

What has the war done to the Lebanese ?

Shifts in Perceptions and Expectations

A quantitative survey by Ara Lebanon for Research and Consultancy
April 2026



Lebanese society is enduring yet another war, while the wounds of the 2024 conflict remain unhealed. Displacement, forced migration, deteriorating living conditions, and sharp divisions in political opinions continue to shape daily life.

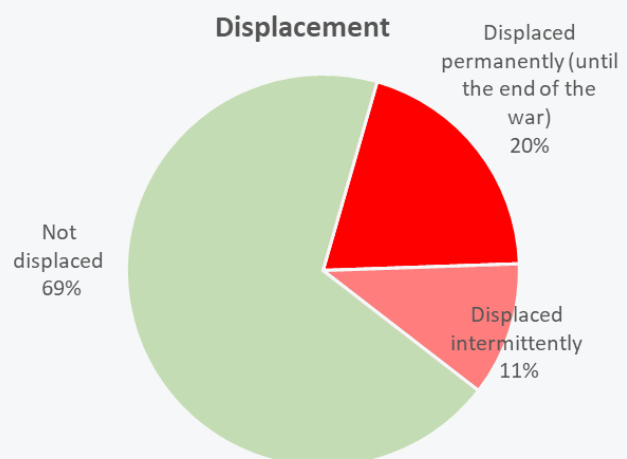
To better understand what the Lebanese are currently experiencing ,and their expectations regarding the outcome of this war and its impact on both themselves and the country, Ara Lebanon for Research and Consultancy, in collaboration with Raseef22, conducted a national survey of 470 adult citizens between March 24 and 31, 2026.

The sample reflected population distribution by residence, age, gender, and sect. Data was collected through Computer-Assisted Telephone Interviews (**CAPI**), with contacts randomly selected using arithmetic methods..

31% of the Lebanese have been displaced, either permanently or temporarily ...
47% are dissatisfied with the government's handling of the displacement crisis.

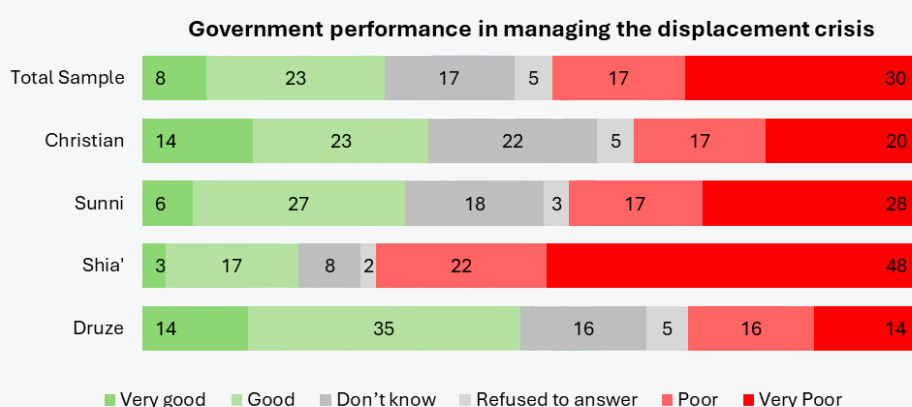
Between forced displacement and temporary relocation, **31%** of Lebanese people were compelled to leave their homes. Most displacement were permanent (**20%**) driven by Israeli strikes and evacuation warnings, while **11%** relocated intermittently out of fear.

Undoubtably, Shiites were the most affected (**73%**) followed by Sunnis (**21%**), Druze (**16%**), and Christians (**7%**).



The Lebanese are dissatisfied with the performance of the Lebanese government in handling the displacement crisis. **47%** expressed dissatisfaction with its performance, describing it as very weak (**30%**) or weak (**17%**), compared to **31%** who expressed satisfaction, describing its performance as very good (**8%**) or somewhat good (23%). Meanwhile, **17%** did not respond due to lack of knowledge, and 5% refused to answer.

Dissatisfaction was higher among women (**53%** rated it weak/very weak) than men (**43%** rated it weak/very weak), as well as among those displaced (**62%** rated it weak/very weak) compared to those who remained (**40%** rated it weak/very weak).



Compared to the performance of the previous government during the 2024 war, **51%** of Lebanese people considered the current government's performance to be worse than that of its predecessor, while **19%** considered it better, and **10%** saw no difference between the two. On the other hand, 18% did not respond due to lack of knowledge, and **3%** refused to answer.

38% of Lebanese people, from all sects and religious groups and at relatively similar rates (**62%** Druze, **39%** Christians, **37%** Shiites, **35%** Sunnis, and **39%** of those who did not disclose their religion), stepped in to help displaced persons through volunteer work, financial donations, or in-kind assistance, despite the fact that people's economic conditions have become worse than they were during the 2024 war.

53% of Lebanese people saw their work disrupted ...

46% reported household income cut off or reduced by more than half.

Naturally, the war has disrupted people's work and significantly reduced their sources of income. Excluding those who do not work, who make up **30%** (students, homemakers, retirees, unemployed, and those unable to work), the livelihoods of more than half of the Lebanese population (**53%**) have been negatively affected by the current situation.

For **24%**, their work has stopped completely; for **13%**, it has stopped temporarily; while **16%** continue to work partially. Those who reported that their work has not been affected and continues as usual did not exceed **18%**.

Work stoppages, whether complete or temporary, have affected Lebanese across all sects. However, the highest rate was among Shiite Lebanese (**48%**), followed by Sunnis (**37%**), Christians (**30%**), Druze (**24%**), and those who did not disclose their sect (**26%**).

Additionally, working hours have been affected for half of those who are still working either regularly or partially. While **52%** reported no change and maintained their usual working hours, **37%** said their working hours had decreased, significantly for some (**18%**) and slightly for others (**19%**). In contrast, a small group (**10%**) reported that the war led them to increase their working hours, significantly for some (**3%**) and slightly for others (**7%**).

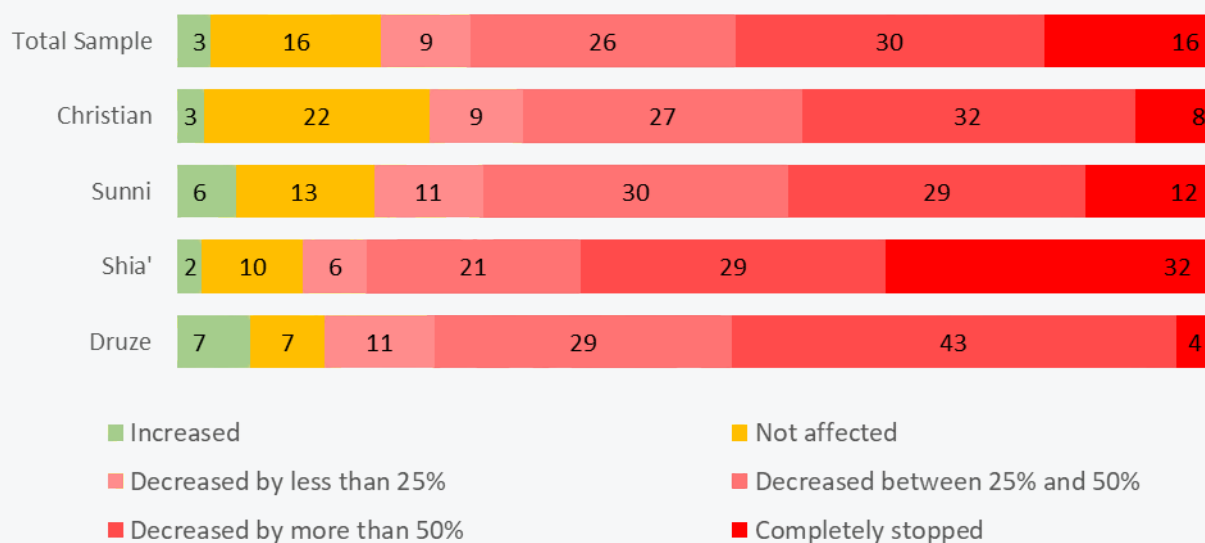
"Remote work" has returned during the war, reminiscent of the pandemic period. Among those still working, **5%** have shifted to fully remote work, **7%** are working remotely more than before, and **5%** were already working remotely and continue to do so. The majority (**82%**), however, still go to their workplaces.

The decline in work has inevitably worsened people’s living conditions. **16%** reported that their household income was completely cut off, **30%** said it decreased by more than **50%**, **26%** reported a decrease between **25%** and **50%**, and **9%** reported a decrease of less than **25%**. This means that, overall, **80%** of Lebanese households experienced a decline in income, albeit to varying degrees.

On the other hand, **3%** reported that their household income increased due to the war, while those whose income remained unaffected did not exceed **16%**.

With the general decline in work, the poorest group (those with a household income of less than **\$400** per month) appears to be the most affected and most vulnerable to hardship, as **65%** of them reported that their household income was either completely cut off or decreased by more than half.

Impact of the war on household income



42% reported strained social ties ... and Sedatives use nearly doubled

The current war has caused the largest displacement crisis Lebanon has ever witnessed, alongside the systematic destruction of villages and agricultural areas. It has also deepened political divisions, strained communication, and eroded family and friendship bonds.

No doubt, media outlets and influencers fueled polarization.

Accordingly, **42%** reported that their social relationships have been affected by this war: tension now dominates some relationships (**20%**), communication with certain family members and friends has decreased (**20%**), some relationships were lost due to differences in opinions and political positions (**1%**), or people avoided discussing politics and the war to preserve their relationships (**1%**).

On the other hand, **58%** said their social relationships were not affected. Notably, most of them did not vote in the 2022 parliamentary elections, which clearly highlights the impact of Lebanese politics on people's social lives.

150,000

Around 150,000 Lebanese adults have begun or increased their use of sedatives, nearly doubling overall consumption.

Lebanese reliance on sedatives as a refuge from national trauma has often been the subject of humor. Yet the shock of the current war appears to have changed this pattern: **3%** began using sedatives for the first time, **2%** increased their intake, and **4%** maintained pre-war levels. Notably, women were far more likely than men to start using sedatives during this period (**6%** versus **1%**).

To put these figures into perspective, **nearly 150,000 Lebanese adults have begun or increased sedative use, causing overall consumption to almost double.**

Lebanese expectations are dominated by fears of worsening economic conditions... while concerns about disruptions to basic resources remain relatively mild..

Expectations for the coming period are largely pessimistic, particularly regarding economic conditions and other aspects of daily life. While some Lebanese anticipate further deterioration, others dismiss the possibility. This polarization is reflected in respondents' views at both extremes, those convinced that decline is inevitable and those certain it will not occur.

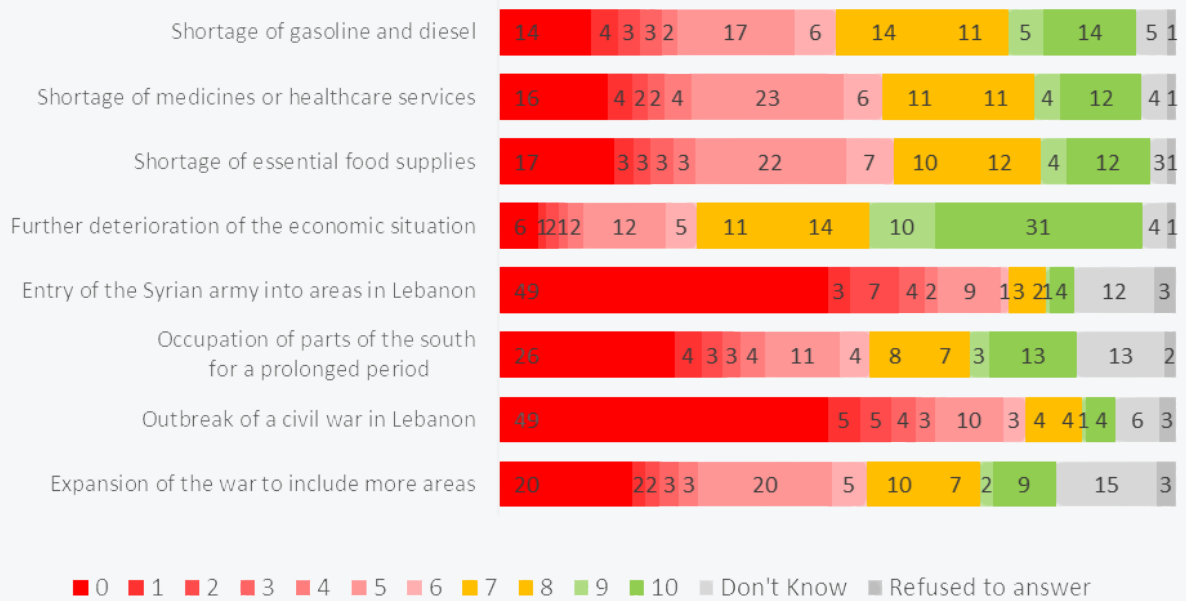
First, expectations for the coming period point to **"further economic decline"**: **31%** of Lebanese believe it will certainly occur, with similar proportions across all sects. In contrast, **6%** completely rule it out, the highest share among Shiite respondents.

Second, most Lebanese dismiss the possibility of disruptions to basic resources such as fuel, food, and medicine. Despite the gasoline and diesel shortages following the 2019 financial crisis, equal proportions (**14%**) believe such a crisis will certainly happen or completely rule it out, while the majority lean toward it not occurring.

Third, **12%** expect **"a shortage of basic food supplies"** to certainly occur, compared to **17%** who completely rule it out.

Fourth, **12%** foresee **"a shortage of medicines and healthcare services"**, while **16%** do not expect it at all.

Expectations of specific crises on a scale from 0 to 10
(10 = will definitely happen, 0 = will definitely not happen)



36% believe that the war will end in Lebanon once it ends in Iran.

While Lebanese people clearly understand how and when the war began, their expectations regarding its duration and when it might end depend on their own analyses and hopes.

The largest share of respondents (**37%**) said they were unable to predict when the war might end, while 2% refused to answer. For the rest, **16%** expected it to end within weeks, **25%** anticipated it lasting one to three months, **11%** three to six months, **6%** six months to a year, and **3%** believed its would continue for more than a year. These responses were collected the last week of March.

Shiite Lebanese were the most optimistic about the war ending within weeks (**29%**), compared to **11%** of Sunnis and Druze, **9%** of Christians, and **20%** of those who did not disclose their sect.

61% of Shiites are certain the war in Lebanon will end once it does in Iran.

Lebanese opinions are divided on whether the war's end in Lebanon is tied to Iran: **45%** believe it will end if hostilities in Iran cease, **35%** believe otherwise, and **18%** are uncertain.

This division is slightly leaning toward the view that the end of the two wars are not connected, a pattern evident across most sects except among Shiites. The latter are certain that the war in Lebanon will end if it ends in Iran (**61%**), with an additional **11%** considering this outcome likely.

In contrast, the majority of Christians (**49%**) believe the war in Lebanon will not end if it does in Iran, compared to **36%** who see a connection. Similarly, among Sunni respondents, **41%** reject a link between the two conflicts, while **38%** believe they are connected.

Linking the end of the war in Lebanon to its end in Iran



**Most Lebanese do not expect the outbreak of a civil war...
nor the entry of the Syrian army into Lebanon.**

On the security front, expectations for the coming period appear largely unaffected by the daily atmosphere of political escalation and alarmism promoted by politicians, analysts, and media figures. This is reflected in the polarized views of respondents—those convinced that certain security events will definitely occur and those equally certain they will not.

A clear majority of Lebanese dismiss the **“possibility of a civil war”**: **49%** completely rule it out, compared to only **4%** who believe it will certainly occur. A similar pattern emerged regarding the **“potential entry of the Syrian army into Lebanon”**, with **49%** rejecting the scenario outright and just **4%** expecting it to definitely happen.

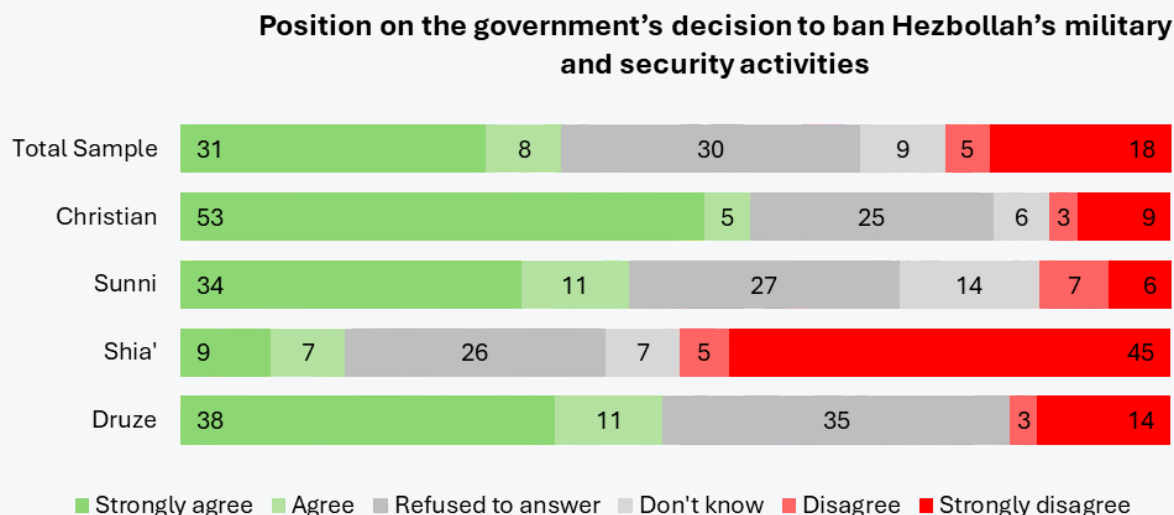
When asked about possible **“expansion of the war to include more areas,”** **20%** of respondents completely ruled it out, compared to **9%** who believed it would certainly happen. Similarly, regarding the prospect of an **“Israeli occupation of parts of Lebanese territory for a prolonged period,”** **26%** dismissed this scenario outright, while **13%** expected it to definitely happen. Both scenarios were more strongly rejected by Shiite respondents.

The government’s decision to ban Hezbollah’s military activities is supported by 39% of Lebanese.

The government’s decision to ban Hezbollah’s military and security activities and restrict its role to political work received more support than opposition. **39%** of Lebanese supported the decision (**31%** strongly and **8%** somewhat), while **23%** opposed it (including **18%** strongly opposed and **5%** somewhat opposed). Notably, a large proportion refrained from answering this question (**30%**), and an additional **9%** found it difficult to answer.

The strongest support for this decision came from Christians (**53%** strongly support and **5%** somewhat support), followed by Druze (**38%** strongly support and **11%** somewhat support), and then Sunnis (**34%** strongly support and **11%** somewhat support).

In contrast, the Shiites respondents expressed the opposite view, with **45%** strongly opposing and **5%** somewhat opposing the government's decision.



The French initiative for a ceasefire in exchange for Lebanon's recognition of the State of Israel within a peace agreement was met with more opposition (**42%**) than support (**32%**). Some opposed it strongly (**34%**) or somewhat (**8%**), while others supported it strongly (**19%**) or somewhat (**14%**). Meanwhile, **17%** did not know how to answer, and **8%** refused to respond.

Among the different sects, only Christians expressed overall support for the initiative, with **37%** strongly in favor and **23%** somewhat supportive. By contrast, Sunnis tended to reject it, with **34%** strongly opposing and **10%** somewhat opposing. Unsurprisingly, Shiite respondents showed the highest level of rejection, with **60%** strongly opposed and **7%** somewhat opposed.

It is worth noting that **5%** of Shiites supported it strongly and **8%** somewhat. Among Sunnis, **15%** supported it strongly and **10%** somewhat. Among Christians, a non-negligible share opposed the initiative: **15%** strongly and **6%** somewhat.

Finally, when Lebanese respondents were given a choice between two exclusive scenarios: Either Israel occupying part of the south with Hezbollah disarmed, or Hezbollah retaining its weapons without any occupation. A remarkable, **39%** chose to keep Hezbollah's weapons, compared to **11%** who **preferred disarmament even if it meant the partial occupation of the south.**

Notably, a very high percentage refused to answer this question (**32%**), while **18%** said they did not know how to respond, thus half of the sample did not provide a definitive answer.

Occupation vs. disarmament, or arms without occupation

