

# Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada

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## Responses to Information Requests

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Responses to Information Requests (RIR) respond to focused Requests for Information that are submitted to the Research Directorate in the course of the refugee protection determination process. The database contains a seven-year archive of English and French RIRs. Earlier RIRs may be found on the UNHCR's [Refworld](#) website. Please note that some RIRs have attachments which are not electronically accessible. To obtain a PDF copy of an RIR attachment please email [Basesdedonnees.DatabaseUnit@irb-cisr.gc.ca](mailto:Basesdedonnees.DatabaseUnit@irb-cisr.gc.ca).

12 November 2013

### LBN104652.E

Lebanon: Citizenship requirements and procedures for an individual who was born in Lebanon to parents with Syrian citizenship, has a permanent residency permit, and whose spouse was granted Lebanese citizenship by Decree (2012-November 2013)

Research Directorate, Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada, Ottawa

#### 1. Citizenship

According to the Director of the Lebanese Emigration Research Center (LERC), an academic initiative of Notre Dame University dedicated to the study of migration (LERC n.d.), "[i]t is practically impossible for anyone who is not born to a Lebanese male to obtain Lebanese citizenship. Citizenship is acquired through paternal *jus sanguini* and *jus soli*. Women do not transmit their citizenship to their husbands or children" (LERC 7 Nov. 2013). In their 2012 research report on Lebanese citizenship published by the European University Institute, El-Khoury and Jaulin also indicate that

*[j]us sanguinis* through patrilineal affiliation remains the sole principle for the attribution of citizenship: in other words, only men can transmit citizenship to their children, or to their foreign spouse. *Jus solis* only applies to exceptional cases, such as an individual born in Lebanon from unknown parents. (Sept. 2012, 4)

In correspondence with the Research Directorate, a law and human rights researcher and consultant, who specializes in Lebanese citizenship and has extensive experience in monitoring and defending human rights, indicated that a foreign man who is married to a Lebanese woman cannot acquire Lebanese nationality by virtue of marriage (Researcher and Consultant 8 Nov. 2013). The researcher further noted that a foreign man married to a Lebanese woman and residing in Lebanon may obtain a "courtesy" residence permit that is renewable every three years and he "can file a demand for naturalization" (*ibid.*). In their report, El-Khoury and Jaulin note that

[t]he naturalisation of foreigners residing in Lebanon, or married to Lebanese women, depends on a discretionary decision of the executive. In addition, there is no co-ethnic preference to ease the naturalisation of Arab citizens, as is the case in many other Arab countries. (Sept. 2012, 4)

The Director of the LERC indicated that

[t]he only time that a foreigner obtained a citizenship is through a decree. These decrees are rare and cause internal sectarian havoc. There was a decree in 1994 that granted Lebanese citizenship to thousands of stateless persons (e.g. Kurds, Assyrians, Turkmens, Bedouins and Syrians, etc.) in 1994. The Decree continues to be disputed. (7 Nov. 2013)

Corroborating information could not be found among the sources consulted by the Research Directorate within the time constraints of this Response.

## 2. Courtesy Residence Permit

According to the website of the General Directorate of General Security of Lebanon, the General Director of the General Security may grant a foreign spouse of a Lebanese woman a courtesy residence permit, for three renewable years, after one year of marriage (Lebanon n.d.). In order to obtain a courtesy residence permit, an applicant must submit the following documents:

- A marriage document implemented according to the rules and executed in Lebanon.
- A lease contract or a title deed.
- A passport valid for three years or a valid Identity card with a return coupon for a Syrian citizen.  
**NB:** In case the Lebanese woman's husband belongs to the under consideration category he should present a residence permit (valid or expired) proving he is registered in the under consideration category.
- Two recent colored photos size 4x4cm. (ibid.)

According to the website of the General Directorate of General Security of Lebanon, children of a Lebanese woman may also apply for a courtesy residence permit by submitting the following documents:

- A birth document or any official document which proves that the mother of the applicant is Lebanese;
- A passport valid for at least three years or a valid Identity card with a return coupon for a Syrian citizen. **NB:** In case the father of the Lebanese woman's children belongs to the under consideration category he should present a residence permit (valid or expired) proving he is registered in the under consideration category or a birth document belonging to the under consideration category; and
- Two recent colored photos of size 4x4cm (ibid.).

The website notes that the courtesy residence permits should be filed in person and must be signed in front of the General Security personnel in an office of the General Security (ibid.). According to the website, "a courtesy residence permit is granted to some Arabic or foreigner citizens free of charge" (ibid.). Further or corroborating information on the courtesy residence permit could not be found among the sources consulted by the Research Directorate within the time constraints of this Response.

This Response was prepared after researching publicly accessible information currently available to the Research Directorate within time constraints. This Response is not, and does not purport to be, conclusive as to the merit of any particular claim for refugee protection. Please find below the list of sources consulted in researching this Information Request.

## References

El-Khoury, Melkar and Thibaut Jaulin. September 2012. *Country Report: Lebanon*. Robert Schuman Centre for Advanced Studies, European University Institute. <<http://eudo-citizenship.eu/admin/?p=file&appl=countryProfiles&f=Lebanon.pdf>> [Accessed 21 Oct. 2013]

Lebanese Emigration Research Center (LERC). 7 November 2013. Correspondence from the Director to the Research Directorate.

\_\_\_\_\_. N.d. "About Us." <<http://www.ndu.edu.lb/lerc/aboutus.htm>> [Accessed 7 Nov. 2013]

Lebanon. N.d. General Directorate of General Security. "Residence in Lebanon/Courtesy Residence Permit." <[http://www.general-security.gov.lb/residency\\_in\\_leb/sub7.aspx#](http://www.general-security.gov.lb/residency_in_leb/sub7.aspx#)> [Accessed 8 Nov. 2013]

Researcher and Consultant. 8 November 2013. Correspondence with the Research Directorate.

## Additional Sources Consulted

**Oral sources:** Attempts to contact the following organizations were unsuccessful within the time constraints of this Response: Lebanon – General Directorate of General Security.

An official of the Embassy of Lebanon in Ottawa did not provide information within the time constraints of this Response.

**Internet sites, including:** Al Jazeera; Amnesty International; *Beirut Times*; *The Daily Star*; ecoinet; Factiva; Freedom House; Integrated Regional Information Networks; Lebanon – Embassies of Lebanon in Ottawa and Washington D.C., General Directorate of General Security, Lebanese Republic Portal, Ministry of the Interior and Municipalities, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Emigrants; Lebanon Opportunities; Middle East Research and

Information Project; Natlex; United Nations – Refworld, UN Relief and Works Agency; United States – Department of State; University of Oxford, Refugee Studies Centre.

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