

## Lebanon's 2009 Parliamentary Elections Parliament's Vote to Lower the Voting Age to 18 years:

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elections. The voter register for the 2010 elections

will be updated from 5 December 2009.

| Stage One<br>Parliament proposes a<br>constitutional law<br><i>Completed 19 March 2009</i> | At least ten Deputies may propose an<br>amendment to the Constitution  | See<br>Constitution<br>Art. 77                                   | <ul> <li>Parliament's Vote to Lower The Voting Age On 19 March 2009, Parliament voted unanimously to adopt a Constitutional Law to reduce the voting age in Lebanon from 21 years to 18 years. The Law proposes that Article 21 of the Constitution should be amended to read as follows:     Every Lebanese citizen who has reached 18 years     old can be a voter is he/she meets all eligibility     conditions. (Unofficial translation taken verbatim from     Speaker Berris opening address)</li> <li>The 2008 Election Law (Article 3) states:     Every Lebanese who has attained the legal age     stipulated in the Constitution, whether or not     resident on the Lebanese territory, shall be     entitled to vote.</li> <li>Next Steps for the Constitution to be Amended The Constitutional Law adopted on 19 March is the first in a four-stage process to amend the Constitution. The Law will now be forwarded to the Cabinet (Council of Ministers) for the second stage.</li> <li>The Cabinet must approve the Constitutional Law by     a vote supported by at least two-thirds of its members. This must be done within four months of the Cabinet     receiving it. Assuming the Cabinet approves the     lowering of the voting age to 18 years, it will prepare     a draft Constitutional Amendment which will then be     returned to Parliament.</li> <li>The third stage of the procedure requires Parliament to     vote on the final text of the Amendment approved by     the Cabinet. As with the vote on 19 March,     Parliament must have a quorum of two-thirds of its     maporty of all Deputies in Parliament.</li> <li>The final stage before the Constitutional Amendment     can come into force is for the President and Prime     Minister to co-sign a Promulgation of the Amendment. </li> <li>Impact on the 7 June 2009 elections     Even if all three remaining stages were undertaken     promptly, the Constitutional Amendment will not     have an impact on this year's parliamentary elections     unless Parliament also votes to change the Election     Law. Und</li></ul> |
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| Stage Two<br>Cabinet of Ministers approves<br>a draft constitutional<br>amendment          | The Council of Ministers must<br>approves the proposed amendment by a<br>3/3 majority within 4 months.<br>If the Council of Ministers does not<br>approve the proposed amendment by<br>a 3/3 majority, it is returned to the<br>Chamber of Deputies under a separate   |  |  |
|  | procedure described below.<br>The Cabinet of Ministers prepares a draft<br>bill to amend the Constitution<br>and sends to the Chamber of Deputies  | See<br>Constitution<br>Arts. 76 and<br>77                        |  |
| Stage Three<br>Parliament adopts the<br>Constitutional Amendment                           | The Chamber of Deputies holds a<br>session with a quorum of ¾ of its total<br>membership to discuss and vote on the<br>draft bill to amend the Constitution.   | See<br>Constitution<br>Art. 79<br>See<br>Constitution<br>Art. 79 |  |
|  | majority vote of at least 3/3 of its total<br>membership   |  |  |
| Stage Four<br>President and Prime Minister<br>promulgate the Constitutional<br>Amendment   | The President and the Prime Minister co-<br>sign the promulgation for the amendment<br>to the Constitution to come into force.<br>Within one month, the President, after<br>consultation with the Cabinet, has the<br>right to request that the Chamber of<br>Deputies reconsiders the bill.                                   | See<br>Constitution<br>Arts. 51, 56,<br>57 and 79                |  |
|  | If the Council of Ministers does not<br>approve it by a $\frac{3}{4}$ majority, it is returned<br>to the Chamber of Deputies. It is then<br>put to a new vote. If it gains the approval<br>of $\frac{3}{4}$ of all members, the President<br>accedes to the proposed amendment or<br>instruct the Cabinet of Ministers to call |  | During the parliamentary debate on 19 March, there<br>appeared to be consensus by all present that the<br>Parliament's support to lower the voting age should<br>not jeopardise holding the 2009 elections on<br>schedule.<br>Impact on future elections   |
|  | new parliamentary elections.   |  | The Constitutional Amendment, if fully adopted,<br>would mean that 18-20 year olds could vote in the<br>2010 municipal elections and the 2013 parliamentary  |

Outline of the process to amend the Lebanese Constitution