



COI QUERY

Country of Origin/Topic	Lebanon
Question(s)	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Information on entry/exit requirements and procedure for Palestinians with passports2. Information on entry/exit requirements and procedure for Palestinians without passports
Date of completion	20 February 2020
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The target audience is caseworkers, COI researchers, policy makers, and decision making authorities. The answer was finalised on the 20 February 2020. Any event taking place after this date is not included in this answer.



COI QUERY RESPONSE

1. Information on entry/exit requirements and procedure for Palestinians with passports

Background Information on Palestinians in Lebanon

Palestinian refugees arrived to Lebanon in different periods: majority in 1948 (following the creation of the State of Israel), in 1956 (during the Suez Crisis), in 1967 (due to the Six Day War), in 1971 (after being expelled from Jordan) and the 'final influx of Palestinians into Lebanon has been going on since the beginning of the conflict in 2011 in Syria'.¹

As of February 2019, over 475 000 Palestinian refugees have been registered with UNRWA (United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestinian refugees in the near east) in Lebanon and an estimated 270 000 reside in the country.² More than half of them live in the twelve official camps managed by UNRWA and the rest of them live in unofficial settlements or private accommodations, which caused an increasing pressure on space and infrastructures.³ Palestinian communities have been isolated in the refugee camps.⁴ In addition, as of April 2019, there were 28 800 Palestinian Refugees from Syria (PRS) in Lebanon.⁵

Entry/exit procedure for Palestinians from Lebanon (PRL)

Starting from 1 November 2016, the General Directorate of General Security of Lebanon (GDGS) declared that Palestinian refugees in Lebanon are issued a biometric passport registered in the refugees' category in Lebanon.⁶ On its website, the GDGS provides specific information on passports granted to Palestinian refugees, on essential requirements for obtaining travel documents and transit passes, and for obtaining new travelling document. Regarding the issuing of travel documents and transit passes for Palestinians residing in Lebanon and registered as refugees, the GDGS states:

'Travel documents and transit passes

Documents requested:

- A refugee ID card held by the Palestinian citizen residing in Lebanon as well as a certified photocopy of the latter
- An extract of individual civil status issued by the general security
- 4 ID photos certified by the mayor
- A travel approval delivered by the parents or the legal guardian
- A document issued by the competent mayor identifying the refugee and his residence: the attendance of 2 witnesses is required

¹ BPC, Second class refugees : Palestinians in Lebanon, 31 August 2016, [url](#)

² UNRWA, Protection in Lebanon, February 2019, [url](#)

³ BPC, Second class refugees : Palestinians in Lebanon, 31 August 2016, [url](#)

⁴ MPI, A fragile situation : Will the Syrian refugee swell push Lebanon over the edge?, 21 February 2019, [url](#)

⁵ UNHCR, Lebanon crisis respond plan, 2017-2020, 16 April 2019, [url](#), p. 4

⁶ GDGS, The instruction related to biometric passports granted to Palestinian refugees in Lebanon, n.d., [url](#)



- An attestation that proves he is not a member of the UNRWA, or on the contrary case an affiliation card

Fees:

- A travel document associated with the latter held by one of the parents
- A travel document for a Palestinian refugee – 1 year – LBP 60 000
- A travel document for a Palestinian refugee – 3 years – LBP 180 000

Time delay:

A week starting the date of conveying the request'.⁷

Entry/exit procedure for Palestinian Refugees from Syria (PRS)

To enter Lebanon, PRS have to obtain an entry visa, which is only issued at the border with 'either a verified embassy appointment in Lebanon, or a flight ticket and a visa to a third country'. PRS have to obtain a prior approval from the GDGS that requires a sponsor in Lebanon, which cannot be processed at the border and it limits further the number of arrivals. Some PRS tried to enter Lebanon through irregular border crossings.⁸

Entry/exit procedure for Palestinians not residing in Lebanon

The GDGS of Lebanon provides specific information for Palestinians on visa obtaining procedure in the Lebanese embassies abroad:

'Palestinian immigrants that hold a travelling document delivered by their government, or Jordanian immigrants that hold a passport without a national number, residing in Palestine, have to acquire an authorization to come back to his country. For the holders of an Egyptian traveling document, residing in Egypt, a certified photocopy of their residence permit valid for 6 month at least, is requested as well as a re-entry visa. For the holders of an Alien passport, a certified photocopy of the residence permit valid for 6 months at least, is requested'.⁹

In Lebanon, the law stipulates the freedom of internal movement, foreign travel, emigration and repatriation, but the government imposed extensive limitations on the rights of Palestinian and Syrian, Iraqi, and other refugee populations in the country.¹⁰

⁷ GDGS, Travel documents and transit passes, n.d., [url](#)

⁸ UNRWA, Protection brief, Palestinian refugees living in Lebanon, October 2017, [url](#); MPI, A fragile situation: Will the Syrian refugee swell push Lebanon over the edge?, 21 February 2019, [url](#)

⁹ GDGS, Visa granted by Lebanese embassies abroad, n.d., [url](#)

¹⁰ USDOS, Country report on Human Rights Practices for 2018, 13 March 2019, [url](#), p. 17-18 and 25



2. Information on entry/exit requirements and procedure for Palestinians without passports

Background information on undocumented Palestinians in Lebanon

As of 2018, UNRWA estimated that there were around 3 000-5 000 undocumented Palestinians living in Lebanon.¹¹ These persons started to arrive into Lebanon in 1960 and are not recognised by the government since they do not hold any formal valid identification documentation. Palestinians in Lebanon face restrictions on movement, risk arrest or detention due to the lack of their legal status.¹² Palestinians who are not registered with the government nor with UNRWA have the option to apply for domestic identification cards from the General Directorate of General Security, but these cards are not travel permits.¹³ In December 2018, Al Jazeera noted that Palestinian refugees have been moving out of Lebanon, legally or illegally, due to the economic conditions and government regulations that deny them basic rights.¹⁴

Information on procedure for undocumented Palestinian Refugees from Lebanon (PRL)

The General Directorate of General Security of Lebanon provides information via its website for 'Palestinian refugees without papers' in Lebanon on how to obtain an identification document.¹⁵ It also provides them with information on the procedure to obtain 'a new traveling document',¹⁶ with the following essential requirements:

'If the Palestinian refugee is a registered member at the UNRWA, as well as the Palestinian refugee's bureau, and has an authorization issued by the general security, he is granted a travel document. If the Palestinian refugee is a registered member at the Palestinian refugee's bureau, but not at the UNRWA, he is granted a travel document.'¹⁷

Information for undocumented Palestinian Refugees from Syria (PRS)

With concerns to the PRS in particular, the Danish Immigration Service observed that:

'Lebanon does not accept rejected PRS asylum seekers from a third country; the GDGS will not process these cases and they will not be allowed to enter Lebanon regardless of whether they are sent by force or on a voluntary basis. Previous residence in Lebanon, or entitlement to a residence permit in Lebanon, for instance as a child of a Lebanese mother, will not have any impact on the possibility to enter Lebanon in such cases'.¹⁸

¹¹ UNRWA, Protection at UNRWA in 2018, 15 November 2018, [url](#), p. 1

¹² USDOS, Country report on Human Rights Practices for 2018, 13 March 2019, [url](#)

¹³ The Daily Star (Lebanon), Biometric documents for Palestinians, 18 November 2016, available at Pressreader, [url](#)

¹⁴ Al Jazeera, Why thousands of Palestinian refugees are moving out of Lebanon, 12 December 2019, [url](#)

¹⁵ GDGS, Palestinian refugees without papers, n.d., [url](#)

¹⁶ GDGS, A new travelling document, n.d., [url](#)

¹⁷ GDGS, Essential requirements, n.d., [url](#)

¹⁸ Denmark, The Danish Immigration Service, Lebanon, the situation of Palestinian refugees in Lebanon, report based on a Fact Finding Mission to Beirut, Lebanon, from 30 June to 7 July 2019, 18 September 2019, [url](#), p. 9



In addition, undocumented PRS in Lebanon fear of being arrested at checkpoints¹⁹ and being detained. Those with expired visas received 'departure orders' and due to this fear, 61 Percent of Palestinian refugees from Syria 'avoid approaching the authorities for civil registration or other services. Moving in and out of the Palestinian refugee camps requires a permit for which a 'valid legal status is often a pre-requisite'. Some of the Palestinian refugees from Syria living in these areas without a legal status, do not leave the camps for fear of being arrested.²⁰

¹⁹ PHRO, Lebanese restrictions on freedom of movement, case of Haher El Bared Camp, November 2010, [url](#), p. 12

²⁰ UNRWA, Protection brief, Palestinian refugees living in Lebanon, October 2017, [url](#), p. 3



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