



# Youth Policy in Lebanon



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# Table of Contents

<b>Introduction</b> .....	<b>2</b>
Definition of Youth in Lebanon .....	2
Challenges Facing Youth in Lebanon .....	2
<b>Youth Policy</b> .....	<b>4</b>
Definition of Youth Policy .....	4
The Development of Youth Policy in Lebanon .....	4
The Importance of Youth Policy and its Impact on Youth .....	5
Stages of Promoting Youth Policy in Lebanon .....	5
<b>The Recommendations of Youth Policy according to Sectors</b> .....	<b>6</b>
<b>Demographic Properties and Emigration</b> .....	<b>7</b>
<b>Employment and Economic Participation</b> .....	<b>10</b>
<b>Social Integration and Political Participation</b> .....	<b>15</b>
<b>Education and Culture</b> .....	<b>18</b>
<b>Youth and Health</b> .....	<b>22</b>

# Introduction

## Definition of Youth in Lebanon

Youth in Lebanon are the category of people aged between 15 and 29. It was so defined by the Lebanese Ministry of Youth and Sport, and the United Nations agencies working with children and youth, youth associations in the Lebanese civil society, and experts, based on social and economic characteristics specific of Lebanon. Youth represent 28% of the total population in Lebanon.

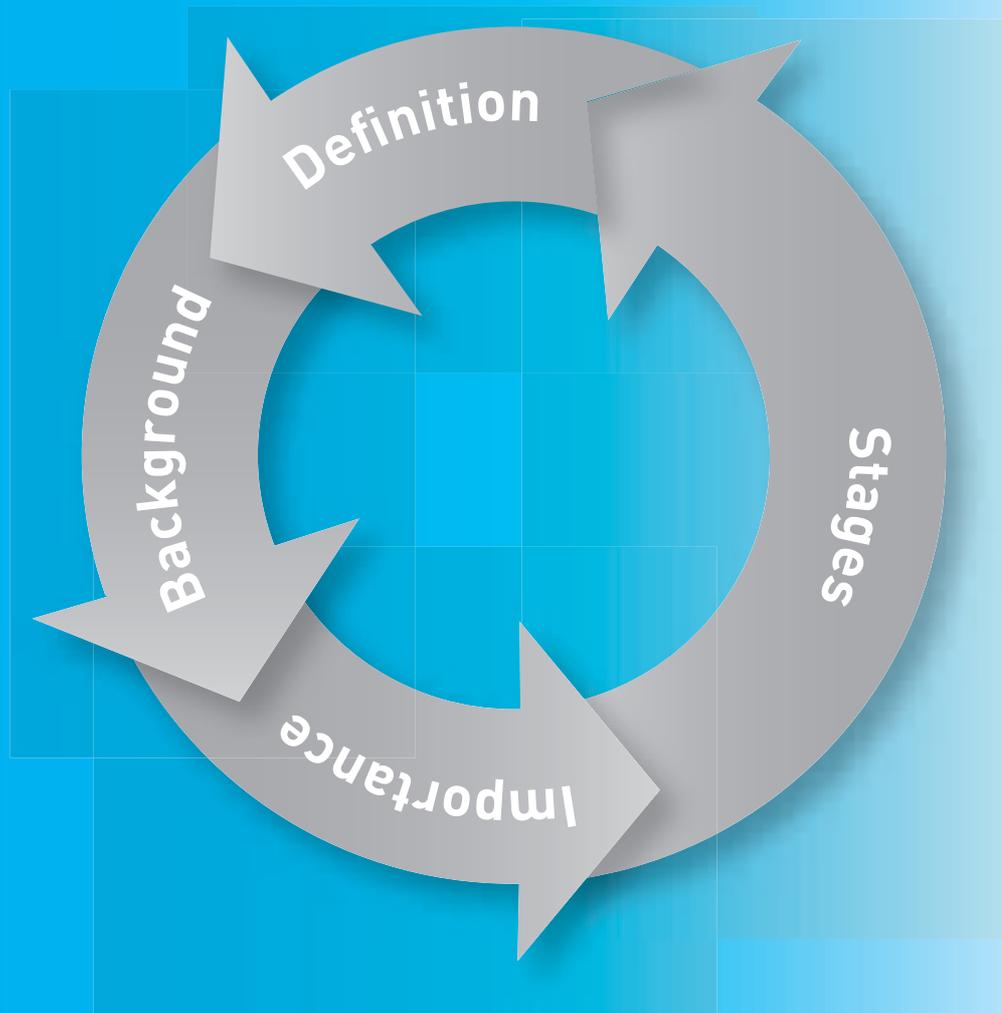
## Challenges Facing Youth in Lebanon

Youth in Lebanon face various challenges, some related to the specific stage of life they go through in any society, some related to the legal, political, social, and economic framework in which they operate in Lebanon. The major challenges are:

- ❑ The type of education and the disparities between private and public schooling; failure to equip the student with life, analytical, and critical skills, in order to enable him/her to withstand the challenges of the modern times. Add to this the high rates of school dropouts especially in public schools.
- ❑ Lack of sufficient information and services for youth on reproductive and sexual health, including AIDS, in addition to the spread of drug abuse.
- ❑ Low level of participation in public and political issues, visible in their distance from elections, be it in voting or running for parliamentary office or local government before the ages of 21 and 25.
- ❑ Migration of young people in order to improve their living standards. The majority of these youth are university graduates. The migration of young people represents 44% of male migration in Lebanon.
- ❑ Unemployment. Youth represent 66% of all unemployed people in Lebanon, which affects the migration of young people.
- ❑ Lack of confidence in their abilities. All adults view them as tomorrow's generation; hence their participation is postponed till tomorrow.

# Youth Policy:

Definition, Background, Importance, Stages



# Youth Policy

## Definition of Youth Policy

The necessity of working out a national youth policy in Lebanon and implementing it in addressing the aspirations and the challenges faced by the Lebanese youth is imperative.

### Youth Policy is:

- The government commitment to young people's issues.
- A document stating an integrated vision of all the decisions that the government intends to make in order to improve the living conditions of youth.
- Clearly defines the status and role of youth in society.
- Creates an interactive relationship between the government and youth.
- Requires the concerted action of political will and societal conviction of the importance of the young people's role.
- In other words, it aims at providing all the services needed by the youth + providing the adequate climate that helps young people reach decision-making positions in public life.
- Takes note of young people's needs and ambitions in the general policy of the State.
- Allocates financial resources to achieve fair youth development on the national level.
- Based on scientific researches and reliable statistics in all sectors affecting young people.
- Multisectoral, and consequently requiring coordination between Ministries concerning young people's issues.

## The Development of Youth Policy in Lebanon

In the context of "the path of youth policies," Work on developing a Youth Policy in Lebanon began in the year 2000 by a group of youth associations in collaboration with the United Nations group for Youth, and the Lebanese Ministry of Youth and Sports recently created then. The working procedure started with determining the needs of young people, and classifying them into sectors, forming working groups on each sector, making recommendations for youth policies and submitting them to the Ministry of Youth and Sports, and pressuring decision-makers to approve them. This collective and cumulative methodical work, in partnership with the Ministry and the United Nations Group for Youth yielded a scientific and reliable document on youth policy, and the establishing of a "Forum

on Youth Policies.” The document was unanimously well received by the Lebanese youth: it was tested in 15 youth meetings in various Lebanese regions. It was equally well received in the various Ministries dealing with youth. As a result of the cumulative efforts of the Forum on Youth Policies, the UN working group on Youth, the Ministry of Youth and Sports, and support from the Office of the Prime Minister the document on Youth Policy was approved by the Cabinet on April 3, 2012 as the State vision of National Youth Development, and action plan for the Ministry of Youth and Sports.

The Document on Youth Policy is comprised of recommendations for Youth Policy according to five sectors:

- Demographic Properties and Emigration
- Education and Culture
- Social Integration and Political Participation
- Employment and Economic Participation
- Health.

## **The Importance of Youth Policy and its Impact on Youth**

- Insures dealing with young people as dignified citizens.
- Achieves equality between young people and other citizens.
- Limits the clientelist, dependent, sectarian relationship.
- Enhances the participation of youth in all areas of activity in a way that speeds up the process of development.
- Reinforces young peoples’ self-confidence and self-respect.
- Contributes to the development of an active youth aware of their rights.
- Confers responsibilities and prerogatives to the youth.
- Facilitates youth access to influential positions.

## **Stages of promoting Youth Policy in Lebanon**

- Determining young people’s needs, issues, ambitions, and aspirations, as viewed by them.
- Developing recommendations for Youth Policy in collaboration with the young people themselves.
- Endorsement of the Youth Policy Document in the Cabinet.
- Enactment of the necessary legislation in the Parliament to implement Youth Policy.
- Implementation of Youth Policy in the various public departments
- Evaluating Youth Policy in five years to keep it in tune with the emerging needs of youth and society.

# The Recommendations of Youth Policy According to Sectors

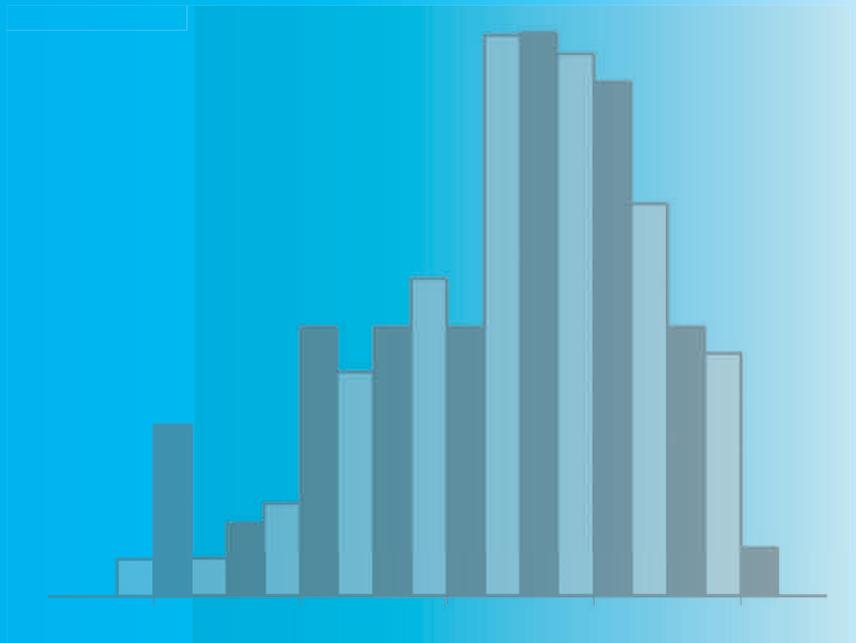
The following recommendations are the essence of a cumulative work performed by the civil society since 2000, in addition to discussions with the representatives of all partisan youth organizations and civil society activists through 14 workshops held in various regions of Lebanon in 2009. It was reviewed and debated with experts through five sectoral round tables during the same year. Furthermore they were examined and commented upon in 2010, by 12 Ministries involved in working with young people: Education and Higher Education, Social Affairs, Finance, Information, Tourism, Transportation, Public Health, Labor, Economy, Agriculture, Interior and Municipalities, and last but not least Youth and Sports.

These recommendations express the demands of youth associations and partisan youth organizations, even if there is no clear consensus on all the points mentioned in this document. They all consider it an integrated basket containing youth issues that deserve acting upon in various ways according to the particular context of each issue.

## General Recommendation

**To activate the Supreme Committee for National Advice in order to pursue its function of supporting the approval of the Youth Policy in the Cabinet, and the promotion of this policy within all relevant Ministries in view of implementing it consistently with the principle that Youth Policy is comprehensive and integrated.**

# 1. Demographic Properties and Emigration



# Demographic Properties and Emigration

Lebanon suffers high rates of internal migration from rural areas to major urban areas due to the disparities in development between the different regions. Similarly, the rates of emigration are also considerable and steadily increasing as a result of the instable economic situation, the civil war that crippled State institutions, and the repeated Israeli aggressions since 1948. Rates of emigration from Lebanon are particularly noticeable amongst university graduates, the major reason being, in general, to improve living standards. Researches show that the majority of young emigrants do not intend to return home. That is why the young emphasize the necessity of addressing the problems of internal migration from rural to urban areas, decreasing the rates of emigration, and preparing the ground for the homecoming of migrant young brains to benefit from their skills and experience in the process of national development.

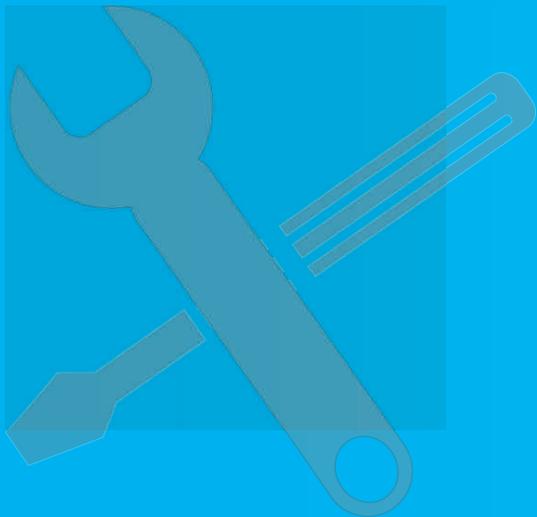
**A** Disparities in development between the different areas of Lebanon play a major role in aggravating the process of internal migration from the rural and remote areas, or emigration to foreign countries. That is why it is vital to create a Ministry for planning to put forth development programs within the framework of a policy of equal and fair regional development that gives a role to the local communities in giving advice, coordinating, and participating in the implementation. Following are some suggestions:

- Setting up an agricultural, industrial, commercial master plan for all Lebanese areas, providing substitute crops, adopting an agricultural agenda, supporting agriculture and agricultural industries, and providing incentives by way of tax cuts to these sectors in order to promote the employment of young people in rural areas.
- Supporting soft agricultural loans through existing institutions.
- Launching development projects in these areas within the available resources, to promote scientific, academic, industrial institutions and agricultural schools and industries.
- Activating administrative decentralization through the establishment of reliable infrastructures.
- Taking the necessary measures to rationalize the building of houses that fit the demand and amending property laws and taxes to this end, and provide soft housing loans for young people.
- Adopting a plan to improve public transportation to cover all regions, including rural areas, with reasonable fees for youth to contribute to retaining young people in their areas (coordination between the Ministries of Agriculture and Public Works).

- Creating a database of youth employment (at home and outside) that includes the statistical and non-statistical indices that facilitate diagnosis processes, devising policies, follow up, and assessment.
- Zoning of agricultural land and prohibiting its use for non agricultural projects (Urban administration)
- Reforming the laws of landed properties (Ministry of Finance)
- Providing resources for water, energy, heating, and sanitation (Ministry of Energy and Public Works)
- Providing social and medical security for agriculturists, including youth (Ministries of Agriculture and Labor)

These steps will have a direct impact on facilitating housing and reducing the rates of migration.

## 2. Employment and Economic Participation



# Employment and Economic Participation

Young people represent 41% of the working force while they represent 27% of the total population. This shows the importance of this category of people in producing economic growth. The problem of unemployment in Lebanon is a chronic, and primarily a youth problem. Researches show that the ratio of young people amongst the total number of the unemployed is 66%. The major problem of youth unemployment is the length of the period of looking for work for those who want to enter the job market for the first time. Young people suffer also from the uncertainty of steady employment, fair remuneration, and protection from exploitation. Hence the necessity of planning for reducing unemployment and insuring decent work conditions for the youth.

**A** One of the most serious problems challenging the chances of youth employment in Lebanon is the shortage in information about work opportunities and the required skills due to the absence of planning and organization in the job market. Hence the necessity of improving the chances of youth participation on the economic level through achieving the following goals:

- Creation of a standing employment committee comprised of representatives of the Ministries of Education, Labor, Economy, and Finance to follow up and assess the job market and its requirements, then providing the public and especially prospective workers with a free of charge, consolidated database about the job market. This database will also provide a definition of the various available jobs and their relationship with the job market.
- Reinforcing the dissemination of information on the specializations of technical and professional education and its links with higher education in order to alter the belittling view of these specializations.
- Reinforcing compatibility between professional and educational life, through motivating the private sector to be more flexible in determining working hours; and motivating educational institutions to take the needs of workers into consideration when scheduling educational activities.
- Reinforcing and activating the role of the National Employment Agency to cover all areas, and enlarging its scope to include the private sector in addition the public sector.
- Supporting all other ways operating in this direction such as job fairs organized by major universities at the end of the academic year, and other events that will introduce the youth into job opportunities thus reducing the length of the period of looking for a job. This role should be given, when the appropriate job is available, to the Lebanese University.

Dr. Riad Tabbara , Draft Study on Status of Lebanese Youth, 2010

- Establishing and activating the offices of career and academic guidance in universities and especially the Lebanese University.
- Creating an electronic site to link the unemployed youth with vacancies in the local job market.
- Giving priority to young people in working and investing in the oil and gas sector through providing all possible facilitation such as tax cuts and other, to reduce emigration.

**B** The Lebanese economy does not presently provide sufficient job opportunities for the young newcomers to the job market. Hence more attention should be paid to the most promising and employments rich sectors, in light of changes in the local and external job markets. The following steps should be made to motivate the various sectors:

- An employment policy integrated into the economic policy.
- Tying investments to projects in the infrastructure and development, and hiring young local workforce.
- Issuing periodic studies and statistics on unemployment (reasons and kinds) in collaboration with the Department of Central Statistics to find the appropriate solutions and reduce it according to the peculiarities of each region.
- Raising the awareness of Lebanese youth with regard to the importance of manual and artisanal professions and encouraging them to work in this sector, and creating new job opportunities in sectors like culture and information.
- Encouraging think-tanks and the institutions of financial support to the economic initiatives of young people.
- Supporting young people's inventions.
- Adopting the standards of specialization and merit in the field of civil service.
- Carrying out an in-depth study of the professional gradation of university students based on the principle of "no work without pay".

**C** The mobility of the workforce and its flexibility in moving from one place to another, and its fast adaptation to various sectors and regions in connection to the circumstances of the job market is of definite consequence in reducing the acuity of unemployment amongst the young and limiting their desire to emigrate in search of a job. Therefore it is vital to implement and develop career guidance in education starting from the elementary level, through:

- Increasing the number of professional rehabilitation for drop outs.
- Motivating private institutions to provide training programs for the young, and making training a must in universities for all fields of education.
- Creating career guidance programs in the secondary level at schools.

- The adoption by schools of modern methods such as tests that adapt the student's abilities and propensities and the specializations that suit him/her best.
- Adopting programs for the exchange of experiences between students in graduate studies and those in the secondary schools to facilitate their choice of a career.

Getting a full-time job does not mean that the young person is getting his/her full rights at work, for we have to take into consideration working conditions and focus on the problems faced by young people who did not reach college education and who got involved in the job market at an early age, through:

**i. Legal field:**

- Enhancing young people's knowledge of their rights and duties and the legal instruments that regulate these through the adoption of civic education in school curricula.
- Limiting the policy of contractual employment in the public sector to ensure job permanence and guarantee the workers' rights at work, because the inadequacy of this policy has been established.
- Improving the Legislations of Labor to secure adequate protection for young people who work in non-regulated professions.
- Setting up mechanisms that guarantee the protection of young people working on a part-time basis in matters related to working conditions and social security.
- Providing lawyers at the Bar's cost and speeding up the conclusion of cases of arbitrary dismissal in the case of young people.
- Activating the laws related to the employment of minors and granting them protection from all manners of exploitation.
- Activating the role of inspection in the work sector and ascertaining the implementation of the Labor Law, especially in big enterprises, through providing inspectors with the appropriate equipment and instruments to protect the youth from hazards and exploitation.

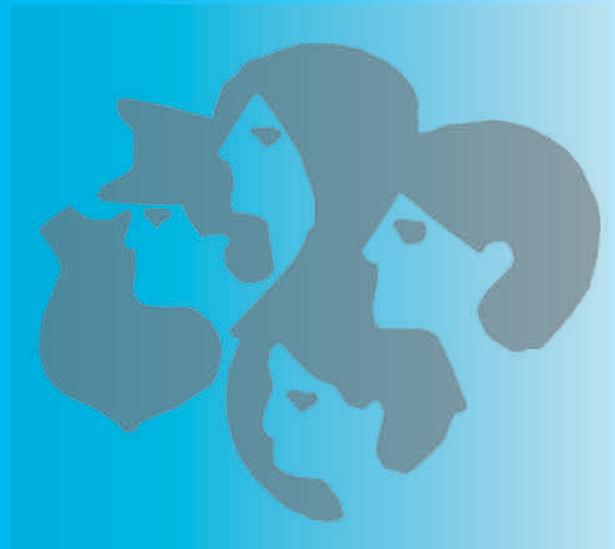
**ii. The Unions field:**

- Activating the role of workers unions in integrating the youth and representing their interests.
- Making apprenticeship in the crafts a salaried practice provided that the wage will not be inferior to the minimum wage.

### iii. Working conditions:

- Paying special attention to young working women, especially those working in the non-regulated sector, with special focus on improving their working conditions, providing them with the services of social security, and fair representation in workers unions, and protecting them from discrimination, sexual harassment, and the like.
- Taking all the necessary measures to implement the decree of health and safety requirements in the workplace for all workers of both sexes.
- Providing adequate workplaces for workers with special needs, and activating the “committee for activating the rights of the disabled in the workplace” in the Ministry of Labor.
- Completing the process of issuing implementation decrees for the law 2000/220 regarding the employment of persons with special needs in the Ministries and the strict implementation thereof.
- Enhancing the compatibility between professional and family lives, especially through motivating businesses to create daycare centers to facilitate the diligent work of young women and protecting their right to motherhood through the implementation of the relevant laws.
- Enhancing the creative abilities and potentialities of young people working in the non-regulated economic sector and helping them move from non-regulated to regulated employment.

# 3. Social Integration and Political Participation



# Social Integration and Political Participation

Young people view the sectarian divide as a major obstacle barring the way to their active participation in the various aspects of national life. Since their participation in public life is indispensable for the practice of their full citizenship, it is necessary to work on facilitating their social integration and removing all the legal and administrative barriers that marginalize their role in public life.

**A** The first requirement for social integration is opening up a room for social interaction between young people from various confessional and cultural backgrounds, through:

- Widening the scope of public and collective areas, and improving their quality, be they educational, recreational, or cultural institutions, or youth organizations, and inducing schools, municipalities, and CSOs, and public agencies, and the private sector to support and operate youth hostels in order to provide various services to the youth, including short-term housing.
- Creating places for cultural and recreational activities to enhance the chances of socializing and interacting amongst the youth, such as the twinning of clubs and mutual or joint visits to archaeological sites or holding joint seminars or parties.

**B** The cultural value system in Lebanon is tainted with several protrusions that have contributed to aggravating social discrimination in all its forms, and facilitated the emergence of many prejudices that complicate the process of social integration. Hence, young people find that it is necessary to work on changing this cultural value system through:

- Taking all the necessary steps to amend all the laws to guarantee total equality between men and women in rights and duties.
- Adopting specific mechanism to make sectarian incitement in the media accountable.
- Enhancing the role of youth media, and supporting the programs and media cultural activities addressed to the youth.
- Facilitating the production of media programs that are prepared, directed and presented by the youth.
- Enhancing alternative media amongst the youth.
- Raising the awareness of society about persons with special needs, especially in the regions and among the strata that consider disability a shame so that parents refuse to disclose it or deal with it in an open manner with the end result of locking the disabled inside the house.

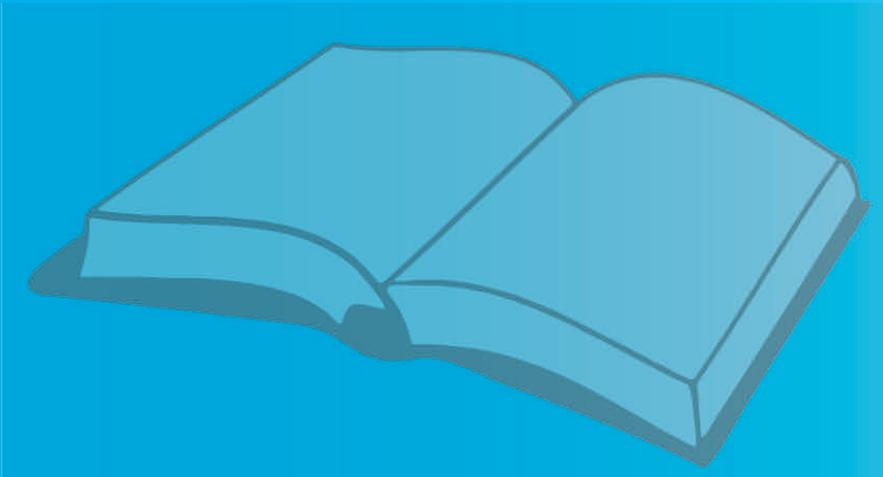
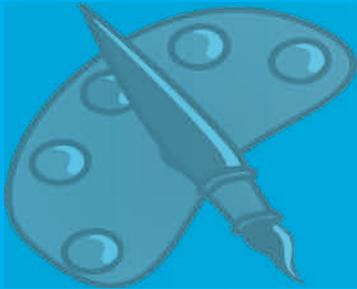
**C** In addition to social values, discrimination before the law plays a negative role in the process of social integration, hence the youth think that it is necessary to secure the equality of all before the law as a precondition to build citizenship through the following:

- Taking all the necessary measures to proceed with the amendment of all laws to achieve complete equality amongst the Lebanese youth, males and females, and abolish the discrimination (males and females) based on religious, political, or regional beliefs, or otherwise, in addition to abolishing the discrimination against children and youth based on age because it is a false standard.
- Issuing implementation decrees for the law 2000/220 regarding the education and employment of persons with special needs, and tightening the sanctions against violators of these laws and creating intermediate institutions to care for those with special needs.
- Ensuring the right of a Lebanese woman to grant the Lebanese citizenship to her husband and children in such a way as to avoid the risk of resettlement.
- Improving the state of Juvenile Correctional and juvenile prisons and putting forth psychological, educational and recreational special programs for the inmates and showing more interest in their health and cultural development.
- Issuing a youth card that offers special discounts for youth, in the areas of transportation and culture, that facilitates access to the sources of information and enhances their involvement in social and public life.

**D** The activation of youth participation in public life is a basis for the success of youth policy in general, and more specifically for the enhancement of social integration. Hence the necessity of securing young people's rights to participate in civil action and political activity in all its forms and motivating this participation through:

- Reducing to 15 years the age of establishing and joining societies in the 1909 law of the Ministry of the Interior and the law 629/2004 of the Ministry of Youth and Sports, in line with the Convention on Children's Rights ratified by the Lebanese State.
- Adoption of a law reducing the age of voting in the general and municipal elections to 18 years.
- Adoption of a law reducing the age of running for office in the Parliament or municipality to 21 years.
- Reviving the student council of the Lebanese University and securing periodical elections and the independence of the councils of the branches
- Financial support of youth associations by the State in order to enable them to participate in public life.
- Amending the law of the Ministry of Youth and Sports no. 629/2004 and the decrees pursuant to it or to its budgets in respect of the general principles of the Constitution, and the international instruments related to the freedom of establishing associations.
- Activating the role of the Ministry of Youth and Sports in sponsoring youth development on a par with Sports.
- Reviving the Union of Lebanese Youth and drawing the lessons of the past years, so that this Union would include all partisan associations and organizations in Lebanon.

# 4. Education and Culture



# Education and Culture

The educational sector suffers from high costs and high rates of drop outs. Furthermore, the educational system does not provide the necessary academic and life competencies, and its curricula are not adapted to the requirements of the job market. Hence, young people find it necessary to act on two focuses: the educational system on the one hand and developing cultural life on the other.

**A** Young people aspire to an educational system that provides them with the academic and life skills and prepare them to be active citizens in all social aspects. These aspirations require:

**i. Overcoming all obstacles that prevent young people from joining educational institutions and pursuing their elementary, secondary, and higher education, and guaranteeing equality of opportunity for all in all regions and social groups, and curtailing dropping out, through the following:**

- Implementing the law of mandatory free elementary education in public schools till the completion of the fifteenth year and providing support to needy parents.
- Developing education in all regions within the context of administrative decentralization.
- Amending school curricula to keep pace with the requirements of life on the basis of the centrality of the student in the learning process, his/her participation in all levels, reducing the quantity of fillers, and adoption of a learning attitude and participation in extra-curricular activities.
- Adapting teaching and public and private schools to fit the requirements of students with special needs, and designing systems that enable them to continue their education without any form of discrimination.
- Removing all hindrances that prevent undeclared record children from joining public or private schools, or sitting for the exams of the official secondary level diploma.
- Taking all the necessary measures in implementing the prohibition of physical, psychological, or verbal, or intellectual violence in schools, and considering the beating of students a violation even if it were for discipline.
- Adopting a modern evaluation system in schools for students, teachers, and curricula not in the aim of holding anyone accountable but to improve the educational process.
- Supporting scholarships and securing soft loans in both the public and private sectors, in coordination with private institutions, to assist deserving low income youth in joining higher education institutions.
- Reviewing the mechanism of equivalence for foreign certificates.

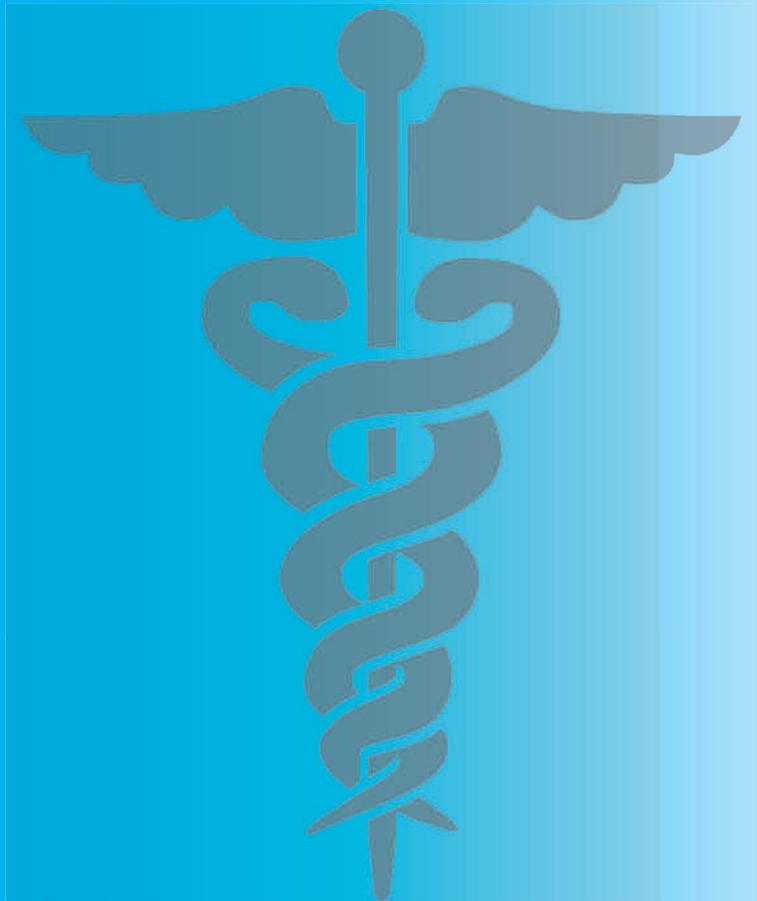
- Introducing oil and gas as a subject matter in the educational system at all levels in schools and universities, and more specifically in the curricula of public schools and the Lebanese University.
- ii. Developing the faculty of public schools to enable them to play their role in empowering youth and involving them in teaching and learning and clarifying the criteria and laws that regulate the teaching profession through:**
- Implementing the law no. 444 stipulating the precondition, for teachers, of holding a University degree while giving the priority to those who have a Teaching Diploma before practicing this profession in order to secure his/her capacity to convey information to the students.
  - Developing and enabling faculty especially with regard to modern methods and dealing with youth.
  - Enhancing faculty with youthful elements.
- iii. Developing the teaching curricula to make the school a place that promotes the intellectual, cultural, and social progress of students in a cheerful atmosphere and healthy interaction, through:**
- Promoting critical thinking in students and teaching them research methodology.
  - Introducing Art History and giving more importance to art classes.
  - Giving more importance to physical education.
  - Enhancing civic education by including training in citizenship and daily life skills.
  - Enhancing national culture in the curricula including the right of the people to protect the national soil and defend it against aggression.
  - Removing racist expressions from the curricula, especially those discriminating against women and people with special needs.
  - Teaching the culture of civilizations in public and private schools.
  - Setting up an equivalence system for University specializations to facilitate the movement of students between the public and private universities.
  - Activating State supervision of the private school sector, including tuitions and the respect of students' rights especially in schools that prevent their average students from sitting for the official exams, for self-promotional reasons.
  - Introducing the teaching of life skills, such as project management, in the curriculum.
  - Training health advisors, social workers, and nurses in schools.
  - Creating areas for all manners of debate, political, intellectual, and social for students in schools.

- ❑ Securing adequate infrastructure such as playgrounds, amphitheatres, laboratories, libraries, computers, in schools, especially public schools in line with new curricula.
  - ❑ Securing the necessary materials and laboratory equipments especially in public schools.
  - ❑ Securing a computer center connected to the web in every school, including public schools.
  - ❑ Introducing the method of active learning in schools.
- iv. **Generalizing and activating students' councils and associations in both the public and private schools so that educational institutions become training venues for the youth to enable them make decisions and actively participate in democratic activities, and enacting adequate legislations that nurture the activities of these councils and guarantees students' rights to participate in them and in all administrative and academic decisions.**
  - v. **Developing the infrastructure of schools and educational institutions and implementing clear standards that regulate the establishment of these institutions in a manner that secures the presence of all the necessary resources, such as libraries, computers, playgrounds, and laboratories, etc. necessary for an empowering environment in line with the requirements of modern and total learning.**
  - vi. **Supporting the Lebanese University and enhancing its role as the National University, through allocating larger budgets to develop the infrastructure, securing all the necessary equipment for the learning process and scientific research, training professors, and creating an office of development to carry out constant evaluation of the University's needs, linking them to the needs of society, looking for all that is new in the world to choose the best of it in order to institutionalize it in education.**

**B** beside the context of education, the youth feel a dire need to access the source of culture especially that a large sector of them are outside educational institutions either to continue their education or because of their joining the job market or because of their being early drop outs, hence the necessity to enhance cultural, artistic, social life, and educational life through the following:

- Enhancing youth participation in cultural life in all its forms, and giving those with special needs the necessary care.
- Promoting youth participation in cultural production in all its forms.
- Enhancing youth knowledge of modern communication skills and scientific knowledge.
- Enhancing the participation of young researchers in activating scientific life.
- Securing the necessary funds to the relevant Ministries to enable them to meet the requirements of cultural projects related to young people.
- Enhancing the network of public libraries to promote reading and energizing cultural activities, and speeding up the process of reviving the National Library, on condition that its programs will include activities and programs for youth.
- Encouraging social media and inciting them to encourage cultural programs to offer opportunities for young people to engage in cultural activities.

# 5. Youth and Health



# Youth and Health

Young people, just like other segments of society, suffer from general health problems that require solutions within a general health policy that will be implemented by both the State and civil society. In addition to that, Young people are more liable to some health hazards than other segments of society, such as those related to reproductive health and sexually transmitted diseases, drugs, smoking, nutrition, and traffic hazards that we must strive to reduce.

**A** Young people think that the general health policy must take into account the following:

- i. Raising the awareness of all concerned concerning the concept of holistic health which includes physical, psychological, mental, and sexual health.**
- ii. Developing health centers, securing their even distribution over all areas, improving and equipping them and ascertaining that all have access to preventive medical services through the following:**
  - Taking all the necessary measures to enlarge the scope of primary health services to meet the needs of youth
  - Making the health card mandatory for all schoolchildren and College students both private and public.
  - Making it compulsory for all legal workers to declare their jobs to the National Social Security Fund regardless of age.
  - Opening Medical Security to part time workers and workers in non regulated jobs.
  - Offering young people reduced fees for all in-patient services.
  - Free support for intractable diseases.
- ii. Supporting and intensifying special health programs and awareness-raising programs on prevention, including risky behavior, and addressing the most vulnerable young, like non working women, and youth in rural areas in line with what follows:**
  - Adopting the method of “from youth to youth” in schools and Universities and youth clubs (outside schools and Universities) in order to disseminate health awareness.
  - Raising the awareness of parents to the importance of consulting a physician on all health issues.
  - Free vaccination programs and routine medical check-ups to help young people secure prevention.

- ❑ Compulsory presence of a therapist/social worker in schools, universities and hospitals.
- ❑ Awareness-raising on the risks of early marriage, and marriage between close relatives.
- ❑ Caring for the diseases of the mouth and teeth and vision in young people.
- ❑ Unifying the security funds (National Social Security Fund, Cooperative of Civil Servants) and equality of treatment for all beneficiaries.

**B** As to the health problems affecting youth in particular, it is necessary to establish special health centers providing fast and sustained support to young people, in matters of guidance, discipline, orientation, and enhancing prevention while providing regular training for those who provide services to the youth. It is also necessary to support social services centers in their effort to devise special programs for preventive and curative intervention in the cases of various categories of youth, especially those non-working and outside school, and young mothers, according to what follows:

**iv. Adopting a strict differentiation in the law between drug users, traffickers and dealers and considering the user a victim of this traffic and of the circumstances that are imposed on him/her and striving to reintegrate him/her into society, rehabilitate, treat, and secure counseling, and guidance for him and for society, and using the last section of the Article 127 and 130 of the Penal Law for sanctions concerning users:**

- ❑ Using the policy of “minimizing risks” concerning drugs.
- ❑ Establishing treatment and rehabilitation centers for addicts in all areas
- ❑ Fighting the social labeling of addicts to facilitate treatment.
- ❑ Tightening control over the sale of medicines and drugs and ascertaining that they are not sold without a doctor’s prescription and launching awareness raising campaigns on the misuse of medicines.

**v. Enacting special legislations that limit the promotion of toxic stuff amongst youth and children, and especially, cigarettes, narghile, alcohol, drugs, and fast food:**

- ❑ Prohibiting commercials that promote cigarettes, alcohol, drugs, and fast food on TV channels (or setting special timing for such commercials), and advertisement on billboards near schools and setting specific areas for ads and regulating them on the roads.
- ❑ Strictly implementing the law that prohibits the promotion of herbal medicines and weight reduction that are not subject to medical control.
- ❑ Strictly prohibiting the sale of cigarettes and alcohol to minors, and increasing taxes on cigarettes to curtail their use.

- ❑ Prohibiting smoking in closed areas whether private or public, and allocating special areas for smokers, and tightening the implementation of the laws that prohibit smoking in public institutions and places.
- ❑ Intensifying the awareness-raising campaigns in schools on the hazards of smoking and alcohol consumption, and drug abuse.
- ❑ Launching awareness-raising campaigns on healthy food, especially for parents, and warning against the hazards of some tin-canned foods that might be carcinogenic, and prohibiting the sale of meals containing preservatives in schools.
- ❑ Activating and developing the system of supervision over restaurants concerning cleanliness, and food quality, and imposing heavier fines on those who contravene.

**vi. Devising special programs for raising the awareness of young people on sexual education and reproductive health in addition to:**

- ❑ Awareness-raising on the false sexual information disseminated by the media;
- ❑ Raising the awareness of parents on sexual health;
- ❑ Establishing free treatment centers for AIDS patients and combating the social labeling of those patients;
- ❑ Activating awareness-raising campaigns on sexually transmitted diseases.





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