

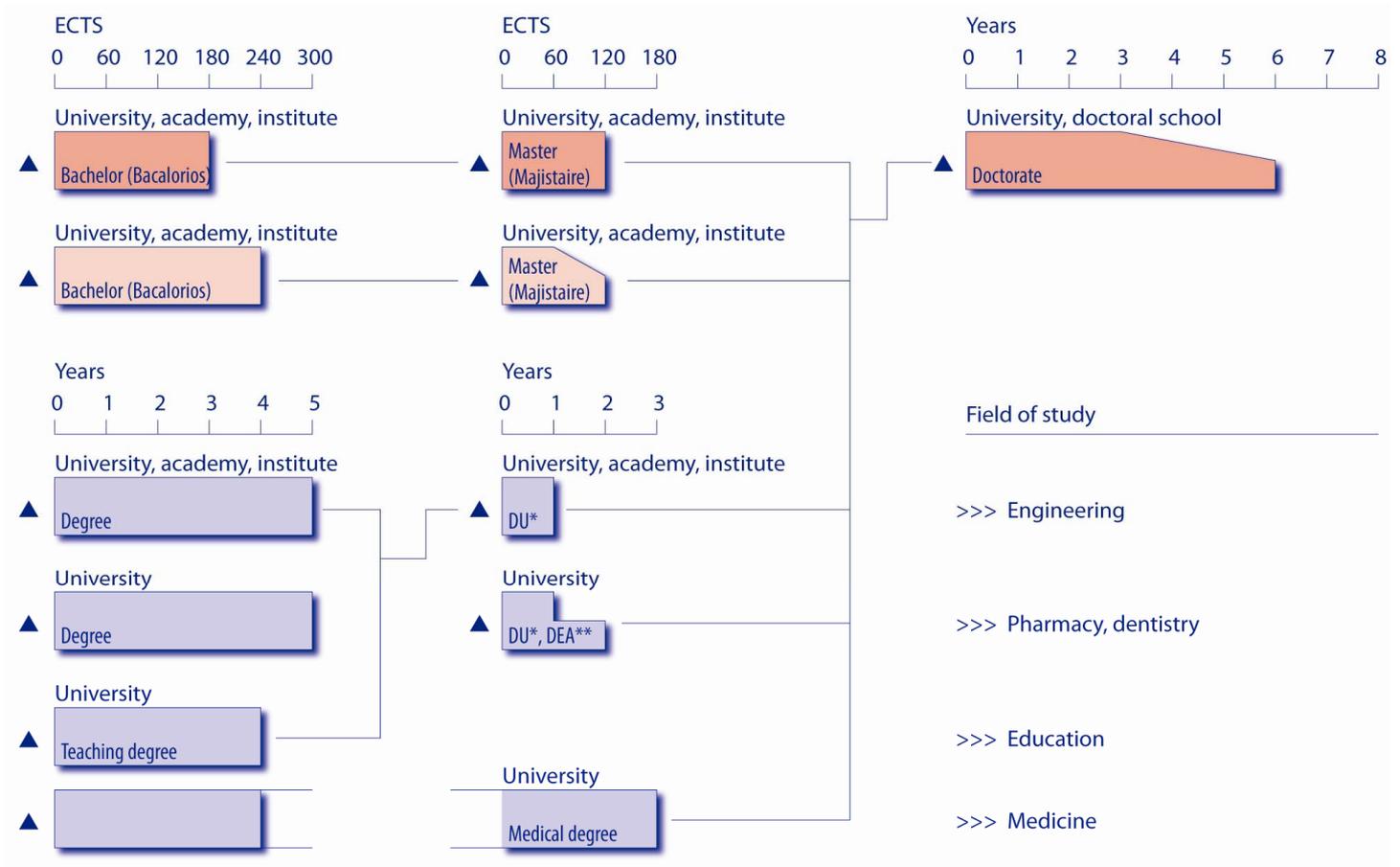


HIGHER EDUCATION IN LEBANON



- I. Overall description**
- II. Current challenges and needs**
 - Trends and challenges**
 - The Bologna Process**
- III. Participation in EU programmes**
 - Tempus**
 - Erasmus Mundus**
- IV. Bibliographical references and websites**

The higher education system in Lebanon



* DU (Diplôme d'université)
 ** DEA (Diplôme d'études approfondies)

Some Lebanese institutions use the American credit system which is different from the European ECTS system

	Most common length of a Bologna cycle	ECTS Credits according to the European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System		
	Other length of a Bologna cycle			
	Programme outside the typical Bologna model			
	Professional programme			
			regulated at national level	decided at institutional level
ALL	programmes have admission requirements	▼	▲	
SOME		▽	△	

I. Overall description

1. Major characteristics of tertiary education in the country

Lebanon's higher education is the oldest in the region and dates back to 1866 when the American University of Beirut (AUB) was founded under the name of the Syrian Evangelical College, followed by the University of Saint Joseph (USJ) in 1875, then by the Lebanese American University (LAU) in 1947 as a Beirut College for Women. The Lebanese University (LU) which is the only public university in the country was founded in 1951. Haigazian University was founded in 1955, followed by the Beirut Arab University (BAU) in 1960 in collaboration with the Egyptian university of Alexandria. Most of the 40 higher education institutions currently in operation in Lebanon were legalised in the late nineties when the private sector flourished in a sudden and rapid expansion following the 15 year civil war that Lebanon suffered between 1975 and 1990 and which had a very damaging impact on the country's higher education sector.

The freedom and independence of Lebanese higher education are protected under the Constitution. Tertiary education in Lebanon is divided into two categories; vocational tertiary education and general or non-vocational higher education.

Legislation covering the field of tertiary education

Non-vocational higher education, referred to simply as Higher Education is governed by the Ministry of Education and Higher Education (MEHE). The main law regulating the private higher education sector was passed in 1961, whereby a Council for Higher Education was established with the means for licensing new higher education institutions. The Lebanese University is self-governing and has its own autonomous structure.

Many decrees regulating the sector were subsequently passed. The most important decrees of 1996 modernised the 1961 law and set out the conditions and criteria for a higher education institution to be legalised, given permission to operate, and be audited by special technical committees. One of these decrees set out the criteria for establishing a sort of 'university institute of technology'. Another decree set up a committee for the recognition and equivalence of diplomas; an exercise which had been in place since 1957 through a joint committee in charge of the equivalence of all qualifications in both pre-university and higher education. Other laws governing the practice of some

professions, such as medicine and engineering, have existed since 1957.

In 2002, a Directorate General for Higher Education (DGHE) was established to regulate the private higher education sector, and supervise and coordinate all actions related to it. The DGHE is in charge of the 39 private higher education institutions currently in operation in the country, while the only state Lebanese University (LU) enjoys clear autonomy with its own system of governance.

The student population in higher education is around 180 850 according to figures for the 2009-2010 academic year. 40% of the students are enrolled in the Lebanese University, and 53% of the student university population is female.

In 2003, the DGHE carried out the first audit of private universities.

A recently drafted by-law, to be submitted to the government for approval, calls for the implementation of quality assurance procedures in the institutions leading to a sort of accreditation.

Types of tertiary education institutions

There are two types of higher education institutions:

- 1) A university must start with at least three faculties, one of which should be for human sciences and another should be for sciences. These can grant all degrees, from Bachelor degrees to doctoral studies.
- 2) A university institute of technology or a university college has at least one faculty. Most of these grant BSc degrees. Few, in special cases, can deliver higher degrees.

Among the 40 higher education institutions in operation in Lebanon, there are 28 full universities, including the state Lebanese University, 8 university institute or colleges and 4 religious university institutes.

Tertiary vocational education

Tertiary vocational post-secondary education is managed entirely by the Directorate General for Vocational and Technical Education (DGVTE). As it is not considered to be part of the higher education sector, it will not be dealt with at great length in this report. In short, tertiary vocational education is delivered by technical public and private schools. Students that have successfully finished their general

secondary school or their Professional Baccalaureate (*Baccalaureat Fanniah*) are entitled to proceed further to get one of the following diplomas: the TS (Technique Supérieur (*Fanniah Aaliah*) (after 3 years and 31 fields of study), LT (License Technique) (*Ijaza Fanniah*), IT or LET (License d'enseignement Technique) (*Ijaza Taalimiah Fanniah*) (2 further years with 9 fields of study). 11 % of university students are enrolled for the TS. Transfer from vocational education to non-vocational education is not well organised and only a few higher education institutions accept students holding a degree from a vocational school. There has always been a debate about the relationship between general education and VTE as to whether VTE graduates should be allowed to join universities. There is no clear vision or mechanism to organise this process. VTE students and trainees will be encouraged through an 'open door' policy for higher education, thus paving the way for VTE graduates to study in higher education. Students in tertiary vocational education account for around 14 500 employees in the public sector and around 11 600 in the private sector, which is a decrease compared to previous years. This phenomenon reflects the growing number of university institutes of technology that are attracting a number of students who are avoiding the national exams.

Types of tertiary education programmes and qualifications

The private sector offers 160 programmes leading to a number of qualifications. The first degree offered in higher education is a Bachelor degree (*Bacalorios*) (BSc or BA) obtained after 3 years of study following the secondary school baccalaureate. Students then need at least 2 more years of study to obtain a Master degree (MSc or MA) (*Majistaire*). A teaching diploma (TD) can be obtained at the after 4 years of study following the baccalaureate. A Master graduate gets a PhD degree after a studying period of at least 3 years. The periods of study required in order to obtain a qualification in medical sciences and engineering after the baccalaureate vary: 5 years for a degree in engineering, 7 for an MD (Medicine Diploma) in medicine, 5 years for a degree in dentistry or pharmacy, 4 years to get a BSc in Physiotherapy.

The Lebanese University has 17 faculties and consists of 50 branches located in all regions of the country. It offers 105 programmes with qualifications ranging from Bachelor to PhDs.

Figures for the 2007-2008 academic year show that 175 000 students are enrolled in Bachelor degree courses, 17 500 in Master degree courses, and 2 100 in doctoral studies leading to a PhD degree.

The overall enrollment rate for tertiary

education (ISCED levels 5 and 6) is: 51.6 percent (World Bank Database).

The ratio of enrolment for ages 20-24 is 30 %.

2. Distribution of responsibilities

The Ministry of Education and Higher Education (MEHE) is in charge of managing all tertiary education in the country. The very centralised Lebanese University enjoys an autonomous status. Despite the fact that the Faculties of the Lebanese University have many branches spread all over the country, the responsibility of managing the Faculties is in the hands of the Deans, and the management of the University is in the hands of the University Council.

The private sector which includes 39 higher education institutions is governed by the law of 1960. It operates under the supervision of the Directorate General for Higher Education. Apart from the licensing and the validation of the degrees and disciplines offered by the Institution which must be validated by the DGHE, all other responsibilities are in the hands of each institution's governing body.

More details can be found in the next section.

3. Governing bodies of the Higher Education Institutions

The Lebanese University is a large centralised institution headed by a President and governed by a University Council in which each faculty is represented by its dean and one academic elected by the teaching staff. Students should also have two representatives in this Council; the government is also represented by two persons. The Council also includes three independent qualified experts chosen by the government. The President, with the Council of the University, and through the deans of the faculties, has an influential authority over the management of the university. Each dean manages the branches of his/her faculty through a Director of the branch. Therefore, governance is very much centralised through a strict hierarchy.

For a long time the political situation prevailing in the country has undermined the re-election of the Students' union of the Lebanese university – something that deprived students from being duly represented in the University Council of the Lebanese University.

The picture in the private sector is not much different. All universities started out with a main campus in the capital Beirut or in Mount Lebanon. Few started up outside Beirut, such as the Balamand in Tripoli or the Hariri Canadian University in Mechref. Recently, due to the increasing demand on higher education, universities have started opening branches in

other Lebanese regions, managed by academic staff reporting directly to the central administration of the university.

In the private sector, each university is legally required to have a board of trustees and two thirds of its members must be from outside the owners' circle. A university college or institute should have a board of directors. A university also has a university council in charge of the entire management of the institution. All of these councils have students' representatives, and each faculty has a faculty council and each department has a department council. The importance of implementing this hierarchy efficiently varies from one institution to another. The absence of other stakeholders in the governing bodies is clear in most Lebanese higher education institutions. Some institutions which have a religious background and are normally founded by the Church or by other denominational authorities are subject to a special type of governance related to a system applied to clergy.

4. Financing

Reliable and accurate financial information about the universities is unavailable even to the public authorities because of the peculiarities of the Lebanese system. However, it is a fact that spending on higher education can, broadly speaking, be divided into government spending, household spending and external or private grants. Direct government spending on higher education does not exceed 0.5 % of the GDP, which is below the average levels of OECD countries and lower middle income countries which both amount to 1 % of GDP. The main direct government spending is channelled to the Lebanese University, the Ministry of Education and Higher Education, the CNRS (Conseil National pour la Recherche Scientifique), and to cover participation in financing some bilateral programme, such as CEDRE with France. Indirect spending includes, mainly, the Government's educational allowances and transfers allocated to government employees, at specific levels in the government, for the tuition of their children in private establishments. Around 75 % of civil servants are paid by the government to enrol their children at private universities that are considered to be of better quality. These education allowances make up a large portion of government spending on education. Also included in this spending is the amount of university scholarships the government provides to students. Due to the strong presence and spread of private education, household spending on education in Lebanon far exceeds that of government spending at all levels of education.

In addition to government and household expenditure, a third source of funding comes from external or private grants. This is not

insignificant, especially at higher education level.

Some universities that follow the American model (mainly AUB and Balamand) benefit from endowments and gifts that finance buildings, equipment, programmes and scholarships. For the AUB, whose accounts are available, the amount in 2007 reached USD 21.5 million.

Foreign governments provide support to some universities and schools through the provision of professors or teaching material, or the support of joint programmes. This is particularly the case with France. Amounts are not regularly published.

Many charitable and/or political foundations and some foreign governments grant scholarships to students. Many Lebanese students opt to study abroad, especially in countries where higher education is free. The survey carried by the University of Saint-Joseph in 2002 estimates this number to be 12 500, with 37 % opting for Western Europe, 30 % for Northern America and 20 % for Eastern Europe.

Finally, many schools and universities belong to religious communities that provide not only the land but also the labour cost of the members of the religious order working as teachers or administrative staff (priests and nuns).

It is not easy to assess the value of this supplementary financing but EUR 60 million seems a reasonable estimate.

When the three sources of financing of education are combined (calculated for the year 2004-2005 because of the availability and representativeness of data), the breakdown is as follows: About EUR 718 million are set aside every year for higher education (vocational and non-vocational) in Lebanon. Public expenditure covers only just 16 % of the total for higher education. Supplementary assistance accounts for 9 % of the financing of higher education. Concerning the age structure and the levels of enrollment, the average yearly cost per student is LBP 6 800 million (EUR 3 500 or 84 % of the GDP per capita) in higher education.

5. Students' contributions and financial support

Education at the Lebanese University is almost free and fees cover only 6.5 % of its total budget. The enrolment fee amounts to an average of EUR 200 per year.

Fees are the main source of funding for private universities.

Fee exemptions are based on the number of students and social considerations. Some exemptions can be offered to students carrying out some work inside the university.

Financial assistance to parents of students in tertiary education is paid to state employees and employees in the private sector (see section four).

6. Licensing, quality assurance and accreditation of institutions and/or programmes

No proper quality assurance and accreditation mechanisms are in place at national level. Some higher education institutions have started to implement internal quality control within their structure; some are receiving accreditation from external international bodies in the USA and from Europe. The Ministry of Education and Higher Education (MEHE) has introduced some quality assurance procedures in their traditional licensing mechanisms intended for establishing a higher education institution. The licensing mechanism is applied at the MEHE through the Council of Higher Education and the associated technical committees. The process starts with the receipt of a file that ought to be analysed by a special technical committee which produces a report and carries out some follow-up of the dossier. Based on the report from the technical committee, the Council of Higher Education issues a recommendation for licensing. The final decision on licensing a higher education institution is left to the Council of Ministers. A start-up process, followed by an audit visit or an on-site visit to verify the institution's compliance with the licensing criteria, leads to the recognition of the programmes and the diplomas awarded to students.

7. Admission

In general, the secondary school diploma (the Baccalaureate) or an equivalent, such as the BT (Baccalaureat technique), is a minimum requirement for enrolment at a higher education institution.

Admission at the LU is open to any student holding a secondary school diploma. The faculties of engineering, medical sciences, business administration, arts and public health, require an entry exam based on a *numerus clausus* principle.

Most private universities do not have an admission exam. Some have different admission criteria based on mastering the language of the study programme. For a student to gain admission to an American-style institution, they are required to pass special exams, such as TOEFEL or SAT1 and SAT2 in addition to the secondary school diploma.

Only the CNAM (Conservatoire National des Arts et Métiers), jointly managed by the Lebanese University and the CNAM of Paris, provides special engineering programmes at evening classes for those who work during the day. Formerly, admission was on an entry exam basis but, recently, more flexible admission criteria have been applied.

8. Organisation of the academic year

There is no standard approach to determining the organisation of the academic year. It differs from one university to another. At the Lebanese University, it is the responsibility of the University Council to determine the start and the end of the academic year and its organisation in terms of semesters, examination periods and academic breaks. A degree of flexibility is given to the faculties which have special characteristics such as engineering and medicine.

In the private sector, each university has its own way of determining how to organise the academic year.

September to July is the most common structure for the academic year. The higher education institutions that follow the American style of education also have an additional summer semester. A two semester scheme is common, separated by an examination period around February.

9. Curriculum content

The curriculum content is defined at institutional level. There is no national framework for the definition of the subjects. Only in the law faculties are there around 12 compulsory courses that must be included in the curriculum of all higher education institutions, whether they are private or public. The assessment of these courses is carried out nationally by academics from the Lebanese University.

10. Assessment, progression, certification and degree

The most common form of assessment of students is the standard examinations that take place at the end of each course. There is no mechanism that allows for the recognition or accreditation of prior experimental learning. There is no state exam in the higher education sector except the colloquium exam that takes place twice a year for obtaining permission to practice medical professions.

An entry to a Master programme requires the completion of a Bachelor degree, and a Master degree is a prerequisite to proceed to doctoral studies.

11. Academic staff

There are 5 categories of academic staff in higher education.

- A full professor with a PhD degree, 10 years of experience and more than 10 publications.
- An associate professor with a PhD degree, 5 years of experience and more than 8 publications.
- An assistant professor with a PhD degree, 3 years of experience and at least 3 publications.
- A lecturer with a PhD degree.

An assistant's post may be occupied by a graduate student preparing a PhD degree.

There is no national standard for selecting academic staff. It is a purely market-oriented exercise.

In the Lebanese University, teaching staff can be hired on a contractual basis with a fixed number of teaching hours, or on a full-time contractual basis with a more stable contract that is renewed automatically every year, or within the 'cadre' of the university.

In the private sector, academic staff can be hired only on a contractual basis or within the 'cadre' of the institution.

12. Research activities

It is difficult to know how much funding is allocated to research in higher education. In general, research is weak in the country and needs to be restructured on a national and strategic basis. The CNRS (Conseil National de la Recherche Scientifique) is the only state-funded source for funding research at national level. All other research activities are undertaken by the private institutions themselves. Apart from the three doctoral schools established within the Lebanese University in 2008, there are no research Institutes in the country, and only five universities provide doctoral studies. Research is undertaken within the doctoral programmes that exist in the higher education institutions (HEIs) or with a special exchange scheme or bilateral agreements established between Lebanese institutions and international partners. Individual researchers also benefit from funds provided by the CNRS, CEDRE or

the AUF (Agence Universitaire de la Francophonie).

13. University-enterprise cooperation

There is no structured cooperation between the University and the non-academic world. New efforts are starting to conclude some starting activities in this direction. Some of these activities have been reinforced by European initiatives and some Tempus projects.

14. International cooperation

Travel abroad, whether it be for study or a business venture, is very common among the Lebanese.

Lebanese higher education is characterised by a historical openness to the outside world. It is hard to find one institution that does not have a convention or an agreement with one or more institutions in the region, in Europe, in Canada or in the United States. However there are no national policies or measures to promote the foreign mobility of students during their higher education studies. Only initiatives taken by individual institutions for training purposes exist.

For students coming from other countries, Lebanese higher education institutions used to be attractive, particularly before the civil war; in its aftermath the system lost much of its credibility. Now, Lebanese universities are regaining their reputation and the number of foreign students, mostly from neighbouring countries, is increasing. But internationalisation of higher education is another matter; it is more than a simple international relations office within each university. It needs to be conceptualised and materialised into strategies and actions.

Inter-university cooperation is strong with international institutions but weak within the country. Competition among private institutions is high and makes universities reluctant to cooperate with each other. If proper investment were made, international programmes like Tempus and Erasmus Mundus could play a part in enhancing cooperation between universities. There is an increasing understanding that global and common challenges, together with costly research and limited resources, can be faced only with more cooperation between universities.

II. Current challenges and needs

1. Trends and challenges

Three strategic papers, drafted by the Ministry of Education and Higher Education have to be ratified by the Government and the Parliament.

The first document concerns the restructuring of the Lebanese University.

The second document concerns the reorganisation of the private higher education sector.

The third document is the national strategy for education (higher education is part of it). It calls for the reinforcement of accessibility, the creation of a modern system of accreditation, the setting up of a national reference for evaluation and Quality Assurance, the implementation of a national policy for the recognition of diplomas, the enhancement of the quality of teaching at the Lebanese University, the reform of tertiary vocational education, the diversification of programmes, the promotion of university-enterprise cooperation, the support of research, and the reinforcement of the institutional capacities of the public sector.

This strategy for higher education needs to be complemented by a series of well scheduled action plans.

The main challenges that the Lebanese higher education sector is facing today can be summarised as follows:

the rapid expansion that the higher education sector witnessed during the nineties has had many repercussions on the development of this sector;

the absence of updated regulatory measures

raises the issues of the programmes' relevance, quality control and accreditation.

More pressure has been put on a sector that is facing fierce national, regional and international competition. The lack of cooperation between local universities has had a negative effect on research activities which need a more structured coordination and ought to respond to the country's general strategy. If employability is one of every university's concerns, in Lebanon it is even more problematic due to the absence of a national framework for qualifications.

Many workshops, organised recently, have raised awareness on the issues of Quality Assurance and accreditation in higher education and the need to define a National Qualifications Framework which fulfils the requirements of mobility and employability.

The EU modernisation agenda in the sector of higher education is an inspiring reference for all these initiatives taking place in the country. Almost all Lebanese higher education institutions have switched to the three-cycle credit based systems. Although the definition of credit is not yet well established and has varying interpretations according to each institution's background, efforts to translate the credit system into an ECTS is being made in some well-known institutions. The major challenge facing the implementation of the LMD system is in the Lebanese University, the largest university in the country, where this implementation has been carried out somewhat chaotically and without expertise in the field. This experience has to be re-evaluated, coordinated among the different faculties, and corrected immediately.

2. The Bologna Process

The Bologna cycle structure

Level of implementation of a three-cycle structure compliant with the Bologna Process	Extensive but gradual introduction of Bologna structure/ongoing adaptations or extensions
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Student workload/duration for the most common Bologna programmes			
Bachelor programmes	180 ECTS (3 academic years)	Master programmes	120 ECTS (2 academic years)

Bachelor/Master cycle structure models most commonly implemented	180 + 120 ECTS credits (3+2 academic years)
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European Credit Transfer System (ECTS)

Legislation concerning ECTS	ECTS being introduced without legislation.
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Level of implementation of ECTS	75 % or less institutions and/or 75 % or less programmes are using ECTS for both transfer and accumulation purposes. Various references are used to define the credits. No national credit system.
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Diploma Supplement (DS)

Implementation of the Diploma Supplement	No DS
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National Qualification Framework (NQF)

Stage towards establishing a National Qualification Framework		Not yet started formally.
		<u>Step 1</u> : Decision taken. Process just started.
	X	<u>Step 2</u> : The purpose of the NQF has been agreed and the process is under way including discussions and consultations. Various committees have been established.
		<u>Step 3</u> : The NQF has been adopted formally and the implementation has started.
		<u>Step 4</u> : Redesigning the study programmes is on-going and the process is close to completion.
		<u>Step 5</u> : Overall process fully completed including self-certified compatibility with the Framework for qualifications of the European Higher Education Area.

National Quality Assurance System

National body for Quality Assurance		
Name	Ministry of Education and Higher Education (MEHE)	
Year of establishment		
Status	Government-dependent body or ministry	
Principal "object" of the evaluations	Institutions plus programmes	
Body responsible for	Public higher education institutions	
Main outcome of the review	X	A decision granting the reviewed institution/programme permission to operate/teach at certain levels/undertake research, etc.
		Advice on how the reviewed institution/programme can improve quality in specific areas.

Recognition of qualifications

Ratification of the Lisbon Recognition Convention	NO	
Adoption of national laws/regulations required to implement the Lisbon Recognition Convention	NO	

III. Participation in EU Programmes

1. Tempus

Lebanon has participated in the Tempus Programme since 2002.

1. Statistics

Number of projects in which one or several institutions in the country have been involved (as coordinator, contractor or partner)

	TEMPUS I and II	TEMPUS III	TEMPUS IV		
	1990-1999	2000-2006	2008	2009	2010
Joint European Projects	-	17	4	2	5
Structural & Complementary Measures (Tempus III) Structural Measures (Tempus IV)	-	6	0	1	2
Total	-	23	4	3	7

Higher education institutions with highest TEMPUS participation during TEMPUS I to III (1990-2006)

Institutions	Total	Number of projects	
		JEP	SCM
LEBANESE UNIVERSITY	11	8	3
AMERICAN UNIVERSITY OF BEIRUT	6	3	3
UNIVERSITY SAINT JOSEPH	3	3	0
BEIRUT ARAB UNIVERSITY	3	1	2
UNIVERSITY OF BALAMAND	2	1	1
UNIVERSITE SAINT-ESPRIT DE KASLIK - USEK	2	1	1
HARIRI CANADIAN UNIVERSITY	2	0	2
MODERN UNIVERSITY OF BUSINESS AND SCIENCE	2	0	2

2. Impact of the TEMPUS Programme

Since its implementation in Lebanon in 2002, Tempus has played an important role in the modernisation agenda of the Lebanese higher education sector.

With the 29 projects it has funded to date, in addition to the some 90 Individual Mobility Grants, Tempus has contributed to the development of new curricula, the creation of new structures for research, and the general modernisation agenda of the system as a whole.

With projects like *Master Biodiversité Végétale et Biotechnologies au Liban 2003*, *Collaborative IT Program for Education and Research 2003*, and *Innovative Curriculum On Sustainable Energy, 2005*, Tempus has contributed to the development of new Master degrees in modern subjects in order to respond to a real national and regional demand.

Tempus has also encouraged cooperation between the university, the non academia and

the labour market through projects like *ICOSE, 2005*, *CITPER, 2003* and the *Professional Master Program in Food Science and Technology 2005*, in which a partnership with the Association of Industrialists was established.

Despite the fact that Tempus is not targeting research specifically, it has supported the establishment of a research structure with the creation of three doctoral schools at the state Lebanese University. Two of these doctoral schools, one in Science and Technology and one in Law were prepared through the Tempus projects: *Organisation des Enseignements de Sciences, Technologies et Santé au niveau Master à l'Université Libanaise* et *Création d'une Ecole Doctorale à l'Université Libanaise, 2004*.

Tempus has also contributed to the ongoing general trend of reform and modernisation which is currently taking place in the country. Since Quality has become an issue of great interest following the rapid expansion of the sector during the nineties, Tempus has gone

beyond raising awareness on the subject to proposing a Quality Assurance mechanism that can be established for the country: *Quality Assurance for Higher Education in Lebanon* (2005), and through the project *Lebanese Engineering Programs Accreditation Committee* (2006). Tempus gathered EU expertise in accreditation to design a LABE, a Lebanese Accreditation Board for Engineering. Some 17 faculties of Engineering worked together to put forward a proposal on how to establish the LABE.

The Lebanese higher education sector has a longstanding cooperation programme with the outside world. It has traditional relationships with some countries in Europe, but Tempus has opened the way for the establishment of new partnerships with new EU countries, diversifying the types of cooperation and the dimension of expertise and enhancing a richer and wider cultural exchange.

With Tempus IV, regional cooperation has a new tempo, paving the way for more structured cooperation that can, in the future, lead to a regional process of modernisation and quality control, and to a regional higher education area.

Tempus has enhanced the authorities' ownership of the modernisation agenda by involving the Ministry of Higher education in defining their own priorities, in line with their own strategies for higher education.

The great impact that Tempus could make on the Lebanese higher education sector is through the team of Higher Education Reform Experts (HERE) which was established in 2008. The team has made a considerable effort in disseminating the principles of the Bologna Process and is working on combining all efforts to launch a Lebanese process of modernisation. Given the political situation of the country and the many changes of the Minister, the team has been slowly and gradually installed within the Ministry's planning circles. It is now beginning to be recognised by the education authorities as an important and efficient tool to help bring about changes in the sector of higher education.

Lebanon is not a signatory of the Bologna Process but, since the beginning of the process, higher education institutions have shown a great interest in it and almost all of them have taken measures to adapt their programmes to the three-cycle system and to the credit-based courses. The multidimensional diversity of the Lebanese system has used the Bologna Process as an inspiring tool for

harmonisation and for the adoption of necessary measures that mobility and recognition issues require.

Nevertheless, there is still room for discussion:

- 1) Aligning proposals to predefined priorities is, in some cases, backfiring. Lebanon has no natural resources and its economy is not based on a strong streamline of production or industry but, rather, on a diversity of service activities initiated by the power of its human resources. Therefore, prioritising proposals could deprive the country from some creative and innovative ideas with a strong impact on one institution or on the system. The Ministry's dilemma in defining the national priorities is reflected clearly by the fact that it has to choose between:
 - actively prioritising dynamic and flourishing sectors like tourism and banking to attract project designers, or
 - supporting underdeveloped weak sectors which are not attractive to project designers.
- 2) When the proposals are initiated by EU partners and not by local academics, the result is a lower number of projects targeting vital issues facing the higher education sector.
- 3) Something needs to be done at the commitment and conception levels of the proposals in order to strengthen and guarantee project ownership by the institutions involved.
- 4) The projects are confined to a circle of big universities, while emerging institutions are still under-represented in the programme. Tempus should look at forming an alliance of Tempus project promoters or associations working at regional or international levels
- 5) The Tempus inter-university cooperation principle is yet to be fulfilled. The programme should overcome the tendency of the universities (most of them are private) to work alone or to run away towards regional cooperation which itself still to be proved whether it is a real cooperation resulting in regional outcomes or just budget-sharing practice in a relatively highly funded projects.
- 6) Sustainability of the projects, in terms of the general and specific objectives defined in the original proposals beyond Tempus funding, is something which deserves to be looked at carefully.

2. Erasmus Mundus

Erasmus Mundus (2009-2013) is a cooperation and mobility programme in the field of higher education with a strong international focus. It operates through three actions:

Action 1 – Erasmus Mundus Joint Programmes (Master Courses and Joint Doctorates)

Erasmus Mundus Joint Programmes are operated by consortia of higher education institutions (HEIs) from the EU and (since 2009) elsewhere in the world. They provide an integrated course and joint or multiple diplomas following study or research at two or more HEIs. Master Courses and Joint Doctorates are selected each year following a Call for Proposals. There are currently 123 Master and 24 Doctorate programmes offering EU-funded scholarships or fellowships to students and scholars from all over the world.

Action 2 – Erasmus Mundus Partnerships (former External Cooperation Window)

Erasmus Mundus Partnerships bring together HEIs from Europe on the one hand and from a particular region in the world on the other. Together the partnerships manage mobility flows between the two regions for a range of academic levels – bachelors, masters, doctorate, post-doctorate – and for academic staff. The programme is focused on geographical "lots" of countries or regions covered by the EU's financial instruments for cooperation. These lots include most Tempus countries. New partnerships are selected each year through Calls for Proposals.

Action 3 – Erasmus Mundus Attractiveness projects

This Action of the Programme funds projects to enhance the attractiveness, profile, image and visibility of European higher education worldwide. HEIs (and other key players in the HE sector) may apply.

More information: http://eacea.ec.europa.eu/erasmus_mundus

Number of students/staff participating in the programme

Erasmus Mundus – Joint degrees (Action 1)

	2004/2005	2005/2006	2006/2007	2007/2008	2008/2009	2009/2010	2010/2011
Students	-	3	3	8	9	3	2
Scholars	-	-	-	-	1	2	N/A

Nationals of the country participated in the programme for the first time in 2005-2006 (students) and in 2008-2009 (scholars).

Erasmus Mundus– Partnerships (External Cooperation Window, Action 2)

Year of Grant Allocation	2007	2009	2009
Undergraduate	3	5	10
Master	13	5	6
Doctorate	1	6	3
Post-Doctorate	0	1	0
Academic staff	2	6	3
Total	19	23	22

Institutions participating in the programme up to and until 2010

Institutions	Action 1 Joint Programmes	Action 2 Partnerships	Action 3 Attractiveness projects
American university of Beirut		X	
Faculty of sciences, saint Joseph university			X
Lebanese university, faculty of sciences		X	
Saint Joseph university	X		

IV. Bibliographical references and websites

- Directorate General for Higher Education, <http://www.higher-edu.gov.lb/>
- Center for Educational Research and Development, Lebanon <http://www.crdp.org>
- Financing Higher Education in Lebanon, by Charbel Nahas, www.charbenahas.com, April, 2009, Economic Research Forum
- National Tempus Office – Lebanon <http://www.tempus-lebanon.org/>
- Higher Education Reform Experts team <http://www.tempus-lebanon.org/here>
- Lebanon's national report to the Arab Regional Conference on Higher Education, Cairo, May-June 2009

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