were in senior management; 10.1% were in middle-to-low levels of management; 6.8% were professionals; 5.6% were self-employed; 2.3% were in secretarial/clerical positions; 1.8% were skilled employees; 0.5% were unskilled employees; 0.9% were farmers; and 4.5% benefited from other paid work.

The breakdown of employed resident respondents by age showed that 58.5% were 21-30 years old; 23.8% were aged 31-40; 8.3% were 41-50; 6.2% were 51-60; 2.1% were 15-20; and 1% were aged 61-70. Most resident students (72.9%) were between the ages of 21 and 30; 26.3% were aged 15-20; and 0.8% were 41-50 years old.

The vast majority of resident respondents (78.2%) were single, unattached and had never been married. The percentage of married respondents was 14.9%, while 5.4% were engaged to be married, 1.4% were divorced and 0.2% widowed.

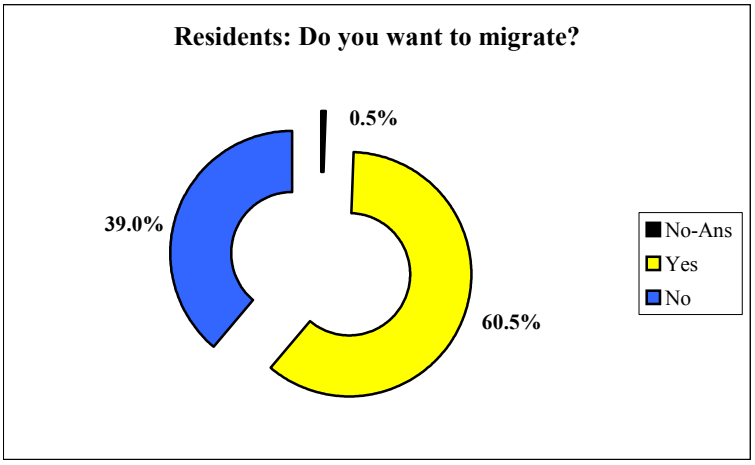
As might be expected, a higher proportion of employed residents (34.2%) were married, although the majority (58.5%) were still single, 4.1% were engaged and 3.1% divorced. Almost all students were single and had no commitments (93.2%), with another 6.4% engaged and 0.4% widowed.

Christians made up 58.8% of the resident survey sample, while 39.6% were Muslim. Only 0.9% followed other religions. A modest 0.7% chose not to specify their religious affiliations.

Out of the employed population, 59.6% were Christian, 37.8% Muslim, 2.1% from other faiths and 0.5% did not give their affiliation. Amongst the students surveyed, 58.2% were Christian, 41% were Muslim and 0.8% failed to respond.

3. Migration in the Period following the Summer 2006 War

Almost two-thirds (60.5%) of Lebanese residents interviewed for this survey indicated that they wanted to emigrate, while 39% said that they had no intention of doing so. Only 0.5% gave no answer.



Graph 1 Migration Intention

63 Ibid., 3:16.

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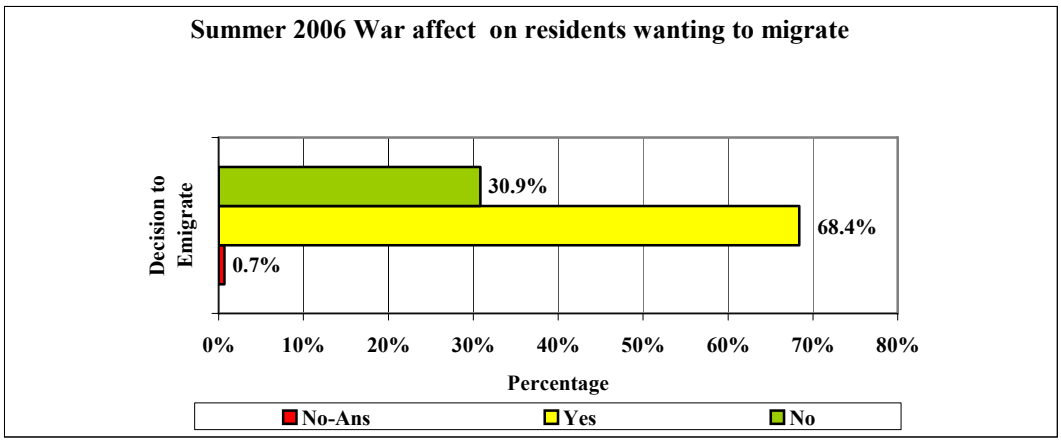
Out of those questioned in the workforce, 61.7% said 'yes' to migration as opposed to 38.3% who said 'no.' A slightly smaller number of students, 59.8%, were interested in migrating, while 39.4% were not interested and 0.8% failed to respond.

When asked whether they would leave alone or with family, 55.2% said they would leave alone and 41.4% said they would leave with family. The 3.4% who declined to answer the question did so for the basic reason that they refused to leave.

The managing editor of *Al-Raida* magazine at the Institute for Women's Studies in the Arab World at LAU, gave her views on leaving Lebanon in an interview: "Of course, I will encourage all the close friends I care about to leave if they ask my advice, especially if they are single and have no roots that tie them [property, children, etc.] to the country. Why? Well, because there is no future or hope in this country. You can hardly plan your weekend. The situation is so unstable, it's scary."[64]

One question asked respondents whether the Summer 2006 War had influenced their decision to migrate: 68.4% said that it had, 30.9% said that it had not and 0.7% did not respond.



Graph 2 War Affect on Residents Wanting to Migrate

Among employed respondents, 69.4% agreed that the Summer 2006 War had affected their decision to leave Lebanon, 30.1% disagreed and 0.5% gave no answer. Among students, 67.7% said that the war had affected their plans, 31.5% said that it had not and 0.8% did not answer.

In response to the question of whether the Summer 2006 War had encouraged migration and discouraged return migration, one of the experts interviewed, a leading CEO had this to say: "This statement is absolutely true. We have seen some people actually leaving, capitalizing on the fact that they can go as refugees, especially to Canada. We have seen people who came back and regretted it. We have seen examples of people attempting to leave – some of them actually did the exercise and went to Europe to search for work: some changed their minds and came back, others probably left permanently. On the whole, the effect of the war was very negative."[65] A social counsellor for a psycho-social services program under the Middle East Council of Churches responded as follows: "Yes, definitely. I personally had hopes that Lebanon would develop and improve after the end of lengthy years of war. However, the Summer 2006 War disappointed me while the current volatile political situation has made me look forward to emigration."[66] A women's studies journalist noted that

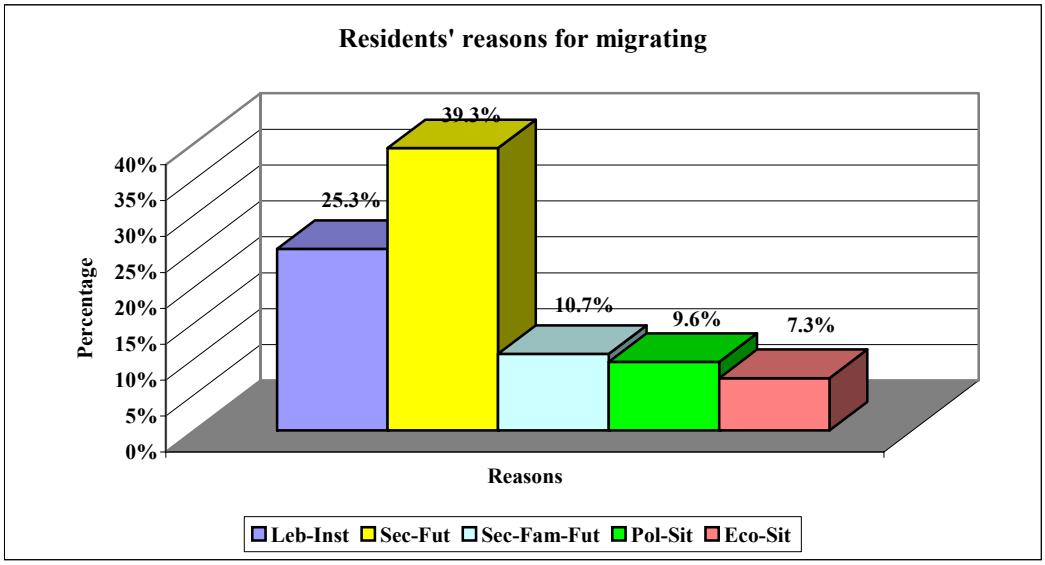
64 Myriam Sfeir, interviewed 11 December 2006.

65 Mounir Kharma, interviewed 20 November 2006.

66 Nanor Sinabian, interviewed 12 December 2006.

"[a]s a result of the July War, LAU lost a lot of its students, who emigrated, and a lot of the return-migrants also left in fear."[67]

Survey respondents who indicated that they did not plan to migrate were asked why that was so. Almost half of them (45.3%) cited societal satisfaction as a reason for staying stay. Of the remainder, 27% said political satisfaction; 8% said satisfaction with the economy; 0.7% said personal reasons; 1.5% said that they had already decided to stay, regardless of the war; 1.5% responded in terms of human dignity; and 4.3% said that other issues were at stake. Interestingly, 11.7% of respondents failed to answer.



Graph 3 Residents' Reasons for Migrating

Of the employed respondents asked the same question, 49.1% said they would stay because of societal satisfaction; 22.8% because of political satisfaction; 8.8% expressed satisfaction with the economy; 3.5% had previously decided to stay; 3.5% indicated other factors; 3.5% cited human dignity; and 8.8% did not answer. Among students asked why they had no plans to migrate, 42% said societal satisfaction; 29.6% said political satisfaction; 7.4% said economic satisfaction; 4.9% said other factors; 1.2% said personal reasons; and 14.8% gave no response.

When survey respondents were asked to identify their reasons for migrating, most said they would leave to secure their own future (39.3%) or their family's future (10.7%). Another 25.3% referred to Lebanon's insecurity, with 9.6% specifically mentioning the political situation, 7.3% the economic situation and 3.4% the societal situation. The next largest number (2.2%) said they would leave for purposes of tourism (an option not foreseen in the questionnaire), while 0.6% said opportunities to improve their businesses and 0.5% said to obtain training. Only 1.1% gave no response.

When we consider the reasons for leaving given by employed Lebanese, fewer (24.7%) said that they hoped to secure their own future, but many more workers (22.2%) than overall or student respondents mentioned their family's future. About the same number, 25.9%, mentioned Lebanon's insecurity, but they gave less attention to the country's economic (3.7%) situation and more to political (12.3%) and societal (6.2%) circumstances. The remainder cited tourism (2.5%), business improvement (1.2%), or gave no response (1.2%).

67 Myriam Sfeir, interviewed 11 December 2006.

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Over half of the student respondents (51.5%) intended to leave to secure their own future; only 1% of them mentioned securing the future of their family. The second most popular response was Lebanon's insecurity (24.7%), followed by the economic situation (10.3%) and the political situation (7.2%). The remainder of the student population cited tourism (2.1%), societal reasons (1%), training (1%), or gave no answer (1.8%).

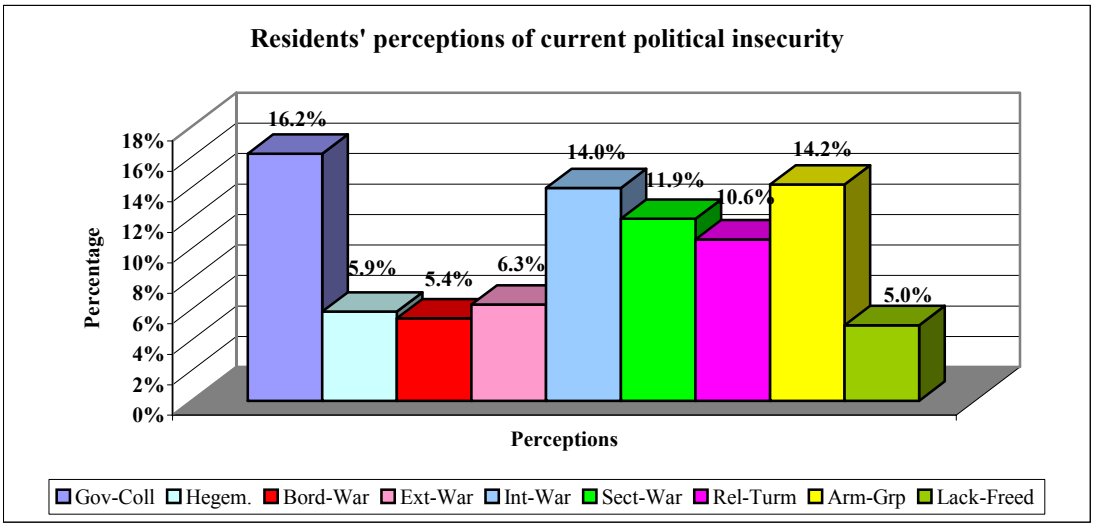
When we consider the large number of respondents who plan to migrate, their high overall level of education and the obvious concern of student respondents, in particular, about their future careers and life courses, the LERC survey seems to support the popular perception that Lebanon is suffering from a 'brain drain' that is likely to worsen. Indeed, a recent *An-Nahar* newspaper article alluded to the fact that this loss of talent is one of three main factors negatively affecting Lebanon's information technology (IT) sector.[68] In a *Daily Star* article published in late November 2006, journalist Michael Bluhm wrote "Lebanese MBA graduates are fleeing the country because of the grim political situation…."[69]

A managing editor told us that, if Lebanon's situation worsens, she will also migrate: "Well, the first thing I will do is leave and go to Ghana to live with my parents for a while until I figure out what to do with my life. I have immediate family members in Ghana, the UAE, Bahrain and Geneva, so I am bound to find a job somewhere. Let's wait and see."[70]

4. Insecurity and Migration

4.1. Residents' Perceptions of Current Political Insecurity

As we have seen above, the LERC resident survey took two specific sectors of Lebanese society into consideration, namely, the workforce (including those currently unemployed) and the student population. When the two groups were combined, 16.2% of all respondents said that they feared that the current political insecurity would cause the government to collapse; 14.2% were concerned about armed groups; 14% emphasized an internal war; 11.9% a sectarian war; and 10.6% a religious war.



Graph 4 Residents' Political Perceptions

68 Aline Farah, "Brain Drain in the Technology Sector… [Arabic]," An-Nahar, 29 October 2006.

69 Bluhm, "Political Crisis Accelerates Brain Drain."

70 Myriam Sfeir, interviewed 11 December 2006.

When survey results from the two groups were looked at separately, their responses were almost identical in most categories: 16.1% of employed Lebanese and 16.3% of Lebanese students were afraid of government collapse; 14.5% of workers and 13.5% of students were anxious about internal war; 14% of workers and 14.3% of students worried about armed groups; and 11.9% of workers and 12% of students feared sectarian war. A little more than 2% separated the members of the workforce (9.3%) and the student population (11.6%) who were concerned about the possibility of a religious war.

A businessman, who was interviewed for the survey, stated that insecurity in Lebanon caused him to make a back-up plan in case things went sour. "For sure, it encouraged emigration – even I personally applied to Canada, but not to stay there, just to obtain the passport, as an alternative or Plan B."[71] Another businessman stated that "If we take the period before the war, say from December until June, the country was booming in all directions. There was prosperity, there was internal stability and, although there were some discrepancies on a small scale, we were all doing very well. Even with the death of Hariri, we still came back and made a recovery. Things became better, but now we have entered a situation where no one knows the beginning or the end. I'm leaving … if the situation gets worse, even if it remains the same, I'm leaving. I'm not going to wait for a war. I don't want my children to grow up in an atmosphere that will make them unproductive in the future."[72]

What will it take for people to stay, rather than migrate? One man who participated in the survey offered the following perception: "In my view, the economic situation is contingent upon the political one. If the political situation stabilizes, even for a short time, the economic situation will improve – this is exactly what happened before the July 2006 War where we saw a great improvement in tourism and other sectors. This is what is needed for me to stay in Lebanon. For the political situation to stabilize in Lebanon we must change all the politicians and to form a Government with young Lebanese persons with educational qualifications. The laws have to be implemented evenly, provide more sanctions to punish those who break the law because most of those emigrating now feel they are being discriminated against by those with connections (wasta).[73]

4.2. Residents' Perceptions of Current Economic Insecurity

Taken together, most of the employed population and students questioned on their perception of current economic insecurity said that unemployment (32.2%) was the greatest contributing factor. In descending order, the other causes that they saw as important were poverty (14.9%), low salaries (13.5%), debt servicing (12.2%) and economic disparity (7.2%). When we look at the responses of workers alone, the top three perceived causes of current economic insecurity were unemployment (25.9%), poverty (16.1%) and low salaries (10.9%). An overwhelming 37.1% of students felt that unemployment was the biggest problem, while 15.5% said low salaries and 13.9% mentioned poverty.

71 Wissam Dabbous, interviewed 29 November 2006.

72 Nadim Ghorayeb, interviewed 27 November 2006.

73 Quote from a response by a male Sunni from Qalamoun, North Lebanon, aged 21-30, single, wants to migrate to France for educational purposes.

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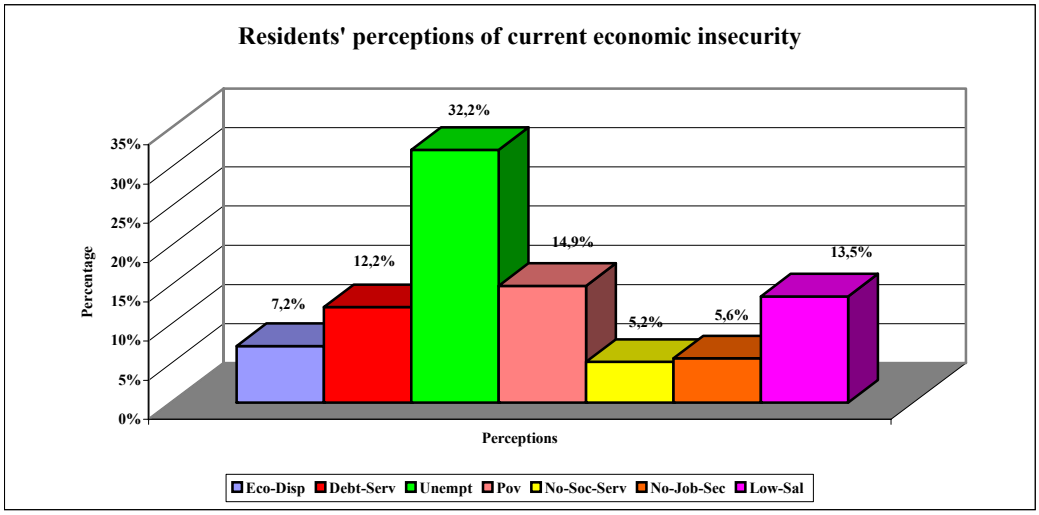


Graph 5 Residents' Economic Perceptions

When we asked a businessman just what his company was doing to curb migration and to encourage migrants to return, he said: "At this point in time, we are not doing very much, very frankly,… [because of] several considerations. Firstly, the economic situation is not putting us in a growth pattern. We have a special situation in our organization in that we have surplus manpower. Concerning this surplus manpower, we did not encourage them to leave – on the contrary, we helped them … under specific terms …. If you look here at my schedule, you'll see the last item is 'talent matrix.' This is a matrix … defining who is the most talented, who is the person we must try and keep. So we are making every effort to retain certain people."[74] Another businessman stated that only continuous stability would make him stay and invest in the country: "It is very difficult to live in a situation where half the year is good and the other half disastrous. Though I live and work in Lebanon, I'm beginning to move my business outside."[75]

A leading civil society activist, Beirut lawyer and the head of three human rights NGOs, offered these thoughts on what it would take to put the Lebanese economy back on track. "My law firm and NGOs work in the fields of human rights and rule of law: both are essential to increase financial investment in Lebanon. This will discourage emigration…. Both human rights and the rule of law are pillars of our economy. We need a climate of rule of law in order to also have a good government allowing people to invest and feel that their money is safe."[76]

In an article relying on statistics supplied by the polling company Ipsos Stat, the monthly French-language magazine, *Le Commerce du Levant*, revealed that half of the Lebanese polled wanted to leave the country and that 57% of those within the 20-24 year age group saw their future professional career as being outside of Lebanon.[77] While the young might be expected to be ambitious and adventurous, older Lebanese who stayed in the country during earlier conflicts are now considering leaving as well. An investigative report in *An-Nahar* stated that "the middle-aged [40-50 years], who initially refused [to entertain] the idea of migrating, now show an intense enthusiasm for travelling abroad, saying they are fearful for their children and about the uncertainty of the future." One man told

74 Mounir Kharma, interviewed 27 November 2006.

75 Nadim Ghorayeb, interviewed 27 November 2006.

76 Mohammed Mughrabi, interviewed 29 November 2006.

77 "La moitié des libanais veulent émigrer pour des raisons professionnelles," Le Commerce du Levant, October 2006.

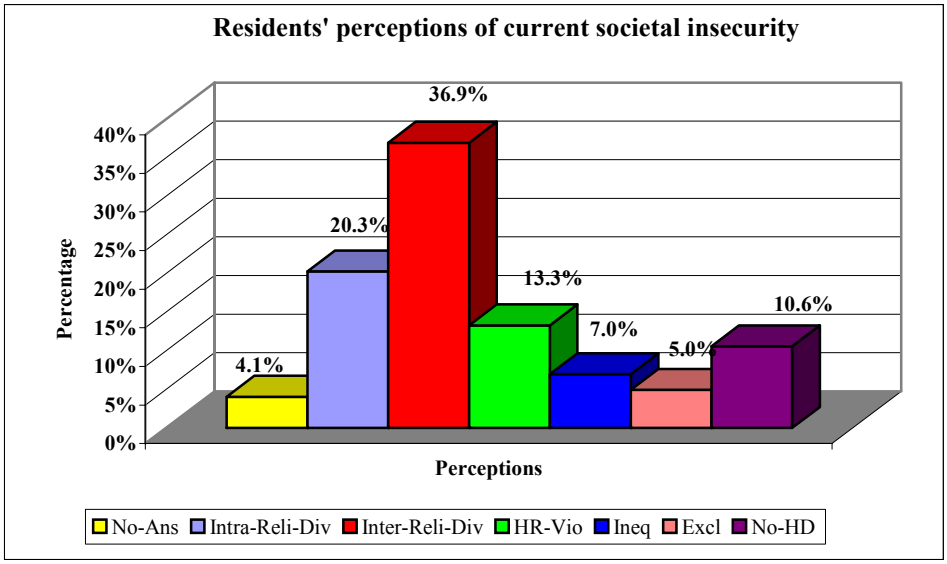
us: "I borrow money from banks to finance my business, and every time I become optimistic about the situation, I get hit on the head…. This time I understood…."[78]
But not everyone feels compelled to migrate, despite the difficulties. One owner of a small business in Tripoli said: "The political, economic and societal situation doesn't make us feel secure. We are living in a state of permanent terror, afraid of the unknown and fearful of an explosion coming from our economic and political problems. I wish the situation would improve in all fields and provide us with work opportunities, aid to support us and to decrease our burden of life. I wish the unknown would be revealed and that Lebanon would live in peace."[79]

Ziad Alshaar, the chairman of the board of the Landmark Project in downtown Beirut, told *An-Nahar* that "an attitude of 'wait and see' is now the prevalent position with investors. All those who had allocated budgets for projects in Lebanon are waiting for the Lebanese people to rise up and to regain trust again in the country.... Regaining trust is related to political stability and the Paris III donor conference." [80]

4.3. Residents' Perceptions of Current Societal Insecurity

The majority of resident respondents (36.9%) questioned on their perception of current societal insecurity attributed it to interreligious divisions (Christians vs. Christians or Shiites vs. Sunnis), with the next most frequent cause cited (20.3%) being the intra-religious divide (Muslims vs. Christians). Other reasons given were human rights violations (13.3%) and a lack of human development (10.6%).

Graph 6 Residents' Societal Perceptions



When we break down these responses according to whether the respondents were employed or students, we find that most members of both groups saw the intra-religious divide as the overriding factor in societal insecurity: 35.8% of workers and 37.8% of students. Members of both groups also ranked interreligious divisions in second place, but workforce respondents (23.8%) gave this factor greater emphasis than students (17.5%). Human rights violations were cited by almost equal

78 R. Al Naket, "The July War Changed the Minds of Those Who Never Thought of Emigrating."

79 Quote from a response by a male Sunni from Tripoli, aged 21-30, single, small business owner, does not want to migrate.

80 M. Abdallah, "Investors Are Not Affected by Traditional Lebanese Political Bickering But… [Arabic]," An-Nahar, 11 November 2006.

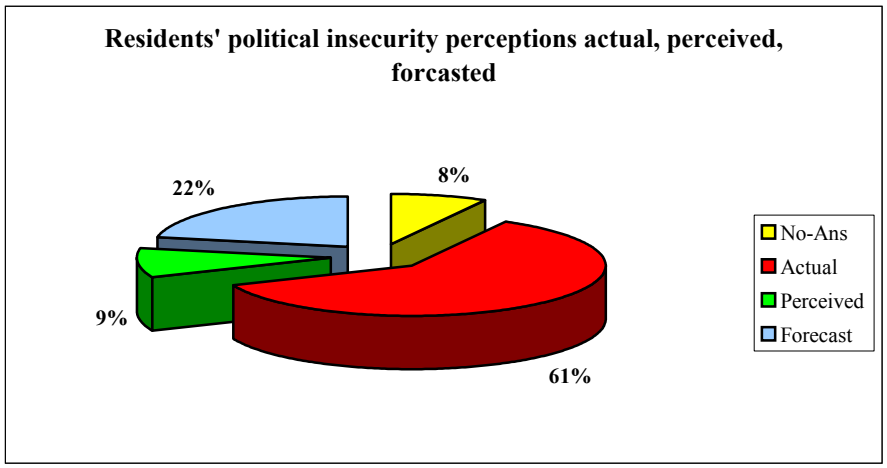
percentages of workers (13.5%) and students (13.1%). More students (12.4%) saw a lack of human development as an important cause of societal insecurity than did employed Lebanese (8.3%).

The feeling of societal insecurity was substantiated by comments made during the expert and in-depth interviews that were conducted for this study. A Beirut editor expressed her fear, saying "It's not just the war that scares me, but the confessional, racist system that they have here."[81]
In an op-ed piece in the French-language daily, L'Orient Le Jour, Sami Gemayel, the brother of the slain MP and Industry Minister, Pierre Gemayel, wrote that one of the main reasons leading to emigration, which detaches itself from others by its essence and by its political and social significance, was the search for modernity by the Lebanese.[82]

When a young Maronite male was asked what conditions he would need to see in Lebanon to dissuade him from migrating abroad, he wrote: "I'm graduating this year and I predict that, when I submit my CV to companies, I won't be employed because I don't know anyone influential in the political arena to back up my CV, or my requests, or to exercise influence (*wasta*) for me. Instead, the company will surely accept other applicants, no matter which university they graduated from, not because of the diploma or the fact that the university they are graduating from is better, but because they are 'backed.' For me to stay in Lebanon, I would like [to see] work circumstances change, first from a change in attitude or actual political thinking, in a country that is based on personal interests and the way the politicians behave in their parties, to replace these actual Lebanese political parties with more youthful ones, more open-minded and civilized, aware of administering the state in a way that is suitable for the interests of all and without discrimination. There should also be a change in living standards and a way to improve them, in order for young people to be able to secure their livelihoods in the country, along with implementation of an income-based tax to provide justice for all."[83]

4.4. Reality of Political Insecurity Perceptions

Insecurity can be actual, perceived, or forecasted. When asked to assess whether perceptions of political insecurity were realistic, the vast majority of respondents, 61% of those questioned, believed that they were, while 22% felt that political insecurity was merely anticipated and 9% saw it as perceived.



Graph 7 Realities of Political Insecurity Perceptions

81 Myriam Sfeir, interviewed 11 December 2006.

82 S. Gemayel, "Confronter la fatalité de l'émigration," L'Orient Le Jour, 4 October 2006.

83 Quote from a response by a male Maronite from Kefraya, North Lebanon, aged 21-30, single, wants to migrate to work anywhere.

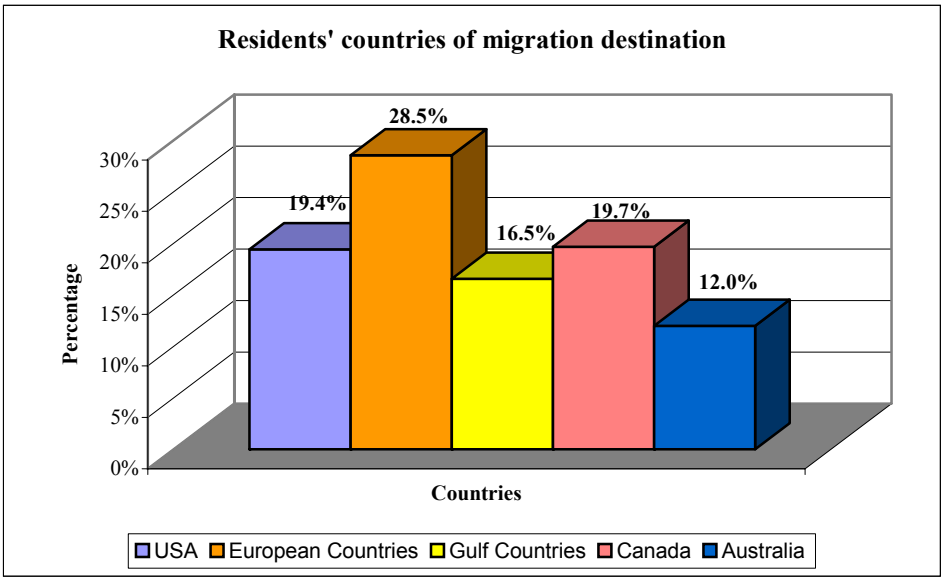
Analysis of both the employed and student groups found that 59.6% of workers and 61.4% of students felt that political insecurity existed and was ongoing. As in the aggregate sample, the next most popular response was that political insecurity was merely anticipated, with 23.8% of workers and 20.7% of students giving this answer. Only 8.3% of workers and 10% of students regarded political insecurity as nothing more than a perception.

5. Choice of Destination and Financial, Human and Societal Capital for Emigrating

5.1. Destination of Migration

In a 2003 survey of those Lebanese who migrated between 1975 and 1990, Kasparian found that North America (29.5%), Western Europe (24.4%), the Arab countries (20.4%) and Australia (13.1%) absorbed the lion's share of migrants, followed by Africa (6.3%), Central and South America (4.3%), Eastern Europe (1.4%) and Asia (0.4%). The destinations of 0.1% of migrants could not be determined.[84]

In the present study, most of the Lebanese surveyed (28.5%) expressed an interest in Europe – mainly France, Germany, England, Sweden and Italy. Canada (19.7%) and the United States (19.4%) came next – or first, if we note that both are in North America (39.1%). The next most popular destinations were the Gulf states (16.5%), mainly the UAE, and Australia (12%).



Graph 8 Residents' Country of Emigration Destination

5.2. Financial Capital to Emigrate

For the purposes of this study, financial capital was defined as cash and convertible assets like short-term investments, accounts receivable, machinery, residential and commercial real estate, luxury cars, boats, planes, antiques, jewellery, valuable commodities and other similar resources.

When asked whether they could afford to pay the expenses involved in emigrating, 27.5% of respondents said they had adequate funds to leave; 22.7% said they had sufficient funds to start a new life abroad; 19.4% said they had enough to continue their education; and 14.9% said they had other

84 Kasparian, L'Entrée des jeunes libanais dans la vie active, 14.

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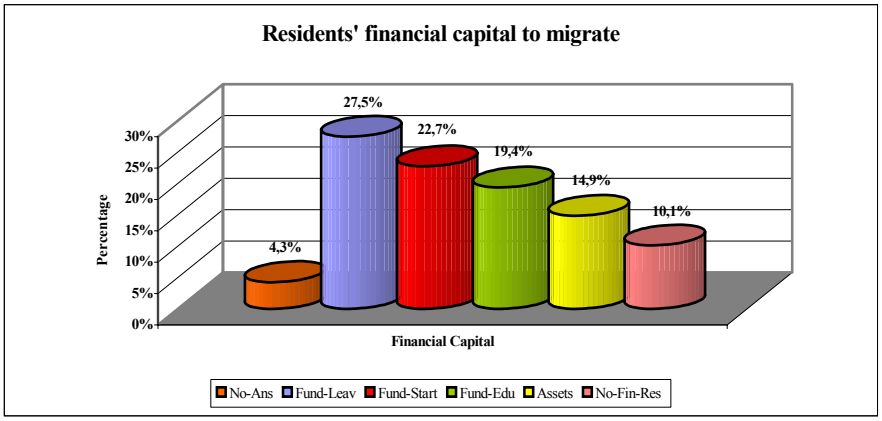
assets. Another 10.1% had no financial resources and 1.1% had no plans to leave, while 4.3% gave no answer.



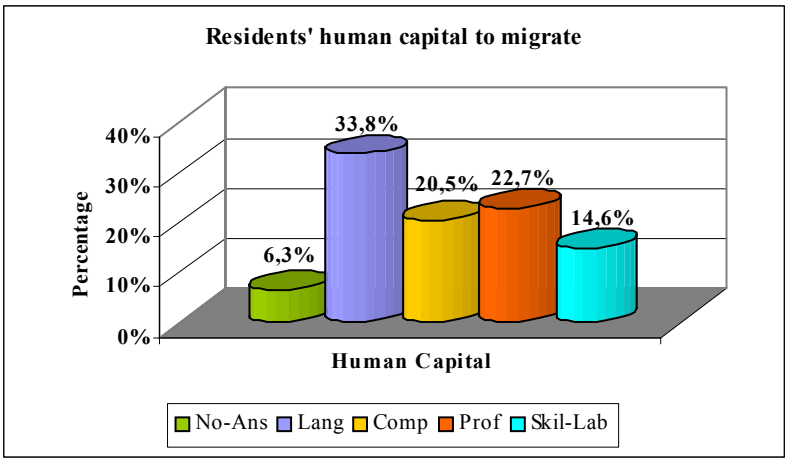
Graph 9 Residents' Financial Capital

Rather unsurprisingly, employed Lebanese respondents were in a better overall financial position to migrate than students. More members of the workforce (31.1%) had adequate funds to leave than the student sample (24.7%); and more workers (29.5%) had sufficient funds to start a new life abroad than students (17.5%). However, 28.3% of students had enough money to continue their education, while only 7.8% of workers were in the same position. Roughly the same number of workers (14.5%) and students (15.1%) could rely on other assets. Also similar were the number of workers (10.9%) and students (9.6%) with no financial resources. One percent of workers and 1.2% of students had no plans to leave, while 5.2% of workers and 3.6% of students failed to answer the question.

5.3. Human Capital to Emigrate

Human capital here refers to resources embodied in the personal knowledge, understanding, capabilities, skills, contacts and health of individuals. It includes a person's entire life experience. Human capital does not include material or physical assets, which are categorized as financial, physical, or human-made capital or natural endowments.

Resident respondents were questioned on the human capital that they possessed to emigrate successfully. Although self assessment of human capital is a subjective evaluation which cannot reflect the level of human capital as measured by various quantitative indexes (level of education, etc.), the constraints of the survey setting, as mentioned in the introduction have required that we accept the results at face value. The largest number (33.8%) said that they had language skills, while 20.5% were computer literate, 22.7% were professionals and 14.6% were skilled labourers. Very few (0.7%) said that they had no resources to fall back on, while 1.4% had no plans to leave and 6.3% gave no answer.



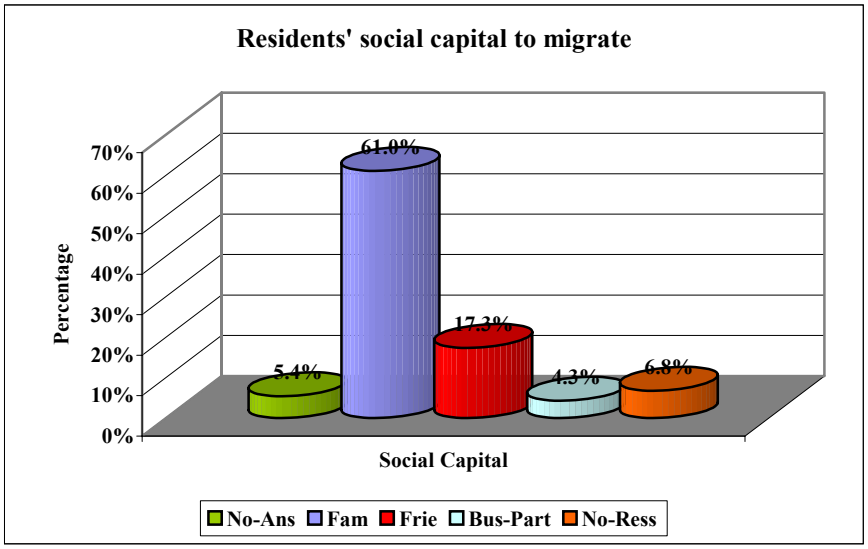
Graph 10 Residents' Human Capital

Some interesting differences appeared when respondents were broken down into members of the workforce and the student population. The language skills of students (45%) far outstripped those of working Lebanese (19.2%); and students (23.5%) were also more likely to be computer literate than workers (16.6%). Unsurprisingly, however, far more employed respondents (35.2%) than students (13.1%) were professionals; and almost twice as many members of the workforce (20.2%) than students (10.4%) were skilled labourers. A very small number of workers (0.5%) and students (0.8%) felt that they had no human capital resources whatsoever. As usual, a few workers (1%) and students (1.6%) had no intention of leaving, while 7.3% and 5.6% of each group respectively failed to answer the question.

5.4. Social Capital to Emigrate

In this study, social capital refers to resources (both at home and abroad) embodied in networks encompassing family members, friends, business associates, religious affiliations, political parties and movements, village associations, and links to international organizations.

When resident respondents were asked if they felt that they had the social capital required to emigrate, 61% mentioned family members/relatives; 17.3% referred to friends; 4.3% cited ties with business partners; and a total of less than 4% mentioned various affiliations – with political (1.1%) or religious (0.7%) groups or with international (1.1%) or village associations (0.9%). The remainder said that they had no social capital (6.8%), no plans to migrate (1.4%) or did not answer (5.4%).



Graph 11 Residents' Social Capital

Taken as two separate groups, more students (68.9%) than employed respondents (50.8%) mentioned family members/relatives as social capital, but more workers (24.4%) than students (12%) referred to friends in this way. The percentage of employed Lebanese (5.2%) with ties to business partners only slightly exceeded that of students (3.6%) with the same links. Members of the workforce had affiliations with village associations (1%) and international associations (.05%), but students were more active in this respect, with affiliations with political (2%) and religious (1.2%) groups, as well as with village (0.8%) and international (1.6%) associations. The remainder of workers had no social capital resources (8.8%), no plans to migrate (1%), or did not answer the question (8.3%); similarly, 5.2% of students had no resources, 1.5% had no plans to leave, while 3.2% did not answer.

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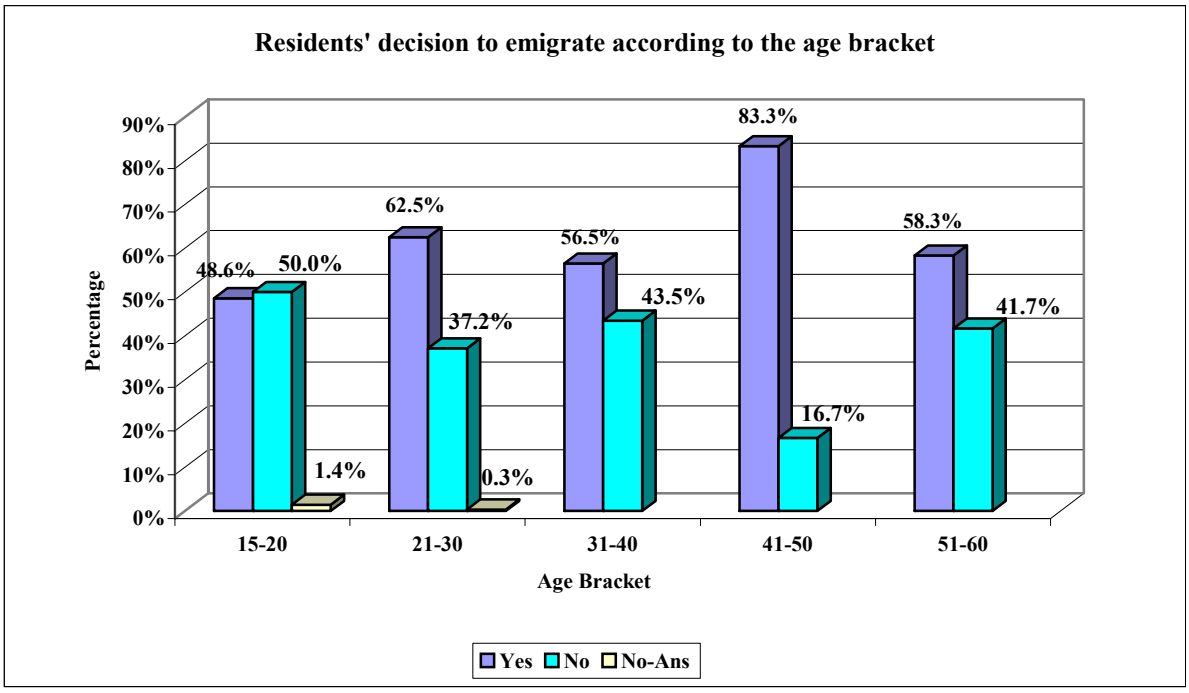
6. Cross Tabulation Based on Age, Gender, Religion and Residence

6.1. Residents' Decision to Migrate according to Age

Anecdotal evidence indicates a close link between age and migration. A significant number of Lebanon's advanced university students, recent graduates and young professionals seem to feel that they must leave the country in order to set their careers on a firm footing. In our survey, the even higher number of potential emigrants among respondents aged 41-50 are most likely parents who plan to leave the country in order to secure the future of their children.



Graph 12 Migration by age

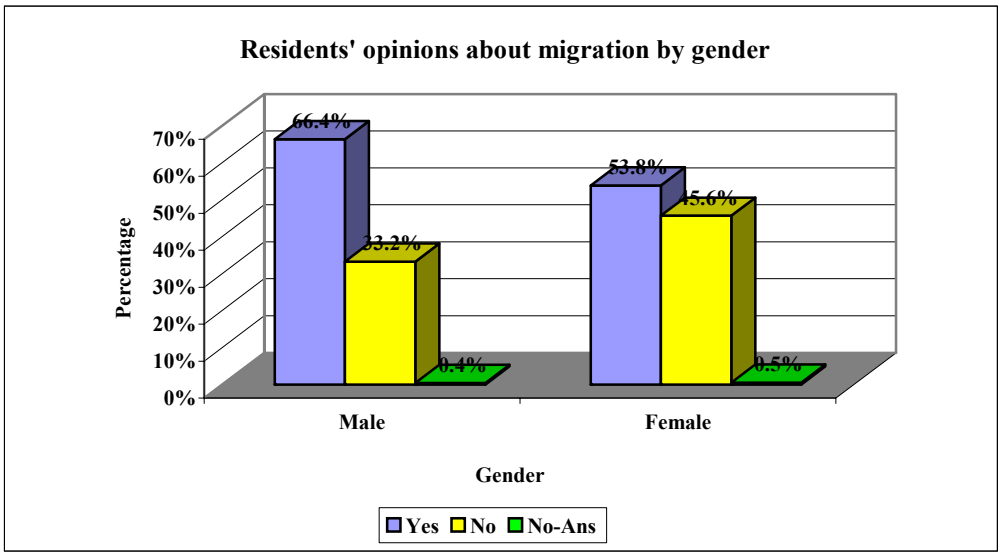
The intention to migrate was strongly expressed by resident respondents of all age brackets. The lowest percentage was among those aged 15-20, of whom 48.6% said 'yes' to migration, 50% said 'no' and 1.4% gave no response. The highest percentage (100%) was among respondents aged 61-70, all of whom were interested in migrating. The breakdown of those in intervening age brackets is as follows: aged 21-30 years, 62.5% said 'yes' and 37.2% said 'no' (0.3% did not answer); aged 31-40, 56.5% said 'yes' and 43.5% said 'no'; aged 41-50, 83.3% said 'yes' and 16.7% said 'no'; and aged 51-60 years, 58.3% said]yes] and 41.7% said 'no.'

When we look at the answers given by employed respondents according to age, we get the following break-down: aged 15-20 years, 50% said 'yes' to migration and 50% said 'no'; aged 21-30, 60.2% said 'yes' and 39.8% said 'no'; aged 31-40 years, 56.5% said 'yes' and 43.5% said 'no'; aged 41-50 years, 87.5% said 'yes' and 12.5% said 'no'; aged 51-60 years, 58.3% said 'yes' and 41.7% said 'no'; and aged 61-70, 100% said 'yes' to migration.

Similar answers, also broken down according to age, were given by members of the student population: aged 15-20 years, 48.5% said 'yes' to migration and 50% said 'no' (1.5% did not answer); aged 21-30, 63.9% said 'yes' and 35.5% said 'no' (0.5% gave no answer); and aged 41-50 years, 50.0% said 'yes' and 50.0% said 'no.'

6.2. Residents' Opinions about Migration according to Gender

Emigration from Lebanon is becoming increasingly feminine. According to the empirical results of our survey, the expected brain drain in the coming years may include almost equal numbers of male and female migrants.



Graph 13 Migration by gender

One of the questions that we asked residents was whether or not they intend to emigrate from Lebanon. When we consider their responses by gender, we find that 66.4% of males and 53.8% of females were interested in leaving, 33.2% of males and 45.6% of females were not, and roughly the same percentage of males (0.4%) and females (0.5%) gave no answer.

Males in the workforce (66.1%) and male students (66.7%) were almost equally interested in migration; the number of male workers (33.9%) and students (32.6%) who wished to stay was also roughly equivalent. Less than one percent (0.8%) of male students gave no response.

Although less enthusiastic than men in both categories, employed females (56.4%) were somewhat more positive about migration than female students (52.1%). The percentage of working women who wished to stay in Lebanon was 43.6% and of female students with the same desire 47%. No answer was given by 0.9% of female students.

These responses indicate that the gap between Lebanese men and women who want to migrate is closing. Consequently, the perception that migration from Lebanon is becoming more feminized may be accurate.

6.3. Residents' Decision to Migrate according to Religion

According to our resident survey, interest in leaving the country is more or less equally great among Lebanese Christians and Muslims. These results dovetail with empirical studies (see above) on Lebanese emigration carried out in previous years, which indicate that more than one-fifth of the members of each major Lebanese confession, barring the Druze, have left the country. Because Shiites were under-represented in our own study, no conclusive statements can be made about the relationship between Sunni and Shiite Muslims in Lebanon on this point.

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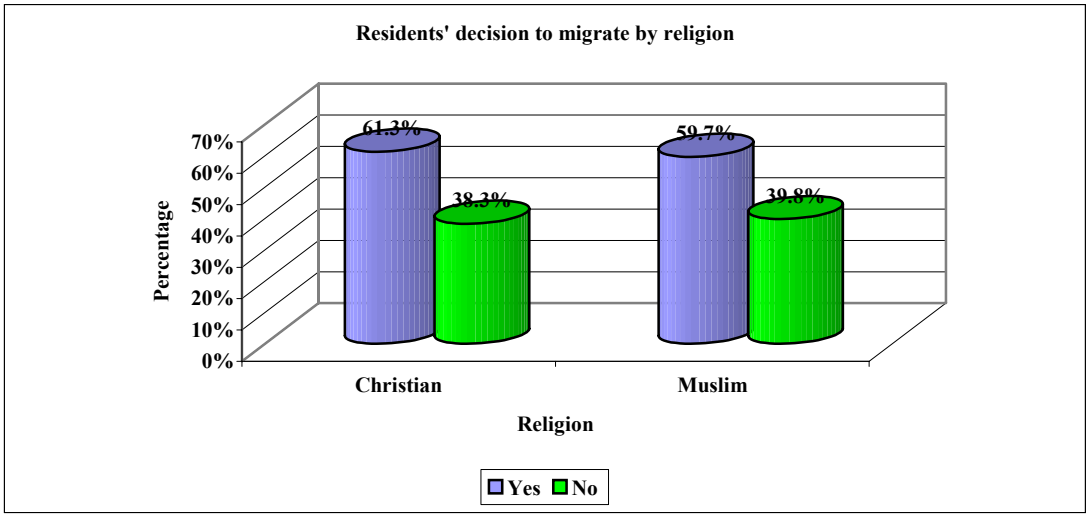


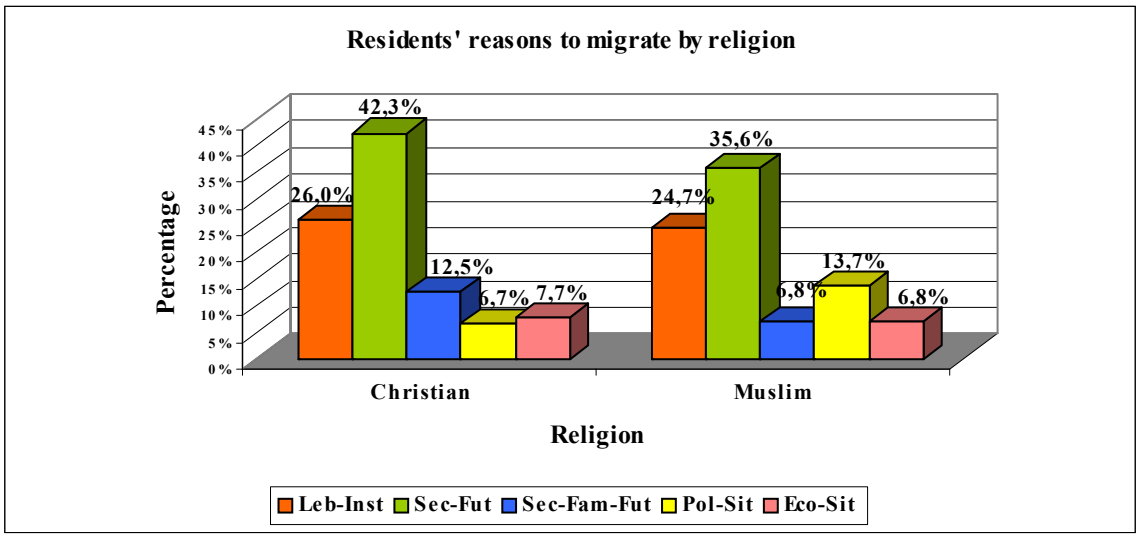
Graph 14 Migration by religion

When we consider interest in migration according to religion, we find that 61.3% of Christian respondents expressed the intention to migrate, 38.3% said that they did not want to do so and 0.4% gave no answer. Less than 2% separated the affirmative Christian responses from affirmative Muslim ones, with 59.7% of Muslims saying 'yes' to migration, 39.8% saying 'no' and 0.5% giving no answer. Affirmative responses were much higher among adherents to other religions, with three-quarters (75%) expressing interest in migration as opposed to one-quarter (25%) who said 'no.'

More Christian (64.3%) than Muslim (57.5%) members of the workforce indicated their interest in migration. The remainder of Christian (35.7%) and Muslim workers (42.5%) said that they had no intention of leaving.

Slightly more Muslim (61.2%) than Christian (58.9%) student respondents indicated that they wanted to migrate. Another 37.8% of Muslims said that they wanted to stay and 1% gave no answer. The percentage of Christians who said 'no' to migration was 40.4%, while 0.7% did not respond to the question.

6.4. Residents' Reasons for Migrating according to Religion



Graph 15 Reasons for migration by religion

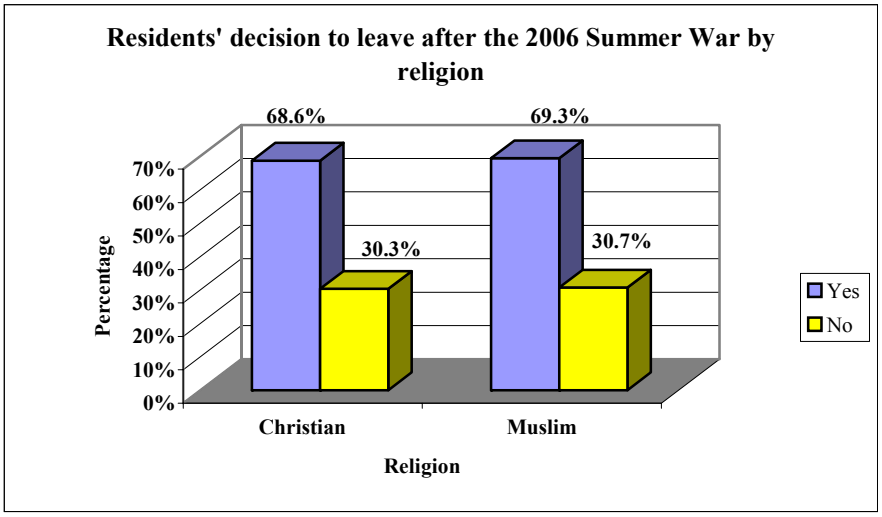
When indicating why they wanted to migrate, both Christians and Muslims gave the greatest weight to their personal life courses and Lebanon's instability, although more Christians than Muslims cited these particular factors. The reasons for migration given by Christians, in descending order, were to secure their own future (42.3%); the country's instability (26.0%); to secure their family's future (12.5%); the economic situation (7.7%); the political situation (6.7%); training purposes (1.9%); the societal situation (1%); and tourism (1%). No Christians said that they hoped to improve their business by migrating. Only 1% of Christians gave no answer.

For our overall sample of Muslim respondents, the political and societal situations were somewhat more important factors in the decision to migrate. The reasons that they gave were to secure their own future (35.6%); the country's instability (24.7%); the political situation (13.7%); to secure their family's future (6.8%); the economic situation (6.8%); the societal situation (6.8%); training purposes (2.7%); and business improvement (1.4%). None of the Muslim respondents mentioned tourism and 1.4% gave no answer.

A comparison of the responses of Christians and Muslims in the workplace shows that 24.5% of Christian and 28.6% of Muslim employees cited Lebanon's instability; 30.2% of Christian and less than half that number (14.3%) of Muslim workers mentioned securing their future; 24.5% of Christian and 17.9% of Muslim workers wanted to secure their family's future; 11.3% of Christian and 14.3% of Muslim workers were concerned about the political situation; 5.7% of Christian workers and no Muslims cited the economic situation; and 1.9% of Christian and an astonishing 14.3% of Muslims workers faulted the societal situation. Muslim employees also mentioned business improvement (3.6%) and tourism (7.1%), which Christian employees did not give as reasons for migration. A small number (1.9%) of Christian workers did not answer the question, but all Muslims responded.

When we compare the responses of Christian and Muslim students, we find that 27.5% of Christian and 22.2% of Muslim students mentioned Lebanon's instability; 54.9% of Christian and 48.9% of Muslim students wanted to secure their future; 2% of Christian and a much higher 13.3% of Muslim students cited the political situation; and 9.8% of Christian and 11.1% of Muslim students referred to the economic situation. No Christian students mentioned the societal situation, although 2.2% of Muslim students did. Christian students did cite tourism (3.9%) and training purposes (2%), which were not mentioned by Muslim students. No students belonging to either religion mentioned securing their family's future. All Christian students answered the question, while 2.2% of Muslim students did not respond.

6.5. Residents' Decision to Leave after the Summer 2006 War by Religion



Graph 16 Decision to leave

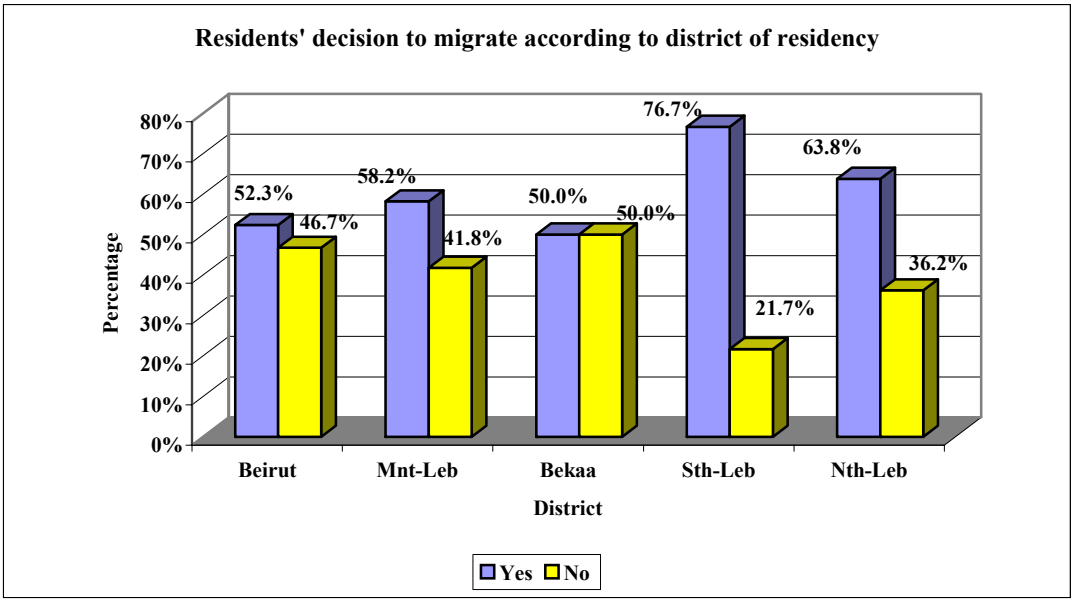
CARIM-RR 2007/01 © 2007 EUI-RSCAS

When asked if the Summer 2006 War had influenced their decision to leave, 68.6% of Christian respondents said 'yes,' 30.3% said 'no' and 1.1% gave no answer, while 69.3% of Muslims said 'yes' and 30.7% said 'no.' The response from the members of other religions was evenly split, with 50% saying 'yes' and 50% saying 'no.'

These percentages changed only slightly according to whether respondents were employees or students. In the workforce, 70.4% of Christians said that the war had influenced their decision to migrate, 28.7% said that it had not had an influence and 0.9% did not respond, while 68.5% of Muslims said that it had been a factor and 31.5% said that it had not. Employees of other religions split their responses evenly. In the student population, 67.1% of Christians and 69.9% of Muslims said that the war had affected their decision to leave, 31.5% of Christians and 30.1% of Muslims said it had not and 1.4% of Christians gave no answer.

6.6. Residents' Decision to Migrate by District of Residence

When we examined the geographical distribution of respondents in relation to the decision to migrate or to stay, we noticed some interesting contradictions. The high number of respondents from Southern Lebanon who plan to emigrate can be explained by reference to the considerable physical damage to homes and other buildings and infrastructure there, as well as the way in which agricultural and industrial activity have been undermined and the continuing threat of cross-border attacks by the IDF. Similarly, we attributed the unusually high number of residents from Mount Lebanon who hope to leave to the fact that many of the Shiites interviewed came from the *Dahiya* 'suburb' of Beirut, which is actually outside of the city limits and, hence, in Mount Lebanon district.



Graph 17 Decision to emigrate by district

Our survey found that the fewest potential migrants resided in the district of the Bekaa, where respondents were evenly split (50%-50%) on the question of migration. In the capital, Beirut, 52.3% of residents were interested in migrating, 46.7% were not and 0.9% gave no answer. In the district of Mount Lebanon, 58.2% planned to leave and 41.8% wanted to stay; in North Lebanon, a higher proportion of respondents, 63%, planned to leave and 36.2% wanted to stay. The most starting results came out of the district of South Lebanon, where an overwhelming 76.7% of those questioned said that they preferred to emigrate and only 21.7% said that they planned to stay.

When we considered the attitude of members of the workforce, we found that there was no change in the Bekaa – respondents were still evenly split on migration. In Beirut, 53.3% of employees were interested in migrating, while 46.7% were not. In Mount Lebanon, the percentage of workers wanting to leave (54.4%) dropped slightly and the number wanting to stay rose (45.6%). This drop was even more noticeable in North Lebanon, where 47.4% of resident employees were willing to leave as opposed to 52.6% willing to stay. However, among workers in South Lebanon, a staggering 84.8% said that they wanted to migrate, while only 15.2% wanted to remain in the country.

For resident students, we again found no change in percentages for the Bekaa. In Beirut, 51.1% of students residing there were interested in migrating, 46.8% were not and 2.1% gave no answer. In Mount Lebanon, these averages were higher: 61.0% of students said they would emigrate, while 39.0% said they would remain. They rose again in North Lebanon, where 67.0% of students, a substantially higher percentage than among employees, were willing to leave, while 33.3% were willing to stay. The finding for South Lebanon was again very interesting: in contrast to the attitudes of resident workers, only 50% of students preferred to emigrate, with 42.9% planning to stay and a surprisingly large 7.1% giving no answer to the question.

A local businessman summarized the importance of physical and moral security and stated that, once these two factors are in place, the Lebanese will create employment and rebuild their country. "Security is the key, let's not kid ourselves, personal security [i.e., physical security], followed by security in the sense of intellectual security – in that I can think, I can believe, I can talk, I can vote, I can hope – basically to have basic human rights… this is also another form of security…. It's natural for a person to be afraid…. Now we have two types of fear: personal and intellectual. Give the Lebanese an opportunity to come back and the Lebanese will create an opportunity. Remove these two obstacles, personal and intellectual, and everything else will fit into place…. I won't worry if there's work or if there's no work, anybody can make work…. Lebanese everywhere are building countries, not just a country, but countries."[85]

7. Conclusion

The causes of international migration are due, at least in part, to political, economic and societal insecurity. In this section, our results indicated that a clear majority – two-thirds – of the Lebanese residents that we interviewed want to migrate and that half of them will leave alone. Two-thirds also said that the Summer 2006 War had affected their decision to migrate, giving the desire to secure their future and the belief that Lebanon is insecure as their two principal reasons for leaving. These findings indicate that migration from Lebanon in the period following the Summer 2006 War is motivated by political insecurity, mainly, the threat of government collapse, fear of armed groups and fear of an internal war. Again, two-thirds of respondents see these threats as actual, rather than perceived or forecast. What is of interest in this section is the difference in the chief fears of the various religious groupings. Druze fear the collapse of the current government and activities by armed groups. Shiites fear the possibility of internal war or sectarian war in equal measure, while Sunnis fear sectarian war, but also give great importance to the fall of the Sunni-led government. Among Christians, the Maronites most fear internal war, as well as armed groups; the Greek Orthodox fear both of those possibilities, but also the government's collapse; and the Catholics are most afraid of the threat posed by armed groups and sectarian war.

Fear of internal war, armed groups, or sectarian armed conflict can probably be traced back to previous tragedies that plagued Lebanon over the last thirty years. Although many of those who responded to the survey were probably born during the civil war or remember it from their childhood, these same generations have made their families' perceptions of the war central to their own. They may also have learnt about the civil war through literature, films, documentaries, biographies and

85 Mounir Kharma, interviewed 27 November 2006.

similar sources. In terms of economic reasons for migration, we also discovered that most respondents see high unemployment rates as a push factor, while societal reasons centre on the increasing possibility of internecine Christian-Christian and Shiite-Sunni conflicts.

In terms of destination, the majority of those questioned will head to Europe, with France being the preferred country there. However, Canada ranked first as the favourite country overall, followed by the United States; together, these two countries were more popular than Europe.

Migrating requires various types of capital – financial, human and social. Our survey discovered that almost one-third of those wishing to migrate have adequate funds, which indicates that they are not from Lebanon's impoverished classes. In terms of human capital, the majority of prospective migrants hold adequate language and computer skills, with 22.7% being professionals. Half of our interviewees (55.9%) were students with a BA or its equivalent, while around one-quarter (26.4%) had an MA or equivalent. Based on these percentages and the educational and professional profile that they indicate, it seems clear that Lebanon is threatened with a significant future 'brain drain.'

Although our focus has been on the causes of international migration, the strength of social networks in determining migration flows had an interesting bearing on our findings. Our survey found that two-thirds of those interviewed were drawn to destinations where they have a network of family and more distant relatives.

B. Survey Results of Embassy and Immigration Services Questionnaires

1. Introduction

Embassies and, in particular, consulates offering visas are an important source of data on the submission of visa applications, especially for emigration. LERC attempted to gather such information by devising a questionnaire tailored specifically to the embassies and sending copies to the principal embassies that Lebanese tend to favour, that is, those of the United States, Canada, France, Sweden, the United Kingdom, Nigeria, Ivory Coast, Ghana, Mexico, Venezuela, Brazil, Australia, Kuwait, the United Arab Emirates and Saudi Arabia.

Once it became clear that we were not getting the response that we had hoped for from most embassies and consulates, both in the West, the Middle East and in the developing world, we opted to consult the next best source – immigration services. Immigration services or 'visa brokers,' as they are called in Lebanon, play an important role in assisting those who wish to emigrate in preparing their documents. Among other services, they provide advice on how to complete applications and review the application package prior to its submission.

There are two types of these services, the certified or legal offices and the unregistered or illegal agents. Initially, we considered targeting both; however, in order to obtain reliable and citable information we decided to send a specially-tailored questionnaire to all of the six major legal companies located, for the most part, in the major cities on the Lebanese coast.

2. Embassies

Out of all of the embassies that we approached, only two replied to our questionnaire, the American and the Canadian. Most embassies either ignored our numerous e-mails, phone calls, faxes and personal visits or failed to respond effectively and in a timely manner. The embassy of Ghana considered the information that we asked for as classified and unavailable for general circulation. The British embassy said that it was not prepared to give detailed information to external parties. Many of the other embassies repeatedly asked us to call back later, to send the questionnaire to different personnel or offices, or to come by in person. Ultimately, these activities were fruitless.

The information provided by the American and the Canadian embassies proved invaluable. According to the US embassy,[86] the consular office ceased processing visas on 17 July. However, it resumed visa processing for non-immigrants on 14 September, receiving 3,133 applicants through to 31 October.[87] Between 21 July and 31 October 2006, the US embassy granted 571 visas for immigration (15.14%); 2,519 for tourism (66.8%); 49 for work (1.3%); 83 for education (2.2%); 6 for business (0.1%); and 542 for family reunification (14.4%).

The responses provided by the Canadian embassy[88] showed that Lebanese applied for 7436 visas between 12 July and 31 October in three capital cities in the region: Amman, Damascus and Beirut. Of these applications, 1600 were for immigration visas (21.5%); 5621 for tourism (75.6%); 89 for work (1%) and 126 for education (1.7%).

The Canadian embassy provided a break-down of the ages of applicants for 2710 of the visa applications. Out of this total, 4.71% were aged 15-20 years; 31.80% were aged 21-30; 26.4% were 31-40 years; 15.6 % were 41-50; 10.03% were 51-60; 7.97% were 61-70; and 3.4% were over 70 years old.

The total number of Canadian visas granted between 12 July and 31 October 2006 was 3495 in response to the 7436 applications: 886 were for immigration (25.4%); 2,497 were for tourism (71.45%); 25 for work (0.75%); and 87 for education (2.5%).

During the period studied, the Canadian government did not alter its immigration policies in any way. All of those interested in migrating to Canada could apply; however, the priority, according to the Canadian embassy in Lebanon, continued to be family reunification, especially for the spouses and parents of Canadian citizens.

These figures which are relatively small in absolute terms are indeed quite significant considering the time period survey, i.e., a period of approximately two and a half month during and immediately following the Summer 2006 war. These figures reflect the emigration of those Lebanese without dual citizenship, permanent residency abroad or a valid visa.

3. Immigration Services or 'Visa Brokers'

Two immigration services agreed to be interviewed for the purposes of this study, one in the northern part of Lebanon, and one in Beirut: they have been given the respective code names of 'ImServ1'[89] and 'ImServ2.'[90] It should be noted that the two services received thousands of applications for their assessment, but only some four hundred were ultimately successful when submitted to embassies and consulates between July and October 2006. In the interviews carried out for the survey, both services emphasized that there was a large increase in the number of applications without revealing exact statistics with respect to the period prior to the war.

ImServ1 told us that they had successfully assisted a total of 195 visa applicants, all of whom were applying to emigrate. Approximately half of the applications were from Beirut, with 30% from North Lebanon and 20% from Mount Lebanon. Out of the 195 persons who were granted visas, 65% were Christian and 25% were Muslim.

86 Questionnaire filled out on 9 November 2006.

87 The US embassy did not break down information by age or profession.

88 Questionnaire filled out on 19 December 2006.

89 ImServ1, interviewed 14 November 2006.

90 ImServ2, interviewed 17 November 2006.

ImServ2 assisted a total of 5000 applicants, of which only 200 were successful: 10% of these visas were for immigration; 5% were for tourism; 6% were for education; 5% were business-related; and 5% were for family reunification, with the remainder being work visas.

Most of the applicants (30%) who used the services of ImServ2 came from Beirut. Another 20% came from South Lebanon; 15% from North Lebanon; 15% from Mount Lebanon; and 10% from the Bekaa. Equal numbers of applicants were Christian and Muslim.

ImServ1 stated that 40% of its successful applicants were aged 21-30 years; another 40% were 31-40; 18% were 41-50; and only 2% were 51-60. The total percentage of family visas granted was 55%, while 15% of visas went to women and 30% to men.

ImServ2 told us that the majority of its applicants (90%) were aged between 21 and 40 years, while the remainder (10%) were between the ages of 41 and 60.

ImServ1 said that 40% of its clients who received visas held BA or BSc degrees, with another 40% holding an MS, MA, or MBA. The remaining 20% possessed a PhD, DDS, or MD.

ImServ2 said that 80% of its successful applicants held a BA or BSc degree or higher, while 20% merely had some form of secondary education.

According to both immigration services, the only country that allowed applications for immigration after 12 July 2006 was Canada, since the war did not lead to any changes in its immigration policy.

There is no way of determining at present how representative the statistics supplied by these two services are. It should be emphasized that they deal exclusively with two countries of immigration (Canada and Australia), that they are only two of a larger number of legal immigration services, and an unknown number of illegal brokers also service the domestic Lebanese population.

In the opinion of the immigration service agents that we contacted, the main reasons for the migration of Lebanese, particularly following the Summer 2006 War, were feelings of insecurity, fear and lack of trust. After the war, concerns about physical security were the main reason for emigration by the wealthy and the well-paid.

4. Conclusion

Of particular significance to this study were the high levels of training, education and experience among those who applied for visas to leave Lebanon after the Summer 2006 War according to embassies and immigration services. This would seem to substantiate the information that we gathered from the questionnaires and media survey. Although by no means representative, this phase of the project seems to indicate that more Muslims are now seeking to leave Lebanon and that the number of Muslims leaving is now approaching the number typical for Christian Lebanese. Our interview partners emphasized the important role played by the post-war political crisis, which exacerbated the effects of the war and the already high migration levels of educated Lebanese prior to the summer hostilities.

Finally, it should be pointed out here that the fact that this project was initiated and funded by the European Union's EuroMed research consortium had no effect on the willingness of embassies and consulates to respond to requests for data. The cooperation of the two North American embassies was the result of longstanding contacts between LERC and their respective consular staffs. Of particular significance is the lack of cooperation on the part of the Western European embassies, which undercut – to a small but noticeable degree – the reputation of Barcelona Process in the Eastern Mediterranean.

C. Survey Results for Migrants

1. Introduction

In this section, we will be dealing exclusively with the issue of return migration. Other key related topics – for example, remittances, investment, moral and emotional support – will be considered in detail in Section D. Our survey of Lebanese migrants was the second quantitative approach used for this study. A separate questionnaire for migrants was developed and sent via e-mail to Lebanese migrants in different parts of the world. Eighty-five migrants self-administered the questionnaire, of which only 74 were complete, hence, accepted, keyed in and analyzed. LERC advertised its migrant survey on different Lebanese web-lists, via e-mail to the Friends of LERC and through announcements sent to a number of Lebanese diaspora organizations. Migrants also selected themselves, that is, they wrote to LERC expressing interest and asking to participate in the survey. Hence, we had no way of controlling the age, religion, or host country of respondents.

Returning to the home country is a life strategy decision that depends on willingness and readiness to return, tangible and intangible resources – including social capital – and certain determining factors and circumstances in both the host and home countries.[91] Cassarino argues that "return is not only a voluntary act. Return also pertains to a process of resource mobilization that requires time…. Returnees preparedness is not only dependent on the migrant's experience abroad, but also on the perception that significant institutional, economic and political changes have occurred at home."[92] Return migration is indeed a form of migration and as such, it largely depends upon 'pull' factors (i.e. the ability of Lebanon to attract people living abroad).

Return is mostly contingent upon "confidence because it depends on the existence of a minimum of economic opportunities and social stability in the home country."[93] Once the return occurs, its continuation and/or reinforcement is contingent upon certain key factors, such as political democracy, economic growth, a suitable business environment (especially for small and medium-sized enterprises), the rule of law and due process.[94] Returnees' greatest concerns are "political stability and personal security" and the obstacles to their reintegration include "corruption and bureaucratic practices."[95]

People return for many reasons that include and surpass the four typologies of return mentioned by Francesco Cerase, that is, return because of 'failure,' 'conservatism,' 'retirement' and 'innovation.'[96] Some return because of discrimination in their host countries, others because of ideological beliefs, and some because of feelings of nostalgia.[97]

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91 J.-P. Cassarino, "Theorising Return Migration: The Conceptual Approach to Return Migrants Revisited," International Journal on Multicultural Societies 6, no. 2 (2004); available online at [http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0013/001385/138592E.pdf#page=60], accessed 23 September 2005.

92 Ibid., 271-72.

93 A. Portes and L. Guarnizo, "U.S. Bound Immigration and Small Enterprise Development in the Dominican Republic," Working Paper no. 4, 1999; available online at [http://dkc.mse.jhu.edu/~scholz/Iprints/ladark4], accessed 17 March 2006.

94 Ibid., 4.

95 "A Report on the International Workshop on Sustainable Return of Professional and Skilled Migrants," Dhaka, Bangladesh, 7-8 March 2005; available online at [http://www.migrationdrc.org/news/reports/ReturnMigrationReport.pdf], accessed 18 December 2006.

96 Cited in Cassarino, "Theorising Return Migration," 257-58.

97 N. Malhame, "Lebanese Returnees: Reasons for Return, Adaptation and Re-Emigration" (MA thesis, American University of Beirut, 2006), 3-5.

One of the experts consulted for this study said that he and his family had themselves returned and stayed, and that they were, therefore, among the minority of Lebanese migrants. "You also have people who choose to return and live here. I'm one who returned and stayed here; I call myself 'a minority in a minority.' The minority of those who migrated to the US and who returned to Lebanon, and the minority who returned to Lebanon and stayed here."[98]

Although "the issue of post-[civil] war return migration has not received particular attention in Lebanese society,"[99] the few references available confirm that the reasons for the return of migrants to Lebanon are as diverse as anywhere else. In preliminary research, Jaulin found that return "is a 'return to the origins' for a third generation descendant of Lebanese immigrants in Colombia, an 'academic return' for a second generation Brazilian who joins his father and pursues his studies in Beirut, a 'professional return' for the one who participates in the reconstruction of the city centre of Beirut or for the one who works as a professor at the Lebanese University."[100] Stamm found that some Lebanese returned because they felt that societies abroad had lost their values and preferred Lebanon because community ties "are much stronger and provide a sense of security, stability and moral standards." [101]

The families of returnees frequently influence the decision-making process and reintegration into Lebanese society.[102] The Lebanese state does not offer any kind of assistance to returning migrants, [103] hence, responsibility for return and reintegration lies with the returnees and their families, who often depend on family members in the home country for advice on whether or not to return.[104] In her research, Malhame found that some Lebanese returned because of a "collective household decision," others because of "economic opportunities."[105]

When reflecting on the decision of expatriates to return, one of our experts, Ghobril, head of research at the Byblos Bank and a specialist in remittances, drew on his own experience of return and reintegration "I lived abroad eleven years as a migrant in the United States. It took me almost two years to decide to return, a final decision I never regretted, even with the instability and the uncertainty and smaller markets compared to the opportunities I left behind in the US."[106]

The following section examines various attitudes on the part of the surveyed migrants, including the reasons behind their decisions not to return permanently following the Summer 2006 War, their perceptions of the political, economic and societal situations in Lebanon, the roles played by their families in the decision not to return and how long they have been away and plan to stay away.

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[98] Nassib Ghobril, interviewed 23 November 2006.

[99] Malhame, "Lebanese Returnees," 40. See also A. Malek, *Returning Home: A Post-War Lebanese Phenomenon* (Beirut: Dar al-Mourad, 2001); and M. Soueid, "La Réintégration des émigrés dans leur pays d'origine: Cas d'une famille chiite du Liban Sud," (Thesis, Université Saint-Joseph, Beirut, 1993).

[100] Th. Jaulin, "Returning to Lebanon," Paper presented at the Sixth Mediterranean Social and Political Research Meeting, Montecatini Terme, 16-20 March 2005, 2.

[101] S. Stamm, "Social Networks among Return Migrants to Post-War Lebanon," Paper no. 9, Center for Comparative and International Studies, 2006, 27; available online at [http://www.cis.ethz.ch/publications/WP9_stamm.pdf], accessed 7 July 2006, see M. Holm Pedersen, "Between Homes: Post-War Return, Emplacement and the Negotiation of Belonging in Lebanon," Working Paper no. 79, New Issues in Refugee Research, UNHCR, February 2003, 22.

[102] Stamm, "Social Networks among Return Migrants to Post-War Lebanon," 27.

[103] Pedersen, "Between Homes," 20.

[104] R. Tiemoko Migration, "Return and Socio-Economic Change in West Africa: The Role of Family," Sussex Migration Working Paper no. 15, March 2003; available online at [http://www.gdrc.org/icm/remittance/mwp15.pdf], accessed 9 August 2005.

[105] Malhame, "Lebanese Returnees," 66.

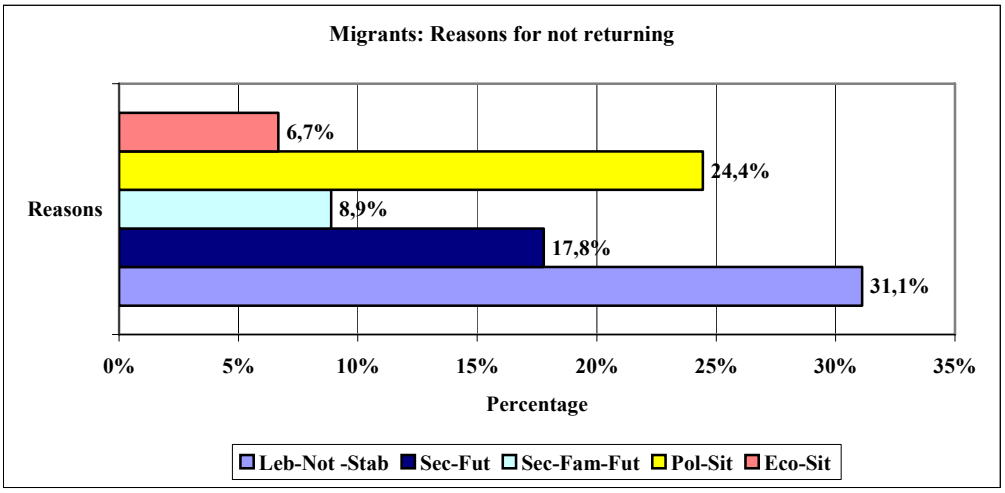
[106] Nassib Ghobril, interviewed 23 November 2006.

2. Socio-Demographic Background of the Respondent Migrants

According to a study by Dr. Anis Abi Farah, the majority of the Lebanese who left the country between 1975 and 2001 were between the ages of 20 and 34 (28.4%) and 35 and 49 (28.1%).[107] In terms of education, he found that almost one-third (29.2%) held university degrees.[108] According to Fargues, aggregated results f the most recent population censuses in the OECD countries put the proportion of Lebanese migrants living in the member states with university level education at 51.8%.[109] Abi Farah also found that most migrants (48.4%) were married, with only 20.7% being single, unattached and never married.[110] In terms of religious affiliation, Abi Farah concluded that 23.1% of Lebanon's Armenian Orthodox have left; 14.7% of the Druze; 23.2% of the Greek Orthodox; 22.2% of the Sunnis; 21% of the Shiites; 23.1% of the Greek Catholics; 23.3% of the Maronites; and 23.3% from other religions and denominations.[111] The most popular destinations were the United States (11.9%), Canada (11%), France (10.8%) and the Gulf states (12.5%).[112]

Almost half (47.9%) of the migrants surveyed for the present study were between the ages of 21 and 30, and one-quarter of them (25.4%) were aged 31 to 40. In terms of marital status, the migrant respondents were almost equally divided between those who never married (52.1%) and those who were (45.1%). The overwhelming majority of them were Christians of different denominations (81.7%), with various Muslim sects making up only 14.1% of the sample. Regarding their occupations, over one-third (36.6%) were professionals, 19.7% were at medium and lower levels of management and 11.3% were senior managers.

Most respondents were living in the United States (32.4%), Canada (12.7%), the Gulf states (16.9%), or France (11.3%) when they filled in the survey. The rest were located in South Africa, Norway, the United Kingdom, Armenia, Egypt, Switzerland and as far away as China and Ecuador.



Graph 18 Migrants' Reasons for Not Returning

107 Abi Farah, "Lebanese Emigrants between 1975 and 2001," 4.

108 Ibid., 6.

109 Ph. Fargues, "International Migration in the Arab Region: Trends and Policies," Paper presented at the United Nations Expert Group Meeting on International Migration and Development in the Arab Region, Population Division, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, United Nations Secretariat, Beirut, 15-17 May 2006; available online at [http://www.un.org/esa/population/migration/turin/Symposium_Turin_files/P09_Fargues.pdf], accessed 15 May 2006. See, also, Mammy Helou, "Contingency Planning for Systems Evolution after Crisis: Reconstructive Brain Drain Policy-Oriented Implications – The Case of Lebanon, 1975-1994," Journal of Contingencies and Crisis Management 3, no. 3 (September 1995); and M. Fatfat, "The Migration of Lebanese Professionals to the U.S.: Why They Left Lebanon and Why They Are Staying in the US" (Ph.D. diss., University of Pittsburgh, 1998).

110 Abi Farah, "Lebanese Emigrants between 1975 and 2001," 8.

111 Ibid., 8-9.

112 Ibid., 3.

3. Impact of the Summer 2006 War on the Decision to Return

The study that LERC published on the evacuation during the Summer 2006 War showed that 18.8% of the Lebanese evacuees surveyed were actually return migrants living in Lebanon permanently, while 12.5% had merely come to Lebanon to explore the possibility of returning.[113] When asked how many times they had been back with the intention of staying permanently since their first migration, 22.9% of them answered more than twice, 20.8% said twice and 16.7% said once.[114] In response to the question of whether they would ever return permanently to Lebanon, "52% of the respondents indicated that it was a possibility, 10% said that they have already returned, 23% said they will return some day and 15% said they will never return."[115] The factors that motivated them to return were mainly family (61%) and business (11%), although some variations were recorded within our data set.[116] These responses indicate that permanent migration is not so permanent.[117]

Remigration is a neglected subject in the broad field of migration studies. Like migration, remigration is impacted by economic, political and societal instability. In an MA thesis entitled "Lebanese Returnees: Reasons for Return, Adaptation and Re-Emigration," Malhame found that practically all of those whom she interviewed identified political and economic insecurity as factors that impeded adaptation and led them to contemplate remigration.[118]

The Summer 2006 War continues to have an impact on the lives not only of resident Lebanese, but also of Lebanese migrants who continue to follow developments in the country by watching Lebanese satellite television transmissions and other regional and international channels.[119] A female Lebanese-American migrant summed up the general view, saying: "Certainly the experience that I endured last summer will affect any revisit with my family…. I don't see myself returning permanently to Lebanon in the near future since my kids will probably be better off in the US for their education and the normal process of life. Maybe in 25-30 years, I will return to Lebanon, when it's time for me to retire."[120]

When asked whether they planned to return permanently to Lebanon in the next one to five years, 60% of the migrants surveyed said that they had decided not to return following the Summer 2006 War, 37% said that the war had not negatively affected their decision to return, and 3% gave no answer.

Further inquiries specifically aimed at discovering why some migrants had decided not to return permanently found that one-third (31.1%) felt that Lebanon was unstable; 24.4% faulted the political situation; 17.8% preferred to stay abroad to secure their future; 8.9% wanted to secure their family's future; 6.7% mentioned the economic situation; 2.2% referred to the societal situation; 2.2% said they never had plans to return; and 6.7% gave no answer.

During her interview for this study, a Ph.D candidate in sociology who was in Lebanon during the Summer 2006 War to interview women in politics, told us: "The situation was promising and lots of people I knew from Austin, Texas have returned or made long term plans … [for] permanent

113 Hourani, The Impact of the Summer 2006 War on Migration in Lebanon, 81-82.

114 Ibid., 90-91.

115 Ibid., 92-93.

116 Ibid., 92-93.

117 O. Arowolo, "Return Migration and the Problem of Reintegration," International Migration 38, no. 5 (December 2000).

118 See Malhame, "Lebanese Returnees"; Stamm, "Social Networks among Return Migrants to Post-War Lebanon"; and Soueid, "La Réintégration des émigrés dans leur pays d'origine."

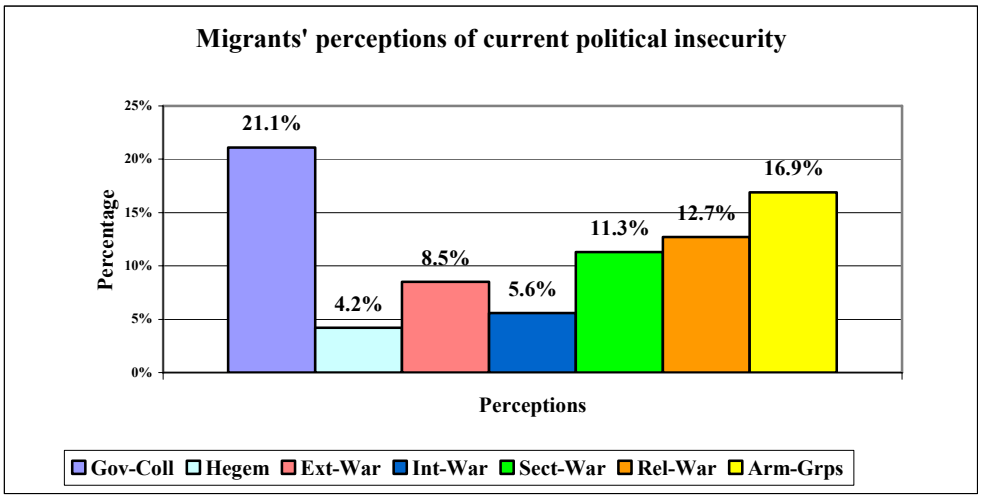
119 See J. Berger, "Immigrants Get a Touch of Home on TV," International Herald Tribune, 23 February 2004, available online at [http://www.iht.com/articles/130747.html], accessed 29 January 2005; and Z. Constantine, "Anxiety of War Is Wearing Down Expatriate Lebanese," Gulf News, 7 August 2006.

120 Hourani, The Impact of the Summer 2006 War on Migration in Lebanon, 97.

residency in Lebanon." However, due to the recent war, "many have given up the idea of returning to Lebanon in the near future."[121]

4. Migrants' Perceptions of Current Political Insecurity

The definition of political insecurity used above for Lebanese residents also applies to the migrants. When asked about their perceptions of current political insecurity, 21.1% of migrants feared government collapse; 16.9% feared armed groups in Lebanon; 12.7% feared religious/sectarian turmoil; 11.3% feared sectarian/factional armed conflict; 8.5% feared external armed conflict; 7% feared a border war; 5.6% feared a violent internal uprising; 4.2% feared the hegemony of one group over the others; 2.8% feared that one group would intimidate the others; 2.8% feared a coup-d'état; 2.8% feared the restriction of freedoms; and 1.4% feared being oppressed. Only 2.8% failed to answer the question.



Graph 19 Migrants' Political Perceptions

We asked one of our experts, a Lebanese professor at Florida State University, whether regional and domestic political developments since July 2006 had encouraged migration from Lebanon and discouraged return migration. He responded: "I think that those Lebanese migrants who have been abroad for less than fifteen years or so were not influenced by regional events and paid more attention to the domestic situation within Lebanon before deciding to move/not move. The older generation of migrants – if assimilated enough – are the ones who paid more attention to the regional situation and decided it wasn't safe for them to be in Lebanon whether for visits or for permanent return."[122] Another Lebanese businessman answered the same questioning this way: "I think the Summer War had a trigger effect. It was a big incentive for people to leave the country. It helped them to make up their minds. Those with businesses abroad and who could afford to stay there did so. Those living here, but with businesses abroad, were then encouraged to leave. Those who returned are those with businesses here who couldn't leave; they had no option but to come back."[123]

When we asked respondents what conditions would cause them to return to Lebanon, one male migrant living in Canada volunteered this solution to Lebanon's protracted conflicts: "The political situation in the country is hopeless. There is endemic mistrust among various political groups,

121 Rita Stephan, interviewed 18 December 2006.

122 Asbed Kotchikian, interviewed 1 December 2006.

123 Nadim Ghorayeb, interviewed 27 November 2006.

especially those now in power. I think most Lebanese will return to Lebanon if a permanent political solution is finally agreed upon between the various religious groups that form the Lebanese social fabric. This can only be achieved through the implementation of a federal or confederate system similar to that of the Swiss."[124]

A female Druze migrant wrote: "The only condition that will allow me to return to Lebanon is if there is a change in the system. The present system is made up of religious and political factions that are divided, all working out of self-interest rather than for the country and its people. The people in leadership positions need to change. We have been doing and saying the same thing for years and years. We have watched Lebanon fall and rebuild itself too many times. We are stuck in a political whirlpool unable to rise above backward mentalities that believe violence is the means to achieve solutions. I don't want to be under or follow any leadership that Lebanon has. We need new blood, new voices, new strength; and most of all, we need positive change. When change at the top leadership level happens and when people start thinking about Lebanon first, then the societal and economic situations will follow the change."[125]

A recent female migrant expressed these opinions: "The reason I left Lebanon was not because of the recent war, but because I got married and followed my husband to Switzerland. However, if the situation in Lebanon was stable long before the Summer 2006 War, we wouldn't have moved to Switzerland in the first place. What led us to move out of Lebanon was an accumulation of decades of economic and political instability. To sum things up, the reasons that made us leave Lebanon were [as follows]. Economic: lack of good paying jobs even for people with a higher education; countries wanting to exploit Lebanon for their own benefit; foreigners working in Lebanon with no legal papers, which diminish the chances for the Lebanese to hold such jobs; lack of fair employee benefits in the private sector; no contracts, no legal rights, and no chances of advancement. Political: the situation of the country where political positions are laid down within the same family, from generation to generation, as well as the never-ending conflict between religious groups. Security issue: I lived in the Christian area (I am sorry to be so specific) where 99% of explosions and acts of vandalism acts targeting politicians took place, which made us afraid of going out of the house. Wanting to provide our future children with the opportunity to get a foreign passport so they will have no problem going from one country to another and avoiding the application for a visa everywhere they go. Human rights violation, animal rights violation, children on the street, etc."[126]

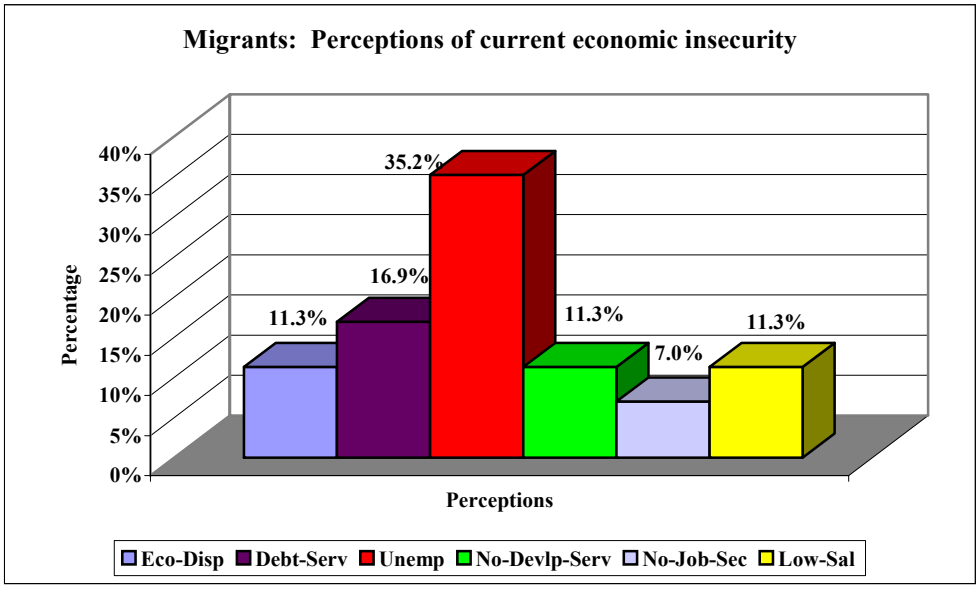
5. Migrants' Perceptions of Current Economic Insecurity

The same definition of economic insecurity used for residents is applicable to Lebanese migrants. When asked for their perception of current economic insecurity in Lebanon, the majority of migrants (35.2%) gave unemployment as the main cause. The other responses, in descending order, were: high external debt service ratio (16.9%); economic disparity between communities (11.3%); lack of access to developmental services (11.3%); low salaries (11.3%); lack of job security (7%); lack of access to social services (2.8%); and poverty in old age (1.4%). A small percentage of respondents (2.8%) gave no answer.

124 Quote from a male migrant, Christian from Canada, aged 61-70, married with children, postponed return 2-5 years.

125 Quote from a female migrant, Druze from the United States, aged 21-30, single, postponed return 2-5 years.

126 Quote from a female migrant, Greek Orthodox from Switzerland, aged 31-40, married with no children, postponed return 5-10 years.



Graph 20 Migrants' Economic Perceptions

A female Shiite migrant living in the United States wrote this comment when surveyed: "There are simple conditions for my return to Lebanon – political stability and access to economic opportunity. No emigrant expects to have the same opportunities as they have abroad – Lebanon is simply too small to allow that. However, we do want to be able to live a good life in Lebanon. Low salaries and lack of appreciation for the talent/skills the emigrant population brings are not going to entice us to come back. The truth is that many of the emigrants that I know want to come back to Lebanon and make it a better place. However, they need an organized way to find job opportunities in Lebanon, access to well-paid jobs and support when they arrive there. They are willing to sacrifice a lot of the economic opportunities they find abroad if they can find a way to create middle to upper-middle class life in Lebanon."[127]

6. Migrants' Perceptions of Current Societal Insecurity

Again, the definition of societal insecurity given in relation to residents applies to migrants as well. When the migrants surveyed were asked about their perception of current societal insecurity in Lebanon, the largest proportion (28.3%) cited lack of human development as the cause. Equal numbers (22.5% in both cases) next mentioned the Muslim-Christian interreligious divide and the intra-religious divisions within Christian denominations and between Muslim Shiite and Sunni sects. The other reasons given included human rights violations (7%); the socio-political exclusion of one or more religious groups (7%); tightening restrictions on all types of freedoms (5.7%); and inequality between religious groups (4.2%). No response was given by 2.8% of respondents.

127 Quote from a female migrant, Shiite from the United States, aged 21-30, married with no children, postponed return 2-5 years.

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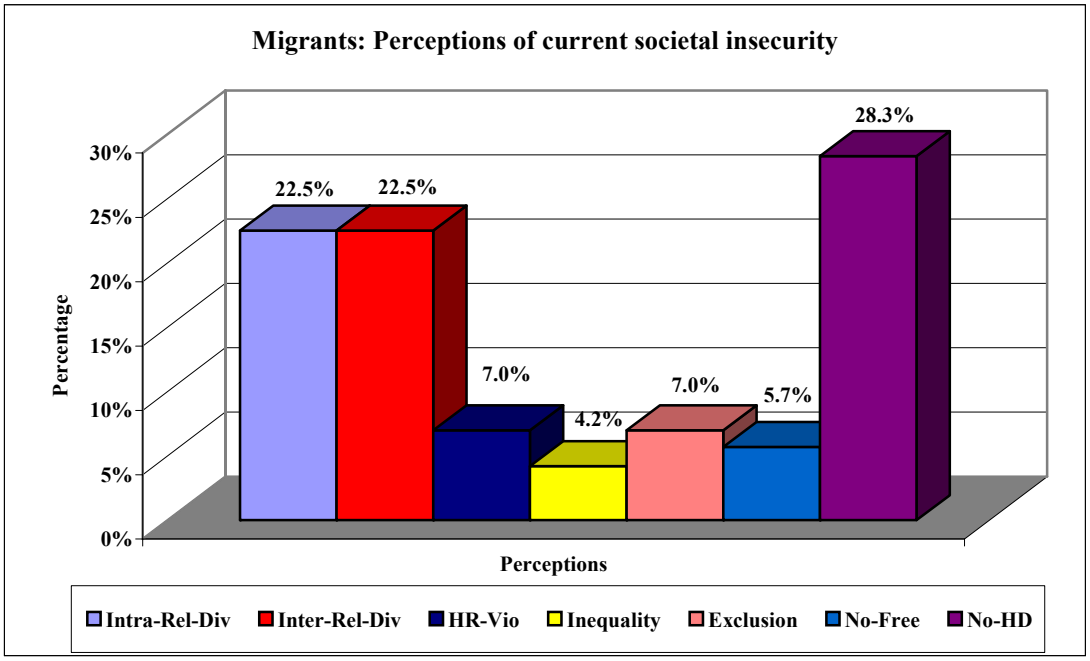


Graph 21 Migrants' Societal Perceptions

Addressing the question of the conditions necessary for return, a female migrant wrote: "The conditions for return do not exist. My closest relatives have all left and my friends do not live there anymore.

Furthermore, I don't believe that my profession (psychologist) is respected enough in Lebanon to have a healthy work environment. In a more general sense, I have a philosophical disagreement with the societal structure in Lebanon (sectarianism, wasta, lack of order and government structure). This is the way Lebanon is and I don't anticipate any changes during my lifetime."[128]

7. Influence of Family in Lebanon on Decision to Return

The vast majority of those surveyed (69%) said their family had discouraged them from returning permanently to Lebanon after the 2006 Summer War. Only 27% said that this was not the case, while 4% gave no answer.

Asked whether he would encourage a close friend or relative living abroad to move his family and career to Lebanon at this moment, a Lebanese professor at Florida State University said "By all means NO. Not only Lebanon, but also the region is in a state of flux and nothing is clear yet as to how things will develop and in which direction they will develop. Perhaps the best thing to do would be for someone who is contemplating to return to Lebanon to spend some time here, 4-6 months, and see how things are before making a decision to move back."[129] Another businessman said that he wouldn't encourage anyone to return: "At the present level the country is in…. if someone abroad wants to move back here, I would not advise anyone to do so. I would say, 'don't think of it yet; just wait and see.' We are still hoping things will improve…."[130]

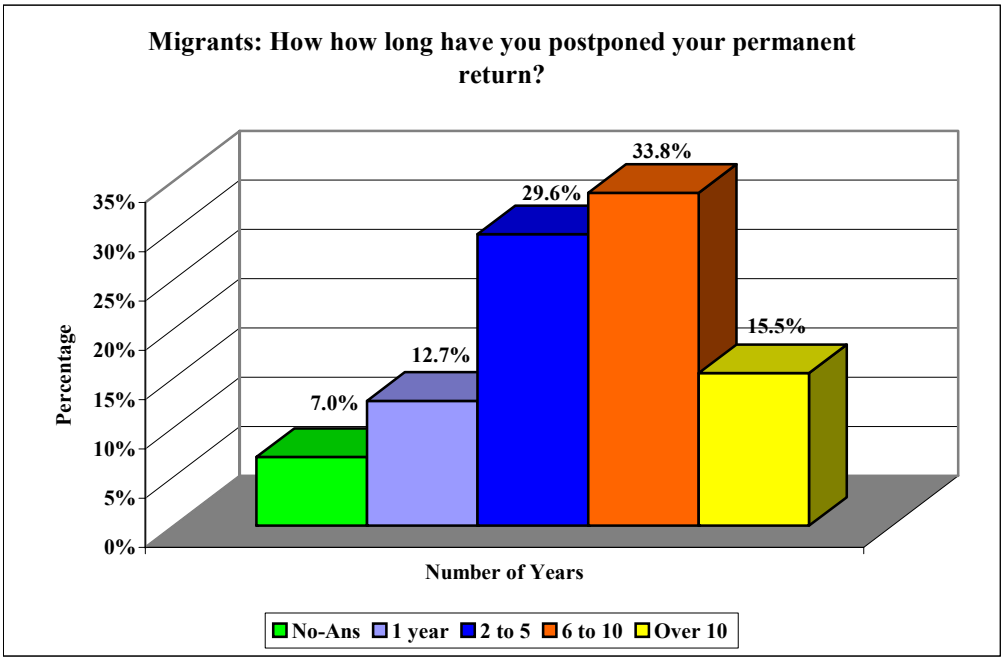
128 Quote from a female migrant, Sunni from the United States, aged 31-40, married with one child, does not want to return.

129 Asbed Kotchikian, interviewed 1 December 2006.

130 Nadim Ghorayeb, interviewed 27 November 2006.

8. Migrants' Postponement of Permanent Return

We asked the migrant respondents how long they expected to postpone their permanent return to Lebanon. Most of them indicated that they did not expect to come back to the country to live in the immediate future. Only 12.7% of respondents said they would postpone their decision for a year. The largest number (33.8%) expected to delay their return for 6-10 years, another 29.6% said for 2-5 years and 15.5% said for over 10 years. A small percentage (1.4%) said they had no plans to return, while 7% provided no answer to this question.



Graph 22 Migrant's Postponement of Return

One of our experts, Ghobril, said that he had recently heard few people express an interest in returning to Lebanon: "Some people will come back irrespective of the political situation if they find a job. Some people don't want to hear anything about returning to Lebanon. It's a wide open and individual decision. However, there haven't been many asking me about returning after the Summer 2006 War. Whoever was planning anything has put it on hold."[131]

A female migrant who has postponed her return to Lebanon for ten years told us: "In order to return to Lebanon, safety is the primary concern of every expatriate. It's common knowledge that war may start at any second in Lebanon. Political stability is also a requisite for the development of civil society and the economy. There aren't any businesses in the world that would want to invest in an unstable nation where revolutions and wars may start any time. I need to feel safe to live permanently in Lebanon. Right now the situation is not safe. I don't feel that I am able to influence politics in Lebanon or to change the social situation while living there. I am empowered to make changes happen abroad. In order for people to feel more empowered, the political system should allow entry to more eligible citizens with creative minds; it should stop nepotism; it should be transparent and accountable; and it should show fairness towards all citizens from different backgrounds. Getting elected should be based on the levels of education and experience, rather than on who you know and which political

131 Nassib Ghobril, interviewed 23 November 2006.

CARIM-RR 2007/01 © 2007 EUI-RSCAS

group or religion you are affiliated to. I do have hope in Lebanon; however, it is very dim and I believe that changes will take a long time to happen."[132]

9. Conclusion

Like residents, migrants base their perceptions of political instability on their worries about government collapse and their fears of armed groups.

Returnees can be from all walks of life; they can be entrepreneurs, professionals, temporary skilled labourers, migrant students, or asylum seekers. They can have different migratory experiences with different expectations and degrees of tolerance. However, all of them need to find the minimum that they are looking for in their countries of origins in order to return, reintegrate and stay. This minimum is very subjective.

Integration was not part of the scope of our study, however, from the answers of the migrants surveyed, we could synthesize that they are touching on very sensitive issues other than the purely political or economic. These sensitive issues may be categorized as societal if we can expand its definition to include moral behaviour and good conduct. Many talked about corruption, nepotism, the lack of human rights and the lack of respect for animals and the environment, to name only a few of the points raised.

The conditions necessary to return or stay given by migrants and residents were similar in terms of political security, employment and societal security. Both also wanted better political behaviour, the abolition of sectarianism and employment based on qualifications and merit, rather than wasta, as well as human rights, the rule of law and due process. However, migrants' conditions for returning went well beyond the residents' priorities for staying. Residents expressed the desire for security, which may be labelled as 'necessity,' while the migrants gave more emphasis to employment, moral behaviour and good conduct. Although the conditions set by both residents and migrants overlapped on all levels, they differed, to a certain extent, in how they were prioritized. Being in materially and non-materially secure environments, migrants can afford the luxury of what we may categorize as 'commodity' conditions.

D. Impact of the War on Networking between Lebanese Migrants and Residents

1. Introduction

A number of scholars have addressed the subject of transnational migration networks.[133] For our purposes, we adopted the concept of transnational development of migrant community networks as the processes by which "immigrants forge and sustain multi-standard social relations that link together their societies of origin and settlement."[134]

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132 Quote from a female migrant, Maronite from the United States, aged 21-30, single, postponed return over 10 years.

133 A. Portes, "Transnational Communities: Their Emergence and Significance in the Contemporary World System," Keynote address delivered at the 19th Annual Conference on the Political Economy of the World System: Latin America in the World Economy, University of Miami, 21 April 1995; M. Smith and L. Eduardo Guarnizo, "Transnationalism from Below," Research V6, Comparative Urban and Community Research, New Brunswick, 1998; Th. Faist, "Transnationalism in International Migration: Implication for the Study of Citizenship and Culture," Paper presented to the ESRC Transnational Communities Programme Seminar, Faculty of Anthropology and Geography, University of Oxford, August 1999; and S. Vertovec and R. Cohen, Migration, Diasporas and Transnationalism (Cheltenham, UK: Edward Elgar Publishing Ltd., 1999).

134 L. Basch, N. G. Schiller, and C. Szanton Blanc, eds., Nations Unbound: Transnational Projects, Postcolonial Predicaments, and Deterritorialized Nation-States (Switzerland: Godon and Breach, 1994).

In order for transnational migrant community networks to develop, certain prerequisites are necessary, including the presence of the migrant community in different parts of the world, diverse transnational relations – financial, commercial, political, religious rituals, or family ceremonies – and visits between the migrants and their kin and communities.

Transnational migrant networks have an important impact on both the countries of origin and the countries of settlement. Scholars have extensively studied their influence on host societies; however, too little research has been conducted on home societies. Considering the ease and speed of new communication networks, the flow of remittances and money transfers, as well as trade in goods, information exchange and travel, migrants can now easily interact with their families and communities back home, affecting lives there and having their own lives affected in their turn. Networks linking immigrants to their communities create a virtual dimension, a transnational abode,[135] where spaces are borderless and where places once remote are accessible villages.[136]

This networking can occur through spatial development and improvements; through businesses; through international remittances; through philanthropic contributions and donations; through religious services and ceremonies; through family reunification; through medical and educational assistance; through associations and organizations; through tourism and yearly visits; through information communication technologies (ICT) and satellite television channels; through trade, ethnic food, traditional crafts – the list is virtually endless.[137]

Since this part of our study deals with networking during and after a military conflict, we opted to consider only a limited number of variables to identify the kind of networking that occurred during the Summer 2006 War or has continued to take place since then. These variables chosen were: variation in remittances; frequency of family visits; family reunification efforts; sponsorship of education abroad; and financial contributions to the Lebanese government and domestic NGOs.

There are few studies of family networks among Lebanese migrants.[138] However, information scattered among various publications and our own personal observations allows us to say with some confidence that Lebanese migrant-resident networks are very strong, especially in relation to Lebanese who have left the country in the last 30 years.[139]

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135 We are introducing this term to mean the environment that emerges from ICT use through the interaction of a migrant or a community of migrants with his/their resident families, friends, or townspeople in the community of origin; and a migrant or a community of migrants with his/their families, friends, or townspeople in other diasporic communities.

136 N. Vivian, and F. Sudweeks, "Social Networks in Transnational and Virtual Communities," Murdoch University, Perth, Australia, June 2003; available online at [http://proceedings.informingscience.org/IS2003Proceedings/docs/192Vivia.pdf], accessed 24 January 2005.

137 G. Hourani and E. Sensenig-Dabbous, "Transnational Lebanese Communities Network: Using Traditional, Alternative and ICT-Based Methodologies to Study Middle Eastern Migration Networks," The Sixth Mediterranean Social and Political Research Meeting, of the Robert Schuman Centre for Advanced Studies, The European University Institute, Montecatini Terme, Florence, Italy, 16 – 20 March 2005, 10-17.

138 Ghassan Hage's comprehensive study of the "Lebanese Transnational Family," which he presented in part at LERC on 19 May 2004 has not yet been published.

139 T. Batrouney, "Australian-Lebanese: Return Visits to Lebanon and Issues of Identity," in Lebanese Diaspora: History, Racism and Belonging, edited by P. Tabar (Beirut: Lebanese American University, 2005), 300-03; D. Boyd, "The Development of Direct Broadcast Television to and within the Middle East," Journal of South Asian and Middle Eastern Studies 18, no. 2 (1994): 37-50; and L. Cainkar, "No Longer Invisible: Arab and Muslim Exclusion after September 11," MERIP, no. 224 (Fall 2002), available online at [http://www.merip.org/mer/mer224/224_cainkar.html], accessed 21 December 2005. See, also, A. Peleikis, Lebanese in Motion: Gender and the Making of a Transnational Village (New Brunswick and London: Transnational Publishers, 2003); N. Jabbra and J. Jabbra, "Kinship and Transnational Links in the Lebanese Diaspora," in Lebanese Diaspora: History, Racism and Belonging, edited by P. Tabar (Beirut: Lebanese American University, 2005); 2005; M. Leichtman, "Reexamining the Transnational Migrant: The Afro-Libanais of Senegal," in Lebanese Diaspora: History, Racism and Belonging, edited by P. Tabar (Beirut: Lebanese American University, 2005), 131-65; and Patricia Nabti, "International Emigration from a Lebanese Village: Bishmizzinis on Six Continents" (Ph.D. diss., University of California at Berkeley, 1989).

The family is the basic institution of Lebanese society and the main refuge of its members. Lebanese turn first to their families for assistance in almost every aspect of their lives, including migration. Kinship networks "are fundamental to Lebanese society … [and] key to both chain migration and community formation in the diaspora."[140] The kinship contract "has been grounded in material realities in which kin relationalities have been, for the Lebanese, the core of social identity, economic stability, political security, and religious affiliation and the first, often last, line of care. It has been kin against whom one has had irrevocable rights and toward whom one has had religiously mandated, at times legally prescribed, moral responsibilities."[141]

These networks have played and continue to play a significant role in linking Lebanese residents with their transnational emigrants and *vice versa*. They have been developed locally and then transferred transnationally as need be, varying in accordance with specific conditions.[142] These networks, which transcend international boundaries, have "proved to be the most sustainable factor in securing money, shelter, work and care in times of great uncertainty and distress."[143] Lebanese living abroad, like other transnational migrants, "work, pray, and express their political interests in several contexts rather than in a single nation-state. Some will put down roots in a host country, maintain strong homeland ties, and belong to religious and political movements that span the globe."[144]

Communication plays an important part in linking migrants and residents. Telephones, faxes, e-mails, text messages, videos, letters, photos and the like all help Lebanese maintain their connectedness no matter where they are located.[145]

Remittances, which "are financial resource flows arising from the cross-border movement of nationals of a country,"[146] are vital to the lives of residents, especially during times of crisis; hence, it is not "surprising that remittances have emerged as a critical insurance mechanism for residents of countries afflicted by economic and political crisis [such as] Lebanon during its civil war."[147]

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140 Jabbra and Jabbra, "Kinship and Transnational Links in the Lebanese Diaspora," 275.

141 S. Joseph, "Civic Myths, Citizenship and Gender in Lebanon," in Gender and Citizenship in the Middle East, edited by S. Joseph (Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press, 2000), 116.

142 F. Khuri, "Kinship, Emigration, and Partnership among the Lebanese of West Africa," Africa: Journal of the International African Institute 35, no. 4 (October 1965): 385-95; and Nabti, "International Emigration from a Lebanese Village."

143 Peleikis, Lebanese in Motion, 91.

144 P. Levitt, "Transnational Migrants: When 'Home' Means More Than One Country," Migration Information Source, 1 October 2004; available online at [http://www.migrationinformation.org/USfocus/display.cfm?ID=261], accessed 26 January 2005.

145 Peleikis, Lebanese in Motion, 83-119. See, also, M. Hudson, "Information Technology, International Politics and Political Change in the Arab World," Bulletin of the Royal Institute for Inter-Faith Studies 4, no. 2 (Autumn/Winter 2002): 1-18; available online at [http://nmit.georgetown.edu/papers/mchudson.htm], accessed 7 January 2005; Barry Wellman and Bernie Hogan. "The Internet in Everyday Life," available online at [http://www.chass.utoronto.ca/~wellman/publications/inet_everyday/inet_everyday.pdf], accessed 22 January 2005; and D. Diminescu, "L'Usage du téléphone portable par les migrants en situation précaire," Rapport de recherche, Paris, ACI-Villes, CNRS, 2004, available online at [http://membres.lycos.fr/crisseries/saint-laurent4/Dana_Diminescu.doc], accessed 24 January 2005.

146 D. Kapur, "Remittances: The New Development Mantra?," G-24 Discussion Paper Series, no. 29, United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, April 2004, 1; available online at [http://www.unctad.org/en/docs/gdsmdpbg2420045_en.pdf], accessed 15 September 2004.

147 Ibid., 7. See, also, P. Weiss Fagen with M. Bump, "Remittances in Conflict and Crises: How Remittances Sustain Livelihoods in War, Crises, and Transitions to Peace," Policy Paper, Security-Development Nexus Program, International Peace Academy, February 2006.

Support for family members and friends back home does not only include financial remittances, i.e. currency transfers, but also in-kind solidarity, such as 'visiting friends and relatives' (VFR),[148] assisting residents during natural and man-made disasters and organizing politically and communally to address social and political issues related to the country of origin.[149]

Due to a series of complex and difficult circumstances, migrant families are frequently separated. However, international organizations and host countries have created family reunification policies that allow immigrants to sponsor the migration of immediate family members.[150] Family reunification occurs when "family members join another member of the family who is already living and working in another country in a regular situation."[151] It is one very important channel by which people enter such host countries as the US, Canada, Australia, France, Belgium, Spain, the Netherlands and Germany, to name only a few examples.

Transnational philanthropy is a process by which migrants in the diaspora allocate a certain portion of their remittances to fund development projects in their home societies.[152] Formal structures through which migrants make philanthropic donations include religious, district, village, or other organizations of common interest; non-governmental organizations; and public relations and lobbying associations outside of the home country. Informal structures include families, broader kinship groups, and friends.[153] In normal times, migrants donate funds for such good causes as church or mosque construction/renovation, pastoral schools, cemetery improvements, health facilities, rest homes for the elderly, orphanages and so on either directly or through fundraising chapters of these organizations abroad. In wartime, migrants give money and goods for relief services, refugee shelters, food drives and the like, channelling their contributions through governmental and non-governmental agencies.[154]

Migrants are distant but key players in their countries of origin. Technology and transportation have facilitated their connections and involvement with their home countries and their inhabitants. Politics mobilize migrants at all times, while natural or man-made disasters unite them in a common cause.[155] To the best of our knowledge, there are currently no scientific studies ongoing or published

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148 A. Asiedu, "Some Benefits of Migrants' Return Visits to Ghana," Paper presented at International Workshop on Migration and Poverty in West Africa, University of Sussex, Brighton, UK, 2003.

149 Leichtman, "Reexamining the Transnational Migrant." See, also, Peleikis, Lebanese in Motion; and Jabbra and Jabbra, "Kinship and Transnational Links in the Lebanese Diaspora."

150 A. John, "Family Reunification for Migrants and Refugees: A Forgotten Human Right?"; available online at [http://www.fd.uc.pt/hrc/working_papers/arturojohn.pdf], accessed 17 December 2006.

151 "Family Reunification," OHCHR Migration Papers, November 2005; available online at [http://www.ohchr.org/english/issues/migration/taskforce/docs/familyreunification.pdf], accessed 18 December 2006. See, also, R. Cholewinski, "Family Reunification and Conditions Placed on Family Members: Dismantling a Fundamental Human Right," European Journal of Migration and Law 4, no. 3 (August 2002): 271-90; and F. Bonnot, "Les Principes généraux du droit applicables au réfugiés et le principe de l'unité de la famille," Revue du droit public et de la science politique en France et a l'étranger 112, no. 5 (1996): 1379-1404.

152 J. Opiniano, "The Dynamics of Transnational Philanthropy by Migrant Workers to Their Communities of Origin: The Case of Pozorrubio, Philippines," Fifth International Society for Third-Sector Research (ISTR) International Conference, University of Cape Town, South Africa, 10 July 2002.

153 Ibid.

154 See Ibid. and Leichtman, "'Reexamining the Transnational Migrant," 153. See, also, S. Hanafi, "Palestinian Diaspora Contribution to Investment and Philanthropy in Palestine," 2000, available online at [www.palesta.net/academic/publication/diaspora.htm], accessed 21 January 2005; M. Ricker, "The Growing Importance of Philanthropy," Supporting Your Community Newsletter, no. 1 (2004), available online at [http://www.community-fdn.ca/doc/BMOnews0304ENG.pdf], accessed 23 January 2005; and K. Newland, "Beyond Remittances: The Role of Diasporas in Poverty Reduction in Their Countries of Origin," Migration Policy Institute, July 2004.

155 S. Vertovec, "Migration Fundamentals: The Political Importance of Diasporas," Migration Information Source, 1 June 2005, available online at [http://www.migrationinformation.org/Feature/display.cfm?id=313], accessed 13 September 2005.

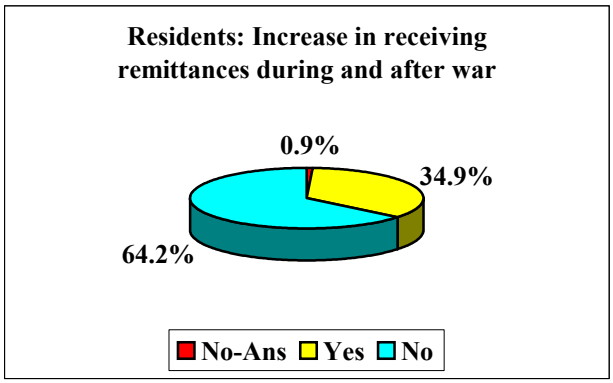
on this phenomenon in Lebanon, barring the Zgharta/Ehden "Migration and Urban Development" project, which LERC has designed and begun implementing.[156]

To identify the ties between Lebanese migrants and residents during and following the Summer 2006 War, we incorporated several questions on the aforementioned variables into the questionnaires for both groups. The results of this module are given below.

2. Family Support through Increase in Remittances

Remittance flows are the most significant and influential type of networking between Lebanese migrants and the families that they have left behind. Lebanese remit enormous amounts facilitated by the fact that Lebanon allows a free flow of capital and hard currency. Remittances are a fundamental feature of Lebanon's economy; they also represent a sizable proportion of Lebanon's foreign revenue. These remittances constituted in 2001 22% of household incomes and 88% of household savings in Lebanon.[157] In 2004, Lebanon received US$2.7 billion in workers' remittances.[158]

Since the Summer 2006 War, slightly more than one-third (34.9%) of the Lebanese residents surveyed reported an increase in the amounts of remittances that they ordinarily receive, while 17% of migrants said that they had increased their remittances to family members in Lebanon. According to Kapur, as well as Weiss Fagen and Bump, referred to in the introduction of this section, remittances can be expected to increase in times of war, crises and transition to peace therefore the questionnaire did not include an item referring to decrease in remittances.



Graph 23 Residents- Increase in receiving remittances

In a qualitative expert interview with a professor at Florida State University, the interviewee stated that migration served two purposes for Lebanon: "[F]rom the economic perspective, migrants alleviate the pressure on the country's job market and create a network of remittance that injects the economy with a large amount of financial aid, which is of paramount importance for Lebanon's poor economy."[159] In another interview that we conducted with Ghobril, we were told: "Continuing emigration from Lebanon, as bad as it sounds, maintains the link with the country especially through

156 Phase one of "Migrants' Networking through Spatial Development and Improvement in Ehden/Zgharta" was carried out in the spring of 2006 by LERC in cooperation with the Faculty of Architecture, Arts and Design at Notre Dame University as part of LERC's five-year study plan on "Transnational Lebanese Communities Network: Using Traditional, Alternative and ICT-Based Methodologies to Study Middle Eastern Migration Networks."

157 N. Ghobril, "Expatriates' Remittances and the Lebanese Economy: Brain Drain or Economic Gain?," Lecture presented at LERC, 21 April 2004.

158 International Monetary Fund's Economic Data Sharing System (EDSS).

159 Asbed Kotchikian, interviewed 1 December 2006.

the flow of remittances…. In Lebanon, a country that relies on emigrants, the involvement of the diaspora is not only positive, but highly important and needed."[160]

3. Family Support through Visits

In the study that LERC recently conducted on evacuations during the Summer 2006 War, "almost half of the [Lebanese migrant] respondents (45.8%) revealed that they had been in Lebanon to visit family when war broke out"[161] and, "when asked whether they would return to Lebanon in the future and the reason for their return, 61% said that they would go back to visit their families…, 10% said that they have returned already and 2% indicated that they were planning to return permanently."[162] Visiting friends and relatives is common among emigrant groups[163] and their visits have different purposes, including reassuring the sick, consoling the bereaved, celebrating weddings and other rituals, and strengthening relations between grandchildren and grandparents. Just one of many examples indicating the continuity of emotional support between the first and second diaspora generations involves the Lebanese-born living in Australia and the Australian-born of Lebanese descent. For many years, members both groups have returned to Lebanon in large numbers to conduct business, visit family and/or friends, or enjoy holidays.[164]

When the evacuation occurred during the Summer 2006 War, the majority of those who were evacuated or who left Lebanon on their own were Lebanese dual nationals visiting during the summer.[165] Their numbers were so staggering that many of their host countries later said that their assisted departure from Lebanon was the largest evacuation of non-combatants by sea ever undertaken.[166] This was particularly true of the most popular countries of immigration: Australia, Canada, France, Germany, Sweden and the United States.[167]

Almost one-third (31%) of the migrants surveyed for this study visited their families in Lebanon during or after the Summer 2006 War. Three-quarters (75%) of them said that they had made the journey to support their families emotionally and morally.

A significant number of Lebanese travel back and forth between their countries of migration and Lebanon on a yearly basis and sometimes more than once a year. The distinctions between travelling, migrating and visiting challenge the definition of migration as a one-dimensional move; hence, the traditional definition of the concept is gradually becoming obsolete.[168]

4. Migrants' Support through Family Reunification Process

During the Summer 2006 War, Monte Solberg, the Canadian minister of citizenship and immigration stated: "Our goal is to reunite families as quickly as possible, we're giving priority visa and immigration services to family members of Canadian citizens and permanent residents to help them

160 Nassib Ghobril, interviewed 23 November 2006.

161 Hourani, The Impact of the Summer 2006 War on Migration in Lebanon," 81-82.

162 Ibid., 90-92.

163 Asiedu, "Some Benefits of Migrants' Return Visits to Ghana." See, also, David Timothy Duval, "Linking Return Visits and Return Migration among Commonwealth Eastern Caribbean Migrants in Toronto," Global Networks 4, no. 1 (January 2004).

164 Batrouney, "Australian-Lebanese: Return Visits to Lebanon and Issues of Identity," 300.

165 Hourani, The Impact of the Summer 2006 War on Migration in Lebanon," 39-57.

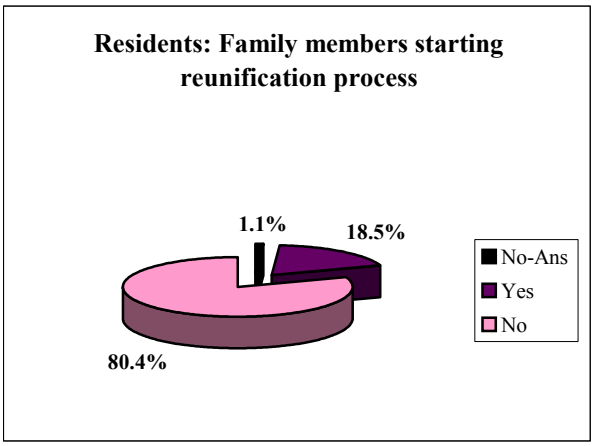
166 Ibid., 64.

167 Ibid, 39.

168 Peleikis, Lebanese in Motion, 87.

join their relatives in Canada".[169] It should be noted here that, during the civil war in Lebanon (1975-91), Canada "even set up emergency visa offices in Cyprus to help with family reunification and refugee applications."[170]

In response to our question on the family reunification process prompted by the Summer 2006 War, 18.5% of residents said that members of their families living abroad had began the paperwork to bring them to their countries of immigration, while 16% of migrants confirmed that they had initiated the immigration process.



Graph 24 Family member encouragement- Residents

The survey showed that the host countries in which family reunification processes are taking place include Canada (25.3%), the United States (20.7%), the Gulf States (17.2%) and Australia (10.3%).

Ghobril confirms that the Lebanese who leave Lebanon "have relatives in the US, Western Europe, Canada and elsewhere – family, friends and/or a community that welcome them; their trips are not a leap into the unknown."[171]

5. Family Support through Study Abroad

Migrant family networks contribute to opportunities for study abroad through sponsorship and/or financial assistance. Although no conclusive studies are available on the subject, it is likely that there is significant diaspora support for students in Lebanon seeking to pursue their studies in other countries. First of all, we know that there is a high level of education-related remittances to Lebanon. Moreover, on the basis of his own sample, Fatfat indicates that the overwhelming majority of all Lebanese who travel to the US to study (84%) have relatives there.[172] It seems plausible that having relatives abroad is a major pull factor when students decide to emigrate in a crisis situation. During the Summer 2006 War, many Lebanese students, especially those with dual citizenship or valid permanent residencies or visas, left Lebanon due to the hostilities.[173] They and their parents often feared that

169 Citizenship and Immigration Canada, "Immigration Measures to Help Reunite Families Affected by Lebanon Conflict," 27 July 2006, available online at [http://www.cic.gc.ca/english/press/06/0606-e.html], accessed 17 August 2006.

170 "Middle East in Crisis: Canada and Lebanon, a Special Tie," CBC News, 1 August 2006, available online at [http://www.cbc.ca/news/background/middleeast-crisis/canada-lebanon.html], accessed 3 August 2006.

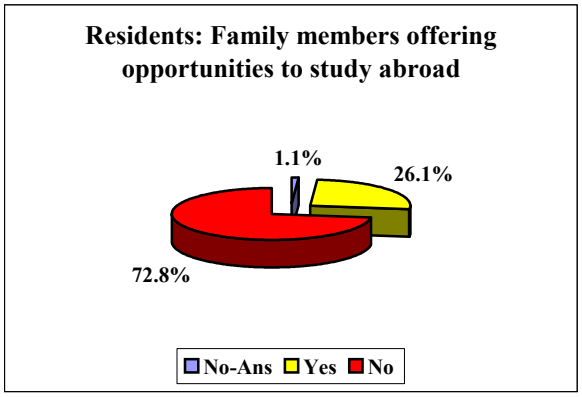
171 Nassib Ghobril, interviewed 23 November 2006.

172 M. Fatfat, "The Migration of Lebanese Professionals to the U.S.," 67-68.

173 Hourani, The Impact of the Summer 2006 War on Migration in Lebanon," 82.

Lebanese universities might not begin a normal 2006-2007 academic year.[174] Although most universities were able to finish their summer sessions after the start of the August ceasefire (reopening in late August), there is significant unsystematic and anecdotal evidence to show that a war-related drop-off in domestic enrolment for the fall of 2006 correlates with an increase in study abroad.[175]

In our survey, 26.1% of Lebanese residents confirmed that they had received offers to study abroad via family members because of the Summer 2006 War. These offers came from family members in the following countries: the United States (26.2%), Canada (18.3%), France (13.5%) and Australia (11.9%).



Graph 25 Family offers to study abroad

6. Support for Home Country through Financial Assistance to the Lebanese Government and Domestic NGOs

Over the years, Lebanese have proven very responsive to the needs of those left behind in their homeland.[176] Lebanese in Ottawa, Canada, for example, "send home substantial amounts of money to help family members there and raise funds … [in Canada] for Lebanese charities."[177]

During the Summer 2006 War, the Lebanese government, especially the Higher Relief Council (HRC), as well as hundreds of international and non-profit organizations, sent out urgent calls for financial assistance. These pleas resonated among all the Lebanese diasporic communities, which began fundraising campaigns in North America, the Gulf states, Australia, Western Europe, West Africa and South America to provide much-needed aid to Lebanon. In the United States, specifically, in "Dearborn, Michigan, the Arab Community Center for Economic and Social Services held

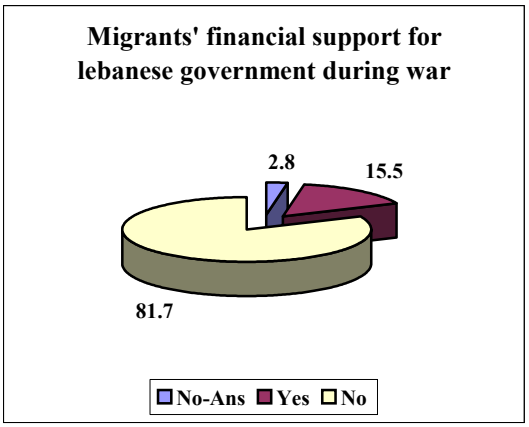
174 Z. Hawari, "Private Universities and the Impact of the Israeli War on Their Programs and Plans [in Arabic]," As-Safir, 4 September 2006.

175 In 'off the record' discussions with representatives of student affairs offices and professors in leadership positions in all of Lebanon's major American- and French-system private universities, we found that the current drop in student enrolment is largely seen as being economic in nature. The issue of physical danger will probably play a larger role if the security situation deteriorates in early January 2007 when the holiday break ends.

176 See B. Labaki, "The Role of Transnational Communities in Fostering Development in Countries of Origin: The Case of Lebanon," Paper presented at the United Nations Expert Group Meeting on International Migration and Development in the Arab Region, Population Division, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, United Nations Secretariat, Beirut, 15-17 May 2006; Ph. Kayal and J. Kayal, The Syrian-Lebanese in America: A Study in Religion and Assimilation (Boston: T. Wayne Publishers, 1975); A. Hourani and N. Shehadi, The Lebanese in the World: A Century of Emigration (London: Centre for Lebanese Studies in association with I. B. Tauris, 1992); and Opiniano, "The Dynamics of Transnational Philanthropy."

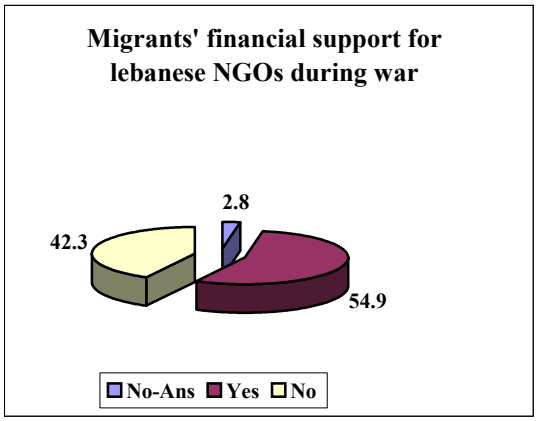
177 "Middle East in Crisis: Canada and Lebanon, a Special Tie."

fundraising events to raise $200,000 for medical supplies in Lebanon. A California-based organization, Islamic Relief, raised nearly $1 million by the first week of August for aid to Lebanon and Palestine."[178]



Graph 26 Financial support-Government

In order to find out more about the financial support provided by the Lebanese diasporic community during and after the Summer 2006 War, we incorporated several relevant questions into the migrant survey. The answers indicated a significant preference for channelling funds through non-governmental organizations: only 15.5% of the migrant respondents said that they had sent money to the Lebanese government in response to appeals for financial assistance[179] while 54.9% said that they had given donations to non-profit NGOs. This preference for the civil society sector to the detriment of government agencies can be seen as indicating the overall reluctance of Lebanese to trust the government with the welfare of its people.



Graph 27 Financial support-NGOs

Expert interviewee with a PhD candidate confirmed the extraordinary efforts of Lebanese migrants during the conflict: "During the war, the Lebanese diaspora worked hard to provide political and

178 K. Murphy, "The Lebanese Crisis and Its Impact on Immigrants and Refugees," Migration Information Source, 1 September 2006; available online at [http://www.migrationinformation.org/Feature/display.cfm?id=419], accessed 8 September 2006.

179 Presidency of the Council of Ministers; available online at [http://www.rebuildlebanon.gov.lb/images_Gallery/Grants&SoftLoans151206.doc], accessed 18 December 2006.

humanitarian support and did everything they could to increase awareness of the nature of the conflict and to encourage their communities to donate relief to the victims….”[180]

7. Conclusion

This part of our study looked at the strength of networks and individual ties between migrants and residents. It did not specifically examine communication levels between migrants and residents during and after the war by means of telephone calls, e-mail, text messages and the like, which is a subject that still needs to be evaluated. It also did not include an assessment of the role of migrant/resident networks in such endeavours as political lobbying, fund-raising campaigns and human rights activities both in Lebanon and abroad.

We found that Lebanese migrants maintained strong ties with their families in Lebanon during the Summer 2006 War either individually or via networks. These contacts led to an increase in support through augmented remittances, personal visits (after the war’s end), family reunification processes, offers of overseas education and contributions to governmental and NGO efforts to alleviate the war’s impact on Lebanon and its people.

It was interesting to discover that most of the increase in remittances by the 17% of those surveyed who so indicated, did so during and after the war in order to compensate for the loss of resident family revenues. This directly relates to a point raised in the introduction to this study regarding financial losses incurred since the start of the war and the rising unemployment rate. However, the increase in remittances and other forms of assistance are no substitute for employment, especially since this type of ‘aid’ cannot contribute to the economic sustainability of individuals and/or families.

The strong ties between migrants and residents evident in this non-representative – although innovative– sample have helped to ease some of the war’s psychological impact and to alleviate some of the financial pressure that it has caused.

The fact that most Lebanese households and families have not totally collapsed raises questions about how they manage to survive – both materially and emotionally – in the face of seemingly endless conflicts and crises. Perhaps the answer can be located in the ties that link Lebanese migrants to their families and kin. Perhaps the billions of dollars in remittances that are injected into the Lebanese micro economy are not only important financially, but also emotionally. Perhaps it is in the entanglement of the lives of those who are abroad with those remaining in Lebanon – a kind of transnational life support system, if you will – that plays the decisive role.

Section III: Conclusion and facts

Conclusion

This section reviews the facts brought to light by the survey findings, including a brief analysis of the impact of probable migration flows in the coming extended period of expected instability, and illustrates the impact of migration on the Lebanese political system and social fabric.

This study was unable to give the exact number of Lebanese migrants who left the country during the Summer 2006 War and the post-war political crisis. Moreover, our findings do not indicate the actual number of Lebanese currently in the process of migrating. All that we can claim is that a certain percentage of those whom we surveyed do have the intention of leaving the country.

180 Rita Stephan, interviewed 18 December 2006.

Despite the fact that those who leave want to improve their livelihoods, neither absolute destitution nor desolation is the cause of Lebanese international migration. We know that this is true because the majority of people planning to migrate have the financial capacity to do so. International migration involves planning, networking and expenses – in other words, human, social and financial capital – and all of these determinants are evident in the profile of the outward-bound Lebanese surveyed for this study. This is explained by "the paradox that socioeconomic development in the form of rising incomes, educational levels, and access to information tends to be associated initially with *increasing* migration."[181]

In analyzing the results of our study, we have realized how contradictory, convoluted, multifaceted and multidimensional the intention to migrate from Lebanon is at the present moment. We have concluded that international migration from Lebanon is not generated purely by poverty, or economics, or politics, or society; rather, it is driven by a combination of all these factors intertwined with the "consequences of what has happened before and what is expected to happen in the future."[182]

International migration is a major life event and not a decision taken haphazardly. It involves all aspects of individual, family and group life. It is "profoundly influenced by three forces on human behaviour: (1) the power of the social context producing or constraining behaviour; (2) the importance of people's subjective interpretation of the situation; and (3) the dynamic interplay of individual and social forces."[183] We can see these forces in action today in Lebanon as we consider how the 'social context,' the 'subjective interpretation of the situation' and the 'interplay of individual and social forces' are producing migratory behaviour.

International migration is also stimulated by personal variables such as age, gender, education, knowledge and individual motivation. This is evident in our survey results, which show a high percentage of potential migrants who are young (21-30 years of age), male and female, highly educated (BA, MA or equivalent) and/or professional, possessing language and internet skills, and motivated to migrate.

International migration from Lebanon at this time is in response to pressures originating in the economic, political and societal challenges facing the home country and to opportunities or perceived opportunities in the prospective host countries. Although these pressures are received, processed and reacted to differently by each individual surveyed, the common denominator is that the migratory urge is "motivated by personal considerations and psychologically perceived threats and opportunities so that individuals may migrate to the same place for different reasons."[184]

Few hard facts have emerged from our survey on migration from and return to the insecure environment that is Lebanon after the Summer 2006 War. In the following brief analysis, we will consider the significance of the data gathered and the impact of probable migration flows in what is expected to be an extended period of instability in order to shed some light on what can be done to deal with this phenomenon.

First, considering the gravity of the political situation in Lebanon at the start of 2007 and the focus of respondents and interviewees on possible violence in the coming months, it seems that one can hardly speak of a post-war situation in Lebanon. Individuals who answered our questionnaires and consented to be interviewed have indicated that they are predominantly concerned with dangers that they have located in the present and immediate future. They consider these threats to be real, but it

181 H. De Haas, "International Migration, Remittances and Development: Myths and Facts," Third World Quarterly 26, no. 8:1271.

182 G. Bierbrauer and P. Pedersen, "Culture and Migration," in Applied Social Psychology, edited by G. Semin and K. Fiedler (London: Sage, 1996), 400.

183 Ibid., 401.

184 Ibid., 400.

remains to be seen whether forthcoming events will substantiate their fears that major transportation arteries and hubs will be severed, the Paris III conference and economic reform project will be undermined, and the Lebanese lira and still thriving financial services sector will both collapse.

Second, Lebanon is very vulnerable in terms of its material or physical environment and its non-material or moral environment. These environments of insecurity (EOIs), which were discussed in the introduction, are all that is flourishing in Lebanon today. As we finalized this report, the 8 March coalition announced its opposition to the Paris III conference,[185] which is intended to ease the devastating impact of the Summer 2006 War, to help Lebanon to cope with its enormous debt burden and to advance efforts to privatize the bankrupt public services sector. This latest stance by the 8 March opposition increases the likelihood that Lebanon will suffer total economic collapse since successful completion of the Paris III conference is a crucial step in revitalizing the country's devastated economy.[186] Upon completion of this document the Paris III conference was held successfully leading to commitments of almost $8 billion US Dollars in aid, loans and developmental support. A successful implementation of the Paris III process will depend upon cooperation between the various political, economic and confessional elites.

Third, external intervention and internally-generated violence have both led to extensive Lebanese migration in the past and there is no reason to believe that they will not stimulate population outflows in the foreseeable future. If this aspect of Lebanon's environment of insecurity is not dealt with soon – and it is increasingly difficult to be optimistic on this point – large-scale migration will be the hallmark of 2007 and numbers may even rise more dramatically in the years to come.

Fourth, the overall vulnerability that is currently pushing people out of the country is also preventing Lebanese expatriates from returning. Our study showed that both of these phenomena are driven by essentially the same causes. The Lebanese migrants surveyed do not need to return and will not do so under duress. Most of these migrants have constructed webs of transnational capital of various sorts and they will only invest and potentially risk these assets if they are convinced that the situation in Lebanon is advantageous to them.

Fifth, the migration imperative has motivated Lebanese to find new channels to obtain visas from the consulates of major embassies. Many are spending an average of US$4,000[187] to employ a business offering immigration services to assist them in securing an entrance visa that is viewed, as a rule, as an immigration visa that permits them to leave Lebanon indefinitely.

Sixth, global migration tends to create lasting networks between home countries and host countries that surpass diplomatic and commercial ties in the impact that they have. This is especially true of Lebanon. These networks become active and take effect as if they have lives of their own – largely untouched by the policy decisions of governments or international organizations. They survive and thrive in a virtual sphere that is intangible, barring remittances and tourism, but which can be measured. These networks keep family and human relations alive across distance and time. They provide the Lebanese connected to them with attractive alternatives and 'easy escapes' in times of crisis.

Seventh, Lebanese migrants who have left the country during the last 30 years and have maintained a high level of social networking with families, kin and friends, as well as with the country in general, are one of the principle sources of returnees today and potential returnees in the future. Our survey showed that many of these migrants remain closely connected to Lebanon through family members.

185 Bathish, "Something New to Divide Beirut: Paris III Reforms."

186 O. Habib, "Will Paris III Conference Save Lebanon's Flailing Economy? Bankers See Support for Reform as Crucial at This Stage," Daily Star, 4 January 2007.

187 ImServ2, interview conducted on November 17.

They are well aware of the current situation in the country and see it as being anything but conducive to permanent return migration or investment projects.

Eighth, those Lebanese migrants who are presently in a position to return immediately, if need be, are also in command of the political, economic and societal security and logistics needed to orchestrate such a move on their own terms. Their financial clout, diverse connections and social skills mean that they are well placed to improve conditions in Lebanon, thus making the country more attractive to other possible returnees as well. If they were to choose to make the necessary political, social and human capital investments, they might be able to turn the situation in the country around.

Finally, the demographics of migration leave little room for optimism at present. For all of the reasons cited above, those Lebanese who might serve as the foundation for the recovery of the economy, reform of the political system, restoration of the infrastructure and creation of a culture of accountability and merit-based achievement are the ones most likely to leave or to stay away. Furthermore, although far from conclusive, current trends seem to indicate that a mass departure of Lebanese may tip the confessional balance, further destabilizing the country and the region. Lebanon seems to be preparing to enter a vicious cycle of proliferating insecurity, accelerating brain drain and rising emigration. The foreseeable outcome of this process cannot be in the interests of Lebanon's European neighbours or the Mediterranean region as a whole.

The Lebanese government does not have concrete policies to curb emigration from Lebanon. Most policies are geared towards enhancing ties between Lebanon and its migrants and at encouraging the Lebanese diaspora to invest in their country of origin. A few laws and agreements recently adopted could have an indirect impact on migration flows. First, the abolishment of mandatory conscription might further facilitate the emigration of young men and second, the Council of Ministers' draft parliamentary election law foresees absentee voting as of the age of 18, which could improve links between the diaspora and Lebanon. Finally, the fact that the Paris III agreement contains no policies directly aiming at stemming the brain drain and youth emigration is an indication that there will be no shift towards a comprehensive migration strategy in the coming years.

Should the political stalemate be overcome and the Paris III process be successfully introduced, this could lead to a return to stability and economic growth. This study has illustrated that these two factors are indeed those which, in the future, might discourage emigration and encourage return migration and investment in Lebanon on the part of the diaspora.