

February, 18, 2022

Contact Information

Research Analyst: Aline Azzi

aline.azzi@blominvestbank.com

A recent report published in 2021 by the UNDP titled “*The life of women and men in Lebanon: A Statistical Portrait*” takes a closer look at the statistics and trend analysis of the status of Lebanese women and men and underlines the achievements made towards gender equality and women empowerment in various areas of development over the past 15 years.

In more details, this report analytically highlights the differences and similarities in the experiences of women and men as well as it provide a better understanding of the country’s progress on gender inequality. Equally, the report concentrates on six thematic areas: demography, health, education, labor market, socio-economic conditions, and decision making and human rights. In addition, the indicators presented in the report give a clearer picture of the relative status of women and men and highpoint social inequalities that may have occurred.

1. Demographic Analysis

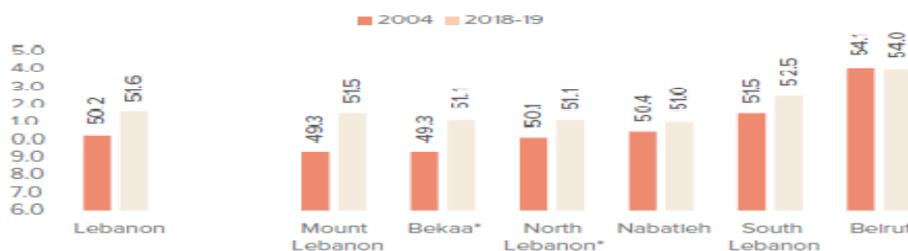
Moving to gender statistics, demographic analysis is an essential technic to develop an understanding of the change in resident population over time. In turn, population growth rates, age structure, marital status and the age at marriage are analyzed in this segment.

1.1. Age and Sex

According to the report, overall status of the Lebanese resident population stayed constant over the past fifteen years. As such, during the period going from 2004 to 2018-19 share of children aged 0 to 14 years retreated by 3% to stand at 24% in years 2018-19. In the same token, the share of girls and boys also went down by the same pace. However, the working age segment of the Lebanese population has not experienced any considerable changes while the older population 65+ is growing at a faster pace than the other age segments standing at 11% compared to the value of 7% in 2004.

Concerning the gender distribution across Lebanese governorates, Women were more numerous than men in most of the governorates. In details, Mount Lebanon and Bekaa witnessed the largest increase of around 2% in the share of women to reach 51.5% and 51.1%, respectively, while the other governorates experienced a drop of 1% or less. Nevertheless, the share of women in Beirut remained exceptionally the highest all time long standing at 54.0 in year 2018-19.

Share of Women to total population:



Source: CAS, UNDP: *The Life of Women and Men in Lebanon, LFH LCS 2018-19*

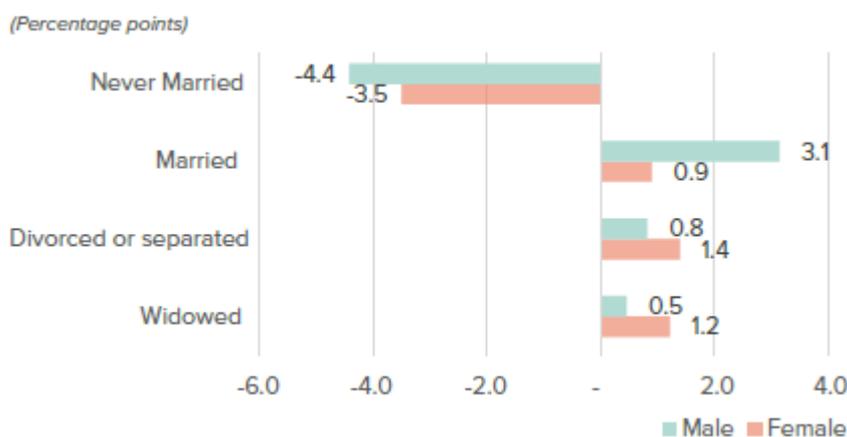
1.1. Sex Ratio

Based on the resident population survey data showed in the report, the number of men and boys in relation to the number of women and girls in year 2004 was in balance with overall sex ratio standing at 99.0. Meanwhile, in 2018, the ratio showed a remarkable decrease to 93.7 designating imbalance in the number of male and females to the disadvantage of men. Interesting to note that in the age segment between 0 and 19 years, the sex ratio was above 100 and dropped later so that the male population outnumbers the female up to the age of 19 whereas, above the age of 20 years, the number of women dominated the population as a result of the ongoing migration of men observed in the country and/or the higher mortality levels among the male population.

1.2. Family Formation and Living Arrangements

According to the household survey, 53.4% of women and 57% of men aged 15 years and above were married in 2018-19, whereas 33.4% of women and 39.7% for men were singles and never married. In the age group 20-64, 62.1% of women were married and 3.3% divorced compared to 60.5% for married men and 1.7% divorced men. In fact, 37.3% of men have never been married against 30.2% of women.

Changes of marital status of people aged 15 years and above, 2004 and 2018-19, by sex:



Source: CAS, UNDP: *the life of women and men in Lebanon, LCS 2004*.

Furthermore, the report showed that the shares of the population who were never married dropped so the proportion of single men and women decreased by 3.5 percentage points and 4.4 percentage points, respectively. In contrast, shares of married men has added 3.1 percentage points to stand at 57% while married women added only 0.9% to score 53.4% over the period.

Another gender indicator, often used in gender statistics, is the age at marriage. As a result of more educated society and further engagement in employment, women and men in Lebanon tend to enter into marriage at an advanced age compared to the region or non-Lebanese resident in Lebanon. As such, by year 2018-19 Lebanese women entered into marriage at younger age than in previous years with average age at marriage stood at 26.9 while men entered marriage at average age of 32.5.

Singulate mean age at marriage (SMAM) 2004, 2007 and 2018-19:

Characteristics	2004		2007		2018-19	
	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men
SMAM	27.5	31.4	28.3	32.3	25.6	30.7
Education level						
Primary and below	24.8	29.9	28.7	31.0	23.5	27.3
Compulsory	24.7	30.9	25.4	31.5	22.3	29.2
Secondary	27.0	32.1	26.7	32.4	23.3	31.0
Tertiary	31.2	33.8	28.2	34.6	28.3	33.9
Participation in Labour market						
Economically Active	31.8	30.8	30.7	31.8	27.7	30.3
Economically Inactive	25.5	36.9	26.7	38.3	23.0	38.0

Source: CAS, LCS 2004, 2007 and LFHLCS 2018-19

Moreover, the statistics claimed that regarding living arrangements, women are more likely to live alone compared to men. In turn, the share of single women living alone progressed at a faster pace than men living alone to add 2.5 percentage points while men living alone increased only by 1 percentage points between 2004 and 2019.

Households by type and presence of children aged 0-15 years, 2004 and 2018-19:

Household type	2004	2018-19	Change
a) Single adult households without children	7.3	10.7	3.3
Male headed	3.2	4.1	0.9
Female headed	4.1	6.5	2.5
b) Single adult household with children (0- 15 years)	0.7	0.1	- 0.6
Male headed	(*)	(*)	-
Female headed	0.6	0.1	- 0.5
c) Living in a Couple (without other members)	35.3	18.0	- 17.3
with dependent children 0- 15 years	26.1	7.1	-19.0
without dependent children 0- 15 years	9.3	10.9	1.7
d) Other types of household	56.6	71.2	14.6
with dependent children 0- 15 years	25.5	16.3	- 9.3
without dependent children 0- 15 years	31.1	54.9	23.8
Total (a+b+c+d)	100.0	100.0	

Source: CAS, LCS 2007 and LFHLCS 2018-19

2. Health and Related Services

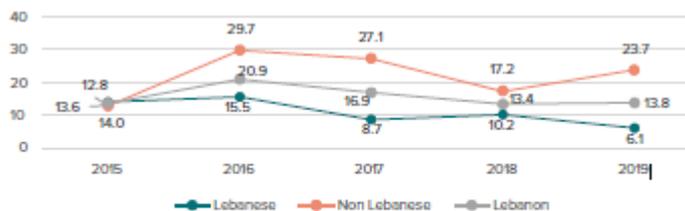
Overall, women and men in Lebanon have equal access to health services. However, mortality, morbidity and the use of health care services are the main indicators to define the gender differences in health status in Lebanon.

2.1. Health of Women in Reproductive Years

As per the report, the data of 2018-19 showed that maternal mortality was remarkably different among Lebanese and non-Lebanese women in a way it was closely four times more common among non-Lebanese than Lebanese women. However, trend of female deaths related to pregnancy and its implications decreased since 2016.

In addition, the under-five mortality rate between 2004 and 2009 for both females and males decreased as a result of the ongoing improvement in maternal health and medical healthcare services. Overall the mortality is usually higher among male children but the 2004 data showed that in Lebanon female children had a higher mortality rate.

Trends in maternal mortality ratio, by nationality, 2015-2019



Source: Ministry of Public Health, Lebanon, data from service statistics.
 Note: MMR reflects the number of maternal deaths in a given time period expressed per 100,000 live births during the same time period.

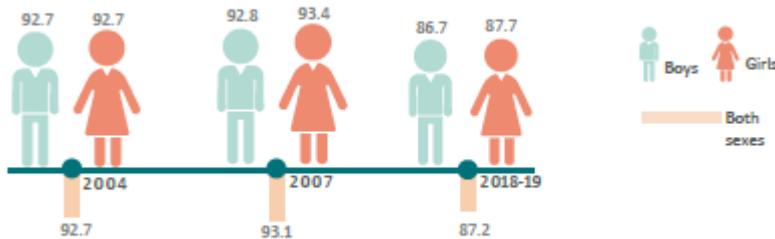
2.2. Women's and Men's Health

Data from the survey displayed that only 4.1% of women and 3.9% of men of their respective populations had self-declared disability. In fact, women are more likely than men to have walking-related disabilities with 65.2% for women against 51.4% for men. For disabilities related to sight, the shares of men are higher than women with 26.7% for men against 22.8%. For hearing, men represented 20.9% in this type of disability whereas women displayed 18.1%.

Moreover, the data indicated that for nearly 20% of women and 19% of men with a chronic health condition their needs for regular medications and health services were unmet. Important to mention that differences by nationality are widely noticeable as the unmet health need was nearly four times more common among non-Lebanese than Lebanese.

3. Education

Generally, for basic education, all children aged 6 years are mandated to go to school. In fact, net attendance ratio (NAR) is at almost 90% and the Gender Parity Index (GPI) which indicates the magnitude of the gender gap in attendance ratios is 1.0% confirming that there is no gender gap. Additionally, those rates are similar across all Lebanese governorates.



Source: UNDP: the life of women and men in Lebanon

As for the complementary education, approximately 7 out of 10 children between age 12-14 years were attending their complementary education, with girls' presence being likely higher than that of boys signaling evident gender differences in school participation across all governorates.

Moving to secondary education, the report mentioned that it increased by 5 percentage points between 2004 and 2018-19. Also it is commonly known that the attendance rates for girls and boy are not alike where boys tend to drop out more often. In fact, 58.7% of girls and 51.2% of boys, between age ranges of 15-17 years, were attending the secondary education in 2018-19, compared to 51.5% and 47.7% respectively in 2004.

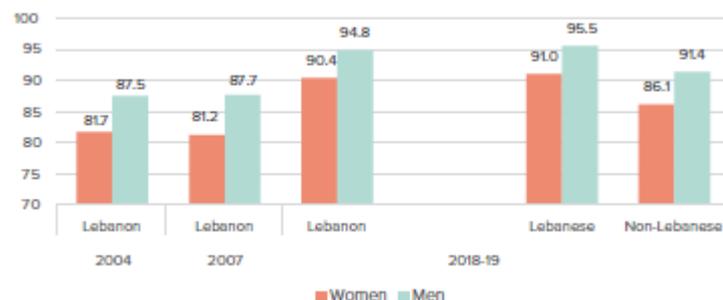
Concerning the tertiary education, gender gap was strongly evident in favor of women recording an increase from 2004 to year 2018-19 to stand at 1.3 at the country level. In more details, gender gap stood at 2.1 in Akkar, 1.8 in Baalbak-Hermel, and 1.7 in Nabatieh. Interesting to note, women try always to complete their tertiary education in order to increase their chances in having decent likelihood and finding further opportunities in the labour market.

4. Literacy and Illiteracy

Concerning this matter, the data conducted by the report indicates that Lebanon has a very high literacy rate for adult residents aged 15 years and above with ongoing increase over time since 2004, unrelated to sex. In fact, men were favored over women regarding gender gap in literacy rates. As such, the illiteracy rates for women went down from 18.3% in 2004 to 9.6% in 2018-19, while the illiteracy rates for men recorded more significant drops from 12.5% in 2004 to almost 5% in 2019.

Literacy rate of population aged 15+, by sex and nationality, 2004 to 2018-19

(In percentages)



Source: UNDP: the life of women and men in Lebanon

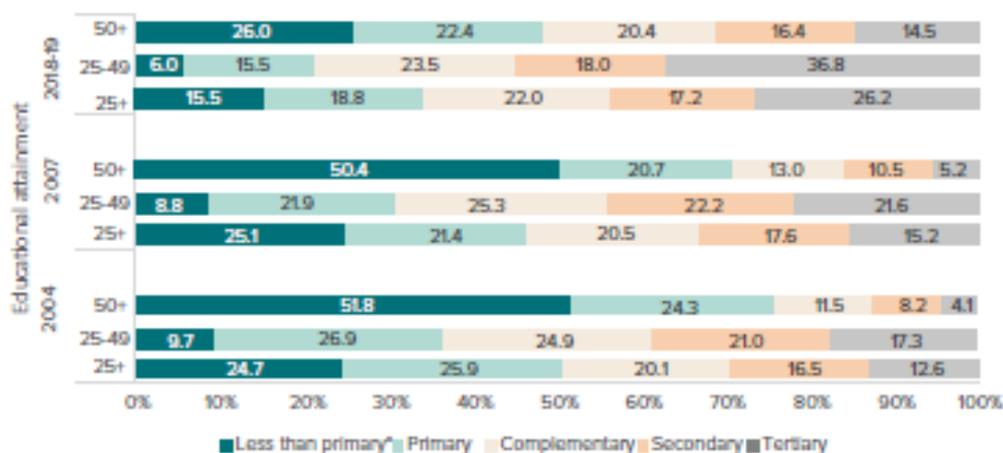
Moreover, the surveys showed the level of education attained among women and men according to four levels: less than primary, primary, secondary, and tertiary while also assuming that the education cycle is completed by the age of 25 years.

In more details, despite some remarkable improvements in the level of attained education, 84% of women and almost 90% of men aged 25 years and above reported to have completed school. The part of women that never attended school has significantly

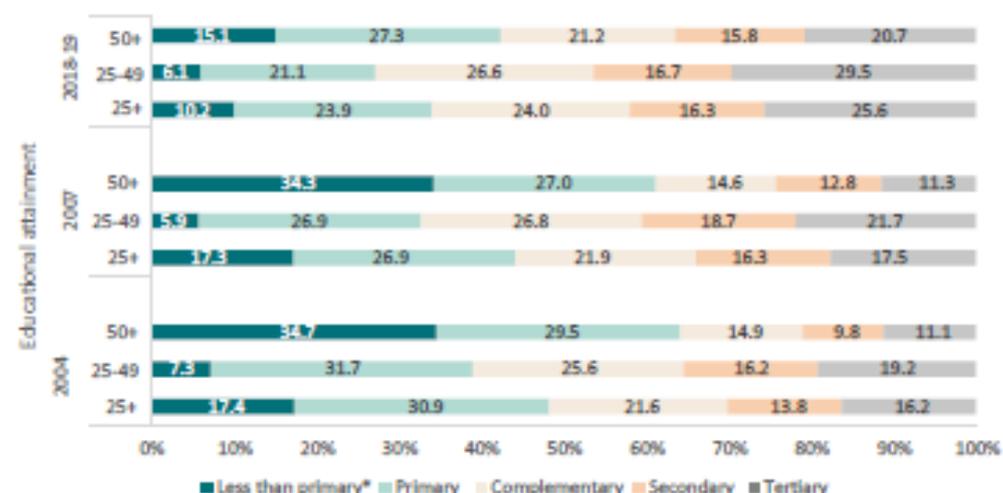
dropped to only 26% of women aged 50 years and above while only 6% of women aged between 25-49 years reported the same. Interesting to note, the shares of women and men that attained tertiary education have remarkably increased in 2018-19, with no gender gap, standing at 26% for both men and women.

Educational attainment of women and men aged 25 years and above, by age bracket, 2004, 2007, and 2018-19:

Women (Percent distribution by age brackets of resident population)



Men (Percent distribution by age brackets of resident population)



Source: CAS, LCS 2004, 2007 and LFH LCS 2018-19.

Note: Figures exclude non-standard curricula and special curricula for disabled.

*Less than primary comprises those illiterate, Read/write and Pre-school.

5. Labour

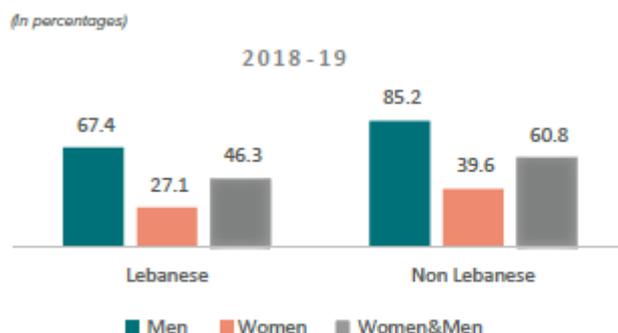
5.1. Labour Force Participation

Data for labour force participation disclosed an increase in labour market participation for both women and men but gender gaps remained significant. Although women's share is up to 52.6% of the working age, only less than 30% of them were actively engaged in the labour market. Meanwhile men were actively engaged more than two times higher than women. This is an indication of the economic dependence of women on others.

However, the gender gap was slightly tightened from 48 percentage points in 2004 to 41 percentage points in 2018-19 as a result of the increase in women's participation rate.

Also, women’s rates in labour force participation ranged between 27.1% for Lebanese and 39.6% for non-Lebanese. Meanwhile, men’s rates were between 67.4% for Lebanese and 85.2% for non-Lebanese.

Labour force participation rate of residents aged 15+, by sex and by nationality, 2018-19:



Source: CAS, LCS 2004, 2007, 2012 and LFH LCS 2018-19

5.2. Employed Population

The employment rate, which is defined as the shares of a country’s working age population that is employed, indicated that reduced employment and productivity was common among women aged 15 years and above in Lebanon. In turn, employment population ratio for women increased from 18.4% in 2004 to 25.1% in 2018-19. As for men, the rate was considerably higher than that of women to nearly 63% in 2018-19. Undoubtedly, for the productive age range this rate is higher for both women and men recording 28.7% and 69.7% respectively in 2018. Despite the significant educational improvement of women and girls, the relative labour market participation remained significantly weak.

Employment to population ratio, by sex, 2004 to 2018-19:

Employment rate	2004		2007		2012		2018-19	
	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men
Persons aged 15+	18.4	63.8	19.0	61.2	25.3	66.9	25.1	63.4
Persons aged 15-64	20.2	67.9	21.4	66.5	28.7	73.3	28.7	69.7

Source: CAS, LCS 2004, 2007, 2012 and LFH LCS 2018-19

It is important also to mention that there is wide agreement on the challenges facing women in balancing between work and family. As a result, employment opportunities may often be limited. Meanwhile, also it is widely conclude that this matter has totally the opposite impact on employment rate for men who are expected to become more likely the main income earners in families.

5.3. Occupational Structure of Employment

The analysis of the data shows that the distribution of women and men across the occupational categories discloses that 30.4% of women predominantly work as professionals, 27.3% in elementary occupations and 19.1% work in services and sales. Meanwhile, data for men occupations indicate that 23.6% work in craft and related trades, 21.9% in sales and services. In short, women’s occupations is taking places generally in a more limited number of occupations with relatively lower degree of power and influence than that of men.

Distribution of employed in formal and informal employment, according to occupation in current work and sec, in 2018-19:

Occupations	Women			Men		
	Formal	Informal	Total	Formal	Informal	Total
Legislators, senior officials and managers	4.0	0.8	4.8	6.0	2.0	8.1
Professionals	20.5	9.9	30.4	7.1	2.9	10.0
Technicians and associate professionals	4.5	2.4	6.9	2.9	1.5	4.3
Clerical support workers	4.9	1.8	6.7	2.7	0.9	3.5
Service and sales workers	7.4	11.8	19.1	10.0	11.8	21.9
Skilled agricultural, forestry and fishery workers	(*)	(*)	(*)	(*)	0.1	0.2
Craft and related trades workers	0.8	2.4	3.2	5.4	18.1	23.6
Plant and machine operators, and assemblers	0.2	0.4	0.6	4.2	8.7	12.9
Elementary occupations	2.0	25.4	27.3	1.8	7.2	9.0
Armed forces occupations	0.7	(*)	0.8	6.6	(*)	6.6
Total	45.2	54.8	100.0	46.8	53.2	100.0

Source: CAS, LFHLCs 2018-19

6. Economic conditions

6.1. Gender wage gap

Despite that women are efficacious in obtaining qualifications, their succeeding careers are frequently interrupted and they have lower pay as well as their career path becomes flat. As a result, women have paychecks less than men and this pay difference remains a challenge throughout their work life cycle.

Furthermore, earnings differences among women and men signal a gender inequality in working conditions and present gender wage gap. In more details, women were reported to earn 96% of what men earn in 2007, while in 2004 it was 93% only. However, when disaggregated by nationality, Lebanese men earn on average 6.5% more than Lebanese women.

6.2. Conditions of Deprivation

In Lebanon, the overall share of population living in households with incomes less than 50% of the median (UNDP proxy measure of poverty) was 22.3% in 2018-19. The outlines indicate that poverty level varies by gender, nationality and age. As such, women have slightly higher poverty rates compared to men at 22.8% while men is at 21.7%, with gender inequality ranging from 1 percentage point for Lebanese to almost 6 percentage points for non-Lebanese. Furthermore, poverty rates among old people are higher for women than for men as the rate for women stood at 16.2% and rate for men recorded 14%.

Resident population living below 50% of median of adjusted income, by sex, age, governorate and nationality, 2018-19:

(In percentages)

	Lebanon			Lebanese			Non-Lebanese		
	Women	Men	Both sexes	Women	Men	Both sexes	Women	Men	Both sexes
Total Population	22.8	21.7	22.3	16.4	15.0	15.7	54.2	48.5	51.2
By Age-groups									
Under 15	33.3	32.8	33.1	20.8	20.6	20.7	62.2	61.3	61.7
15-64	20.2	18.6	19.4	15.2	13.4	14.4	49.2	40.9	44.6
65+	16.2	14.0	15.2	15.4	13.0	14.3	33.7	35.8	34.7

Source: CAS, LFHLCs 2018-19

7. Decision-Making and Human Rights of Women

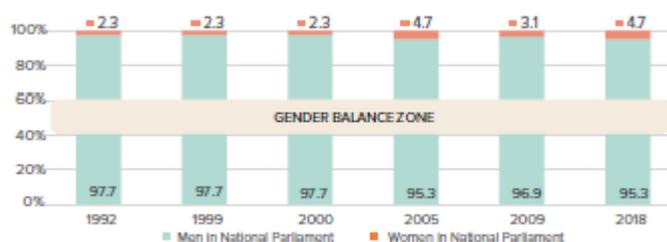
In line with international women human rights, the report presented an assessment of the situation in the participation of women in several positions and covered three main aspects; politics and governance, private sector and violence against women.

7.1. Women in Politics and Governance

Overall, women have limited chances to be directly involved in decision making compared to men. As for Lebanon, women are extremely underrepresented in politics as well as in the government. In fact, the share of seats held by women in parliament remains insignificant despite the increase in its ratio to nearly 4.7% in the latest elections of 2018.

Women and men in national parliament, 1992 to 2018:

(In percentages)



Source: www.lp.gov.lb and www.pcm.gov.lb

As for the level of representation of women among ministers in Lebanon, it has remarkably progressed in the years of 2019-2020 with women grasping a third of the ministerial portfolios by holding six ministerial positions.

7.2. Women in Managerial Positions

Predictably, the traditional gender roles have not justly been modified as the underrepresentation of women in top positions confirms this fact. Nevertheless, the share of women in senior and middle management in the public sector has increased by 12 percentage points to stand at 42.3% by years 2018-19. Meanwhile, the underrepresentation of women is more identified in the private sector with only 26.5% of managerial positions were held by women by during same years.

Share of women in employment and in senior/ middle management in private/public sector, 2004 and 2018-19:

(In percentages)

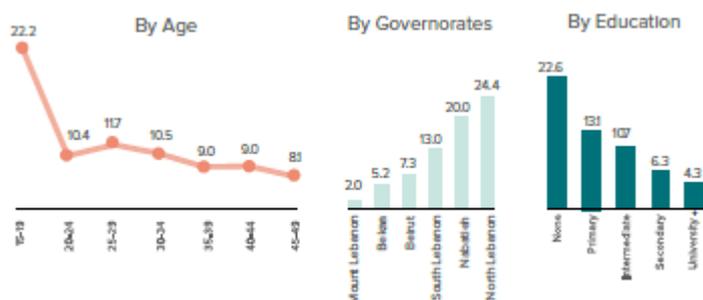
Share of women	Public Sector	Private sector	Other	Overall
2004	30.0	(*)	(*)	27.5
2018-19	42.3	26.5	(*)	28.9

Source: CAS, LCS 2004 and LFHLCS 2018-19

7.3. Violence Against Women and Women's Rights

The survey contained a set of indicators that showed the degree of violence against women and their rights. And what is shocking is that 9.7% of women aged between 15 and 49 years in Lebanon believe that a husband's beating of them is *justified in any circumstances*. As such, the highest share of women that would withstand violence at home was among women of younger age group at 22.2%, at 22.6% for low academic attainment, and at 24.4% for those who are living in North Lebanon Governorate.

Women aged 15-49 years who believe violence against them is justified , by age, governorates and education level, 2009:



Source: CAS, MICS Survey, 2009

8. Conclusion

Status of women and men remains a major concern across Lebanon and especially MENA region. While Lebanese society had produced several frameworks to address gender equality and implement efforts aiming to have national legislation and strategies, progress in practice has been slow and inconsistent.

In the interim, women and girls in Lebanon and particularly in the MENA region remain at certain risk of numerous forms of gender-based violence and gender inequality. As such, intimate-partner attacks, early or forced marriage, under-representation of women in work place and various additional forms of inequality and violence must take first place interest of policymakers and practitioners. These issues should be discussed at the country-wide level to prevent and respond to any act of inequality or violence through policy and legal reforms; that is in addition to support services awareness campaigns about the commonness of gender inequality in Lebanon. We do not have new data yet about the impact of the crisis (post 2019) on gender differences, but we will not be surprised if it had made things more challenging, the more reason to embark on corrective measures and reforms the soonest.

For your Queries:

BLOMINVEST BANK s.a.l.

Research Department

Bab Idriss, Weygand Str.

POBOX 11-1540 Riad El Soloh

Beirut 1107 2080 Lebanon

Aline Azzi

aline.azzi@blominvestbank.com

Tel" +96170627661

Research Department

Tel: +961 1 991 784

research@blominvestbank.com

Disclaimer

This report is published for information purposes only. The information herein has been compiled from, or based upon sources we believe to be reliable, but we do not guarantee or accept responsibility for its completeness or accuracy. This document should not be construed as a solicitation to take part in any investment, or as constituting any representation or warranty on our part. The consequences of any action taken on the basis of information contained herein are solely the responsibility of the recipient.