



Research & Statistics Department

The Economic Letter

March 2016

Summary:

In the first quarter 2016, most real sector indicators advanced with regard to the corresponding period of the preceding year. The trade deficit widened with rising imports and diminishing exports, while the overall balance of payments deficit shrank though still considered large, indicating acceleration in net financial inflows. The expansion in total assets of banks improved a little and the growth in the total public debt slowed down.

In this issue:

| Real sector | <i>p</i> 2 |
|-----------------------|------------|
| External sector | р3 |
| Financial sector | p4 |
| Monetary developments | <i>p5</i> |
| Public finances | р6 |
| Statistical appendix | <i>p</i> 8 |

Tables:

| General indicators of economic activities | p8 |
|---|------------|
| Total imports & exports by product | <i>p</i> 9 |
| Imports by origin | <i>p</i> 9 |
| Exports by destination | <i>p</i> 9 |
| Consolidated balance sheet of banks | p10 |
| Money supply and Counterparts | p11 |
| Outstanding public debt | p12 |
| Treasury bills portfolio | p12 |
| Interest rates | p13 |
| Exchange rates | p13 |
| | |

Charts:

Indicative charts

p14

I- REAL SECTOR

In March 2016,

The total value of checks cleared in the domestic and foreign currencies slightly increased to USD 5,592 million from USD 5,526 million in the previous month (USD 5,901 million in March 2015). Yet, cleared checks o/w 71.3 percent denominated in FC decreased in the first quarter 2016 by 0.4 percent when compared to the identical quarter of 2015.

The total value of returned checks in the domestic and foreign currencies augmented to USD 115 million from USD 107 million one month back (USD 118 million in March 2015). Returned checks dropped, however, in the first quarter 2016 by 15.9 percent with reference to the first quarter of the past year.

Collected real estate fees progressed to LBP 73.9 billion against LBP 69.6 billion in the preceding month and LBP 63.6 billion twelve months back. Collected fees rose in the first quarter 2016 by 15.5 percent with regard to the corresponding 2015 quarter.

Construction permits declined to 1,172 thousand square meters compared to 1,276 thousand square meters in the previous month (918 thousand square meters in March 2015). In the first three months of 2016, construction permits climbed, however, by 18.6 percent in respect of the same preceding year's period.

Cement deliveries improved to 434 thousand tons from 393 in the previous month and 406 thousand tons in March 2015. Cement deliveries jumped by 19.3 percent in the first three months of 2016 in comparison with the similar time interval of 2015.

The total number of passengers arriving to and departing from Beirut International Airport rose to 275,798 and 258,902 respectively to total 534,700 persons. Nonetheless, in the first quarter 2016, arrivals and departures surpassed those recorded in the similar quarter 2015 by 11.1 percent and 10.4 percent consecutively.

Agricultural exports fell to USD 12 million from USD 16 million one month back and were below in the first quarter 2016 those reported in the matching quarter of 2015 by USD 6 million (-13.0 percent).

In December 2015,

Industrial exports (excluding gold ingots) slightly increased to USD 231 million from USD 220 million in the previous month (USD 260 million in December 2014). Nevertheless, industrial exports diminished in 2015 by 6.2 percent with regard to the past year.

Imports of Industrial Equipments slightly retreated to USD 18.7 million from USD 18.9 million one month earlier and USD 20.7 million in December 2014. In 2015, industrial equipments imports regressed by 9.5 percent in comparison with 2014.

| Real Sector Indicators | | | | | |
|---|--------|--------|--------|--|--|
| | Mar-15 | Feb-16 | Mar-16 | | |
| Checks cleared (total) | | | | | |
| Number (000) | 1,063 | 982 | 1,044 | | |
| Value (USD million) | 5,901 | 5,526 | 5,592 | | |
| Checks cleared in LBP | | | | | |
| Number (000) | 347 | 330 | 365 | | |
| Value (LBP billion) | 2,380 | 2,318 | 2,425 | | |
| Checks cleared in FX | | | | | |
| Number (000) | 716 | 652 | 679 | | |
| Value (USD million) | 4,322 | 3,988 | 3,983 | | |
| Returned checks | | | | | |
| Number (000) | 20.4 | 17.0 | 18.9 | | |
| Value (USD million) | 118 | 107 | 115 | | |
| Construction permits (000 square meters) | 918 | 1,276 | 1,172 | | |
| Cement deliveries (000 tons) | 406 | 393 | 434 | | |
| Collected property taxes (LBP billion) | 63.6 | 69.6 | 73.9 | | |
| Passengers arrivals (000) | 243 | 217 | 276 | | |
| Passengers departures (000) | 234 | 225 | 259 | | |
| Agricultural exports (USD million) | 19 | 16 | 12 | | |
| Industrial exports (USD million) | 247 | n.a. | n.a. | | |
| Imports of industrial machinery (USD million) | 20.5 | n.a | n.a. | | |

Source: BDL, OEA ,BIA, CLR, ministry of Industry, Lebanese Customs

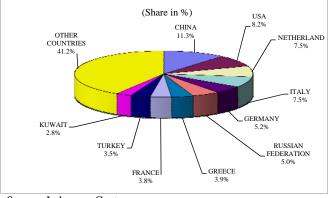
II- EXTERNAL SECTOR

In March 2016,

Imports of goods swelled to USD 1,750 million from USD 1,377 million in the previous month and USD 1,509 million in March 2015. They progressed, in the first quarter 2016 by 10.9 percent with reference to the first quarter of the previous year.

In the first quarter 2016, mineral products lead imported goods with a 25.9 percent share of total imports. They were followed by products of the chemical and machinery and mechanical appliances which accounted for 10.9 percent and 9.0 percent respectively. China topped the list of imports by country of origin with a 11.3 percent share of total. USA came next with a share of 8.2 percent followed by Netherlands and Italy (7.5 percent for each).



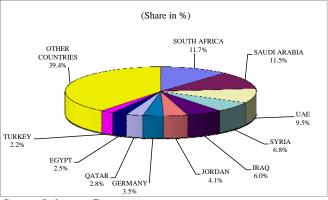


Source: Lebanese Customs

Exports of goods slightly decreased to USD 220 million compared to USD 228 million one month back and USD 257 million in March 2015. In the first quarter 2016, exports diminished by 14.7 percent in respect of the same quarter of the preceding year.

In the first three months of 2016, pearls, precious and semi - precious stones were on top of the list with a share of 17.2 percent of total exports, followed by prepared foodstuffs (17.1 percent), and machinery and mechanical appliances (14.4 percent). South Africa outperformed all others in terms of exports by country of destination with 11.7 percent share of the total, trailed by Saudi Arabia (11.5 percent), UAE (9.5 percent) and Syria (6.8 percent).

Exports by country of destination



Source: Lebanese Customs

The trade deficit broadened to USD 1,530 million from USD 1,149 million a month earlier and USD 1,252 million in March 2015. Thus, the trade deficit widened in the first quarter 2016 by 16.4 percent vis-àvis the corresponding quarter 2015.

External Sector Indicators

| USD million | Mar-15 | Feb-16 | Mar-16 |
|---------------------------------|--------|--------|--------|
| Imports | 1,509 | 1,377 | 1,750 |
| Exports | 257 | 228 | 220 |
| Trade deficit | -1,252 | -1,149 | -1,530 |
| Balance of payments | -417 | 363 | -288 |
| Gross foreign currency reserves | 34,533 | 31,424 | 30,371 |

Source: Lebanese Customs, BDL.

The overall balance of payments reported a deficit of USD 288 million following a surplus of USD 363 million in the previous month (USD 417 million deficit in March 2015). Thus, a USD 644 million negative balance occurred in the first quarter 2016 and represented a decrease in net foreign assets of banks and financial institutions (USD -237 million) and in net foreign assets of the central bank (USD -407 million).

Gross foreign currency reserves of the Central bank retreated to USD 30,371 million compared to USD 31,424 million at the end of the previous month and USD 34,533 million end March 2015. The U.S. dollar average rate remained stable at LBP 1,507.5 with the Central bank maintaining its foreign exchange intervention rates at LBP 1,501 per one USD for bid and LBP 1,514 per one USD for ask.

III-FINANCIAL SECTOR

1. Commercial Banks

Total consolidated assets of commercial banks operating in Lebanon amounted to LBP 282,896 billion (USD 187.7 billion) at the end of March 2016, thus increasing by 0.9 percent from end December 2015 (0.7 percent increase in the first quarter 2015).

Total deposits at commercial banks, including resident and non-resident private sector deposits and public sector deposits increased by 0.6 percent in the first quarter 2016 and constituted 83.1 percent of total assets with an equivalent value of LBP 235,032 billion (around USD 155.9 billion) at the end of the period.

Commercial Banks Balance Sheet -Main items

| M 15 | E-1-16 | M 16 |
|---------|---|---|
| Mar-15 | reb-16 | Mar-16 |
| 266,758 | 281,278 | 282,896 |
| 224,124 | 233,308 | 235,032 |
| 172,829 | 180,468 | 181,889 |
| 46,454 | 47,792 | 47,917 |
| 4,841 | 5,048 | 5,225 |
| 23,798 | 25,155 | 25,061 |
| 77,098 | 82,245 | 82,994 |
| 68,891 | 72,662 | 73,237 |
| 8,208 | 9,583 | 9,758 |
| 58,710 | 57,706 | 57,540 |
| 31,315 | 29,920 | 29,476 |
| 27,253 | 27,644 | 27,921 |
| 16,455 | 16,053 | 15,889 |
| 9,302 | 9,160 | 9,280 |
| 96,647 | 107,233 | 108,422 |
| | 224,124 172,829 46,454 4,841 23,798 77,098 68,891 8,208 58,710 31,315 27,253 16,455 9,302 | 266,758 281,278 224,124 233,308 172,829 180,468 46,454 47,792 4,841 5,048 23,798 25,155 77,098 82,245 68,891 72,662 8,208 9,583 58,710 57,706 31,315 29,920 27,253 27,644 16,455 16,053 9,302 9,160 |

Source: BDL.

The breakdown of total deposits shows that private sector deposits denominated in LBP increased by 0.7 percent from end December 2015, while those denominated in foreign currencies declined by 0.5 percent, thus deposit dollarization rate slightly decreased to 64.8 percent at the end of March 2016 from 64.9 percent at end December 2015. The itemization of total deposits reveals also an increase in public sector deposits (+3.0 percent) and in resident private sector deposits (+0.8 percent) but a slight decrease in non-resident private sector deposits (-0.2) percent) in the first quarter 2016.

Subsequently, resident private sector deposits accounted for 77.4 percent of total deposits at end March 2016 (20.4 percent for non-resident private sector and 2.2 percent for public sector deposits).

Total capital accounts amounted to LBP 25,061 billion (USD 16,624 million) at the end of March 2016 and represented around 8.9 percent of total assets. Capital accounts decreased by 0.3 percent when compared to end December 2015 (+0.3 percent in the first quarter 2015).

Total claims on the resident and non-resident private sector expanded by 1.5 percent in the first quarter 2016, reaching LBP 82,994 billion at the end of March. The dollarization rate of these loans was 74.8 percent at the end of the stated month, and the ratio of total loans to total deposits attained 36.1 percent.

Total claims on the public sector were equivalent to LBP 57,540 billion at the end of March 2016, thus increasing by 1.0 percent from end December 2015. Commercial banks held at the end of the stated month LBP 29,476 billion of Lebanese treasury bills (45.0 percent of the total portfolio in circulation) and USD 18,521 million of Eurobonds (nearly 73.9 percent of the total outstanding portfolio).

Deposits at the Central Bank rose in the first quarter 2016 by 2.0 percent to total LBP 108,422 billion at the end of the period, but claims on non- resident banks recoiled by 8.8 percent to LBP 15,889 billion (USD 10.5 billion) to represent 10.7 percent of private sector deposits in foreign currencies.

2. Investment Banks

Total consolidated assets of investment banks operating in Lebanon (including medium and long term credit banks) amounted to LBP 6,779 billion (around USD 4.5 billion) at the end of March 2016, thus decreasing by 1.2 percent from end December 2015 (2.1 percent growth in the first quarter 2015).

In the first three months of 2016, capital accounts remained almost stable (+0.1 percent) while private sector deposits (resident & non -resident) retreated by 3.8 percent. Cash and banks decreased by 1.4 percent and claims on public sector by 4.2 percent while claims on private sector stood almost unchanged.

3. Financial Markets

The total number of shares traded on the Beirut Stock Exchange jumped to 24,417 thousand shares with a traded value of USD 222.4 million in March 2016 compared to 4,962 thousand shares with a traded value of USD 42.9 million in the previous month and 10,016 thousand shares with a value of USD 74.7 million in March 2015.

During March 2016, the traded value by economic sectors was as such: 99.0 percent for Banking and 1.0 percent for Development and Reconstruction.

| Capital Markets | | | | | | |
|---|--------|--------|--------|--|--|--|
| | Mar-15 | Feb-16 | Mar-16 | | | |
| BSE | | | | | | |
| Traded shares (ooo) | 10,016 | 4,962 | 24,417 | | | |
| Traded value (USD million) | 74.7 | 42.9 | 222.4 | | | |
| Market capitalization | 11,940 | 11,093 | 11,336 | | | |
| (USD million) | | | | | | |
| Outstanding treasury bills (LBP billion) | 62,203 | 65,071 | 64,940 | | | |
| Outstanding sovereign Eurobonds (USD million) | 24,673 | 24,610 | 24,597 | | | |
| Outstanding private sector (banks) securities (USD million) | 850 | 850 | 850 | | | |

Source: BDL, BSE

The market capitalization of listed shares increased to USD 11,336 million at the end of March 2016, compared to USD 11,093 million at the end of the previous month (USD 11,940 million at the end of March 2015). Banking had a 81.9 percent weight, whereas Development and Construction 15.0 percent.

The face value of the outstanding treasury bills portfolio denominated in the domestic currency and the value of the outstanding sovereign bonds portfolio denominated in foreign currencies (Eurobonds) amounted to LBP 64,940 billion and USD 24,597 million respectively at the end of March 2016.

The outstanding value of bank-issued certificates of deposits, Euro-CDs, and subordinated debt stood almost unchanged at USD 850 million at the end of March 2016. The outstanding value of the certificates of deposits issued by BDL in the domestic currency increased to LBP 36,875 billion and the value of those issued in foreign currencies to USD 9.2 billion.

IV- MONETARY DEVELOPMENTS

The stock of money and quasi money (M3) attained LBP 187,703 billion at the end of March 2016, of which 57.8 percent denominated in foreign currencies, thus increased by 0.7 percent from end December 2015 (0.3 percent increase in the first quarter 2015).

Money Supply & Counterparts

| Mar-15 | Feb-16 | Mar-16 |
|---------|---|--|
| 177,973 | 186,166 | 187,703 |
| 51,822 | 48,270 | 48,022 |
| 65,531 | 72,678 | 73,854 |
| -7,646 | -8,646 | -8,912 |
| 71,743 | 75,928 | 76,511 |
| -3,476 | -2,064 | -1,772 |
| 148.29 | 149.08 | 148.89 |
| | 177,973 51,822 65,531 -7,646 71,743 -3,476 | 177,973 186,166 51,822 48,270 65,531 72,678 -7,646 -8,646 71,743 75,928 -3,476 -2,064 |

Source: BDL,CRI.

The LBP 1,342 billion increase in M3 in the first quarter 2016 resulted from an increase in each of net claims on public sector (+LBP 3,166 billion), net foreign assets (+LBP 1,414 billion) and claims on the private sector (+LBP 816 billion) against a decrease in valuation adjustment (-LBP 2,511 billion) and in net other items (-LBP 1,543 billion).

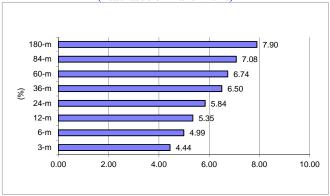
The Consumer Price Index (CPI) for Beirut and Suburbs, published by the Consultation and Research Institute, decreased by 0.13 percent in March 2016 compared to the previous month but increased by 0.3 percent from December 2015.

The Consumer Price Index (CPI) for Lebanon, published by the Central Administration of Statistics, increased by 0.5 percent in the month of March 2016 but decreased by 1.2 percent from December 2015.

The interest rates on LBP monetary instruments were stable at the end of March 2016 on 45 and 60-day certificates of deposits issued by BDL reading 3.57 percent and 3.85 percent respectively. The yields on the issued Lebanese Treasury bills also remained steady and read at the end of the stated month: 4.44 percent for three-month bills, 4.99 percent for sixmonth bills, 5.35 percent for one-year bills, 5.84 percent for two-year bills, 6.50 percent for three-year

bills, 6.74 percent for five-year bills, 7.08 percent for seven-year bills and 7.90 percent for fifteen-year bills issued for the first time in March 2016.

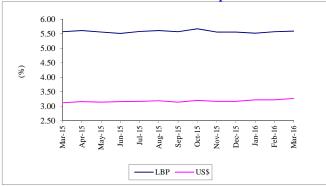
Yield on Lebanese treasury bills denominated in LBP (Last issue of March 2016)



Source: BDL

In March 2016, the average interest rate on new or renewed LBP and USD deposits at commercial banks increased a little to 5.59 percent (5.57 percent a month ago) and 3.27 percent (3.22 percent in February 2016) respectively. The average 3-month USD LIBOR was 0.63 percent.

Interest rates on new or renewed deposits at banks



In March 2016, the average interest rate on new or renewed loans at commercial banks denominated in LBP and USD increased to 8.62 percent (8.18 percent a month ago) and 7.36 percent (7.31 percent in February 2016) respectively, according to a new reporting methodology in compliance with BDL intermediary circular No 389 dated May 22, 2015.

V- PUBLIC FINANCES

Government revenues, including budget revenues and treasury receipts attained LBP 1,055 billion in December 2015 to sum LBP 14,435 billion in 2015 (LBP 16,400 billion in 2014). The LBP 14,435 billion revenues comprised LBP 13,635 billion budget revenues and LBP 800 billion treasury receipts.

Government expenditures, consisting of budget and treasury spending, amounted to LBP 2,127 billion in December 2015 to total LBP 20,393 billion in 2015 (LBP 21,032 billion in 2014). The LBP 20,393 billion expenditures included LBP 7,050 billion debt service and LBP 13,343 billion other general expenditures o/w LBP 1,711 billion to EDL and LBP 1,370 billion related to budget expenditures for previous years.

| Fiscal | Situatio | n |
|--------|----------|-----|
| | Dag | 1.4 |

| LBP billion | Dec-14 | Nov-15 | Dec-15 |
|-------------------------|--------|--------|--------|
| Government revenues | 2,221 | 920 | 1,055 |
| Tax revenues | 666 | 596 | 656 |
| Non-tax revenues | 1,405 | 277 | 306 |
| Treasury receipts | 150 | 47 | 93 |
| Government expenditures | 2,294 | 1,890 | 2,127 |
| Debt service | 499 | 826 | 562 |
| Others | 1,795 | 1,064 | 1,565 |
| Overall balance | -73 | -970 | -1,072 |
| Primary balance | 425 | -144 | -510 |

Source: Ministry of Finance.

Total Deficit increased as such to LBP 5,958 billion in 2015 from LBP 4,632 billion in 2014, while the primary balance surplus decreased to LBP 1,092 billion compared to LBP 1,970 billion respectively.

Gross public debt amounted to LBP 107,092 billion (the equivalent of USD 71.0 billion) at the end of March 2016, thus increasing by 1.0 percent when compared to end December 2015 (4.3 percent growth in the first quarter 2015).

Net public debt, which subtracts public sector deposits at commercial banks and the central bank from gross public debt, amounted to LBP 94,365 billion at the end of March 2016, thus rising by 1.7 percent from end December 2015 (2.1 percent growth in the first quarter 2015).

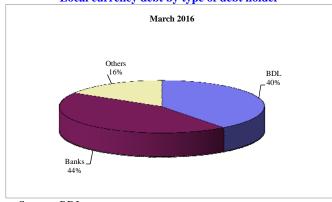
| Public Debt | | | | | |
|------------------------|---------|---------|---------|--|--|
| LBP billion | Mar-15 | Feb-16 | Mar-16 | | |
| Public Debt (Gross) | 104,677 | 107,358 | 107,092 | | |
| Debt in LBP | 63,260 | 66,324 | 66,012 | | |
| Debt in FC | 41,417 | 41,034 | 41,080 | | |
| Public Debt (Net) | 88,212 | 93,666 | 94,365 | | |
| Public sector deposits | 16,465 | 13,692 | 12,727 | | |
| Commercial Banks | 4,841 | 5,048 | 5,225 | | |
| BDL | 11,624 | 8,644 | 7,502 | | |

Source: BDL.

The shares of the local currency debt and foreign currency debt of the total gross were around 61.6 percent and 38.4 percent respectively at the end of March 2016. The distribution of local currency debt by type of holder was as follows: 44.0 percent for banks (44.4 percent end of February 2016), 39.7 percent for the Central bank (38.8 percent in the previous month) and 16.3 percent for the non-banking sector (16.8 percent one month earlier). The breakdown of the foreign currency debt was as such: Eurobonds (92.0 percent), Multilateral (3.7 percent), Bilateral (3.9 percent), Paris II loans (0.2 percent) and others (0.2 percent).

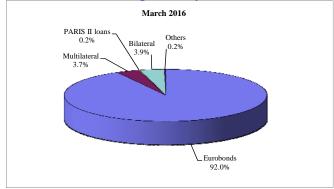
The average maturity of the Government debt securities denominated in the domestic currency was estimated at 1,250 days (3.42 years) as at end March 2016 with a weighted interest of 6.95 percent, while the average maturity of the Government debt instruments denominated in foreign currencies was around 6.07 years with a weighted interest of 6.41 percent.





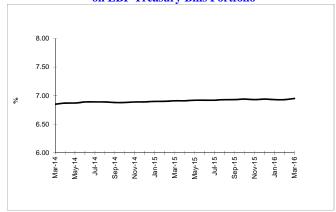
Source: BDL

Foreign currency debt

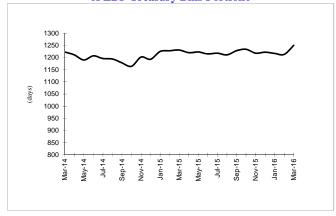


Source: BDL.

Weighted Average Interest Rate on LBP Treasury Bills Portfolio



Weighted Average Life of LBP Treasury Bills Portfolio



GENERAL INDICATORS OF ECONOMIC ACTIVITIES

| | 2015 | Jan - Mar 2015 | Jan - Mar 2016 | Mar-15 | Feb-16 | Mar-16 |
|---|-----------|-------------------|-------------------|---------|---------|---------|
| Imports of Industrial Equipment (000's US\$) | 243,446 | 63,235 | n.a. | 20,457 | n.a. | n.a. |
| Building Permits (000's m2) | 12,339 | 2,745 | 3,255 | 918 | 1,276 | 1,172 |
| Cement Delivery (000s' tons) | 5,043 | 904 | n.a. | 406 | 393 | n.a. |
| Checks Cleared in LBP (billion LBP) | 28,211 | 6,667 | 7,319 | 2,380 | 2,318 | 2,425 |
| Checks Cleared in FC (million US\$) | 50,845 | 12,531 | 12,036 | 4,322 | 3,988 | 3,983 |
| Shipped Goods (tons)-Beirut Port | 1,082,466 | 180,700 | 226,068 | 67,016 | 73,682 | 84,011 |
| Unloaded Goods (tons)-Beirut Port | 7,134,250 | 1,630,264 | 1,947,479 | 607,146 | 577,903 | 755,042 |
| Passengers Arrivals (000's)-BIA | 3,517 | 662 | 736 | 243 | 217 | 276 |
| Passengers Departures (000's)-BIA | 3,688 | 709 | 782 | 234 | 225 | 259 |
| Total exports of goods (million USD) | 2,952 | 744 | 634 | 257 | 228 | 220 |
| Total imports of goods (million USD) | 18,069 | 4,169 | 4,622 | 1,509 | 1,377 | 1,750 |
| Balance of Trade (million USD) | -15,117 | -3,425 | -3,988 | -1,252 | -1,149 | -1,530 |
| Changes of Net Foreign Assets in the banking system (million USD) | -3,354 | -850 | -644 | -417 | 363 | -288 |
| Gross Foreign Currency Reserves (End of period-million USD) | - | - | - | 34,533 | 31,424 | 30,371 |
| Consumer Price Index (End of period) | - | - | - | 148.29 | 149.08 | 148.89 |

Sources: BDL ,Lebanese Customs, Consultation & Research Institute, Order of engineers, Beirut International Airport, Port of Beirut, Ministry of Industry.



TOTAL IMPORTS & EXPORTS BY PRODUCT

(Million US Dollars)

| | | Imports | | | | Exports | |
|--|--------|----------|-----------|-------|----------|-----------|--|
| Goods | | Jan -Mar | Jan - Mar | | Jan -Mar | Jan - Mar | |
| | 2015 | 2015 | 2016 | 2015 | 2015 | 2016 | |
| 1- Live animals, animal products | 908 | 225 | 180 | 32 | 9 | 3 | |
| 2- Vegetable products | 910 | 254 | 255 | 184 | 37 | 37 | |
| 3- Fats & edible fats & oils | 164 | 36 | 42 | 34 | 7 | 10 | |
| 4- Prepared foodstuffs | 1,359 | 315 | 322 | 483 | 119 | 109 | |
| 5- Mineral products | 3,439 | 736 | 1,198 | 31 | 13 | 3 | |
| 6- Products of the chemical | 1,945 | 490 | 505 | 411 | 105 | 72 | |
| 7- Plastics & articles thereof | 758 | 167 | 171 | 129 | 28 | 32 | |
| 8- Raw hides & skins, leather, furskins | 81 | 19 | 18 | 16 | 4 | 3 | |
| 9- Wood & articles of wood | 238 | 52 | 51 | 13 | 3 | 2 | |
| 10- Paper & paperboard & articles thereof | 319 | 78 | 73 | 158 | 41 | 33 | |
| 11- Textiles & textile articles | 819 | 209 | 208 | 106 | 28 | 20 | |
| 12- Footwear, headgear, prepared feathers | 160 | 47 | 45 | 17 | 6 | 4 | |
| 13- Articles of stone, plaster, cement | 427 | 93 | 103 | 27 | 7 | 6 | |
| 14- Pearls, precious or semi-precious stones | 822 | 198 | 213 | 434 | 120 | 109 | |
| 15- Base metals & articles of base metal | 1,159 | 275 | 283 | 314 | 75 | 64 | |
| 16- Machinery & mechanical appliances | 1,993 | 465 | 416 | 414 | 101 | 92 | |
| 17-Transport equipment | 1,758 | 333 | 356 | 23 | 8 | 4 | |
| 18- Optical instruments & apparatus | 331 | 78 | 77 | 17 | 4 | 4 | |
| 19- Arms & ammunition | 24 | 4 | 6 | 0 | 0 | 0 | |
| 20- Miscellaneous manufactured articles | 430 | 90 | 97 | 104 | 28 | 25 | |
| 21- Works of art | 28 | 8 | 3 | 7 | 2 | 1 | |
| Total | 18,069 | 4,169 | 4,622 | 2,952 | 744 | 634 | |

Source: Lebanese Customs.

IMPORTS BY ORIGIN (Million US Dollars)

Jan - Mar Share Jan - Mar Share 2015 % 2016 % CHINA 11.3 12.3 522 513 USA 215 380 8.2 **NETHERLAND** 58 1.4 345 7.5 **ITALY** 279 6.7 345 7.5 **GERMANY** 242 5.2 267 6.4 RUSSIAN FEDERATION 263 6.3 231 5.0 **GREECE** 186 4.5 182 3.9 FRANCE 255 6.1 176 3.8 TURKEY 149 3.6 164 3.5 **KUWAIT** 5 0.1 129 2.8 OTHER COUNTRIES 1,979 47.5 1,906 41.2 TOTAL IMPORTS 4,169 100.0

Source: Lebanese Customs.

EXPORTS BY DESTINATION (Million US Dollars)

| | Jan - Mar | Share | Jan - Mar | Share |
|-----------------|-----------|-------|-----------|-------|
| | 2015 | % | 2016 | % |
| SOUTH AFRICA | 52 | 7.0 | 74 | 11.7 |
| SAUDI ARABIA | 98 | 13.2 | 73 | 11.5 |
| UAE | 78 | 10.5 | 60 | 9.5 |
| SYRIA | 54 | 7.3 | 43 | 6.8 |
| IRAQ | 62 | 8.3 | 38 | 6.0 |
| JORDAN | 24 | 3.2 | 26 | 4.1 |
| GERMANY | 15 | 2.0 | 22 | 3.5 |
| QATAR | 23 | 3.1 | 18 | 2.8 |
| EGYPT | 24 | 3.2 | 16 | 2.5 |
| TURKEY | 18 | 2.4 | 14 | 2.2 |
| OTHER COUNTRIES | 296 | 39.8 | 250 | 39.4 |
| TOTAL EXPORTS | 744 | 100.0 | 634 | 100.0 |

Source: Lebanese Customs.

THE CONSOLIDATED BALANCE SHEET OF COMMERCIAL BANKS OPERATING IN LEBANON (End of Period - Billion LBP)

| | 20 | 2015 | | | |
|---|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| | Mar | Dec | Jan | Feb | Mar |
| ASSETS | | | | | |
| Reserves | 97,295 | 107,021 | 107,787 | 107,930 | 109,126 |
| -Cash | 648 | 693 | 745 | 697 | 704 |
| -Deposits at the Central Bank | 96,647 | 106,329 | 107,042 | 107,233 | 108,422 |
| Claims on the Private Sector | 68,891 | 72,427 | 72,622 | 72,662 | 73,237 |
| -Claims denominated in Lebanese Pound | 19,148 | 20,573 | 20,693 | 20,754 | 20,900 |
| -Claims denominated in Foreign Currencies | 49,743 | 51,854 | 51,929 | 51,908 | 52,337 |
| Claims on the Public Sector | 58,710 | 56,984 | 57,082 | 57,706 | 57,540 |
| o/w -Treasury Bills in Lebanese Pound | 31,315 | 30,243 | 29,567 | 29,920 | 29,476 |
| -Treasury Bills in Foreign Currencies | 27,253 | 26,600 | 27,378 | 27,644 | 27,921 |
| Foreign Assets | 33,965 | 35,870 | 35,138 | 34,797 | 34,927 |
| -Claims on Non-Resident Private Sector | 8,208 | 9,316 | 9,373 | 9,583 | 9,758 |
| -Claims on Non-Resident Banks | 16,455 | 17,422 | 16,628 | 16,053 | 15,889 |
| -Other Foreign Assets | 9,302 | 9,132 | 9,138 | 9,160 | 9,280 |
| Fixed Assets | 6,890 | 7,361 | 7,316 | 7,375 | 7,301 |
| Unclassified Assets | 1,008 | 716 | 754 | 809 | 765 |
| TOTAL ASSETS | 266,758 | 280,379 | 280,699 | 281,278 | 282,896 |
| LIABILITIES | | | | | |
| Liabilities to the Private Sector | 172,829 | 180,489 | 180,167 | 180,468 | 181,889 |
| -Demand Deposits in Lebanese Pound | 4,723 | 4,907 | 4,795 | 4,752 | 4,966 |
| -Other Deposits in Lebanese Pound | 65,466 | 68,678 | 69,144 | 69,200 | 69,239 |
| -Deposits in Foreign Currencies | 102,640 | 106,904 | 106,228 | 106,516 | 107,684 |
| Liabilities to the Public Sector | 4,841 | 5,074 | 5,045 | 5,048 | 5,225 |
| Deposits of Non-Residents | 46,454 | 48,026 | 48,213 | 47,792 | 47,917 |
| -Denominated in Lebanese Pound | 6,011 | 6,680 | 6,746 | 6,640 | 6,655 |
| -Denominated in Foreign Currencies | 40,443 | 41,346 | 41,468 | 41,151 | 41,262 |
| Liabilities to Non-Resident Banks | 8,598 | 9,864 | 10,114 | 9,896 | 9,567 |
| Bonds | 357 | 412 | 409 | 422 | 423 |
| Capital Base | 23,798 | 25,131 | 25,163 | 25,155 | 25,061 |
| -Core Capital | 22,032 | 23,300 | 23,329 | 23,329 | 23,234 |
| -Supplementary Capital | 1,765 | 1,831 | 1,834 | 1,826 | 1,827 |
| Unclassified Liabilities | 9,882 | 11,383 | 11,587 | 12,497 | 12,813 |
| TOTAL LIABILITIES | 266,758 | 280,379 | 280,699 | 281,278 | 282,896 |

Source: BDL.



MONEY SUPPLY AND COUNTERPARTS (End of Period - Billion LBP)

| | 20 | 2015 | | | |
|-------------------------------------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| | Mar | Dec | Jan | Feb | Mar |
| Money Supply | | | | | |
| Currency in circulation | 3,488 | 4,014 | 3,803 | 3,871 | 3,991 |
| + Demand Deposits in LBP | 4,824 | 5,029 | 4,889 | 4,854 | 5,056 |
| = M1 | 8,312 | 9,042 | 8,691 | 8,725 | 9,048 |
| + Other Deposits in LBP | 66,226 | 69,578 | 70,055 | 70,101 | 70,132 |
| = M 2 | 74,538 | 78,620 | 78,746 | 78,826 | 79,179 |
| + Deposits in Foreign Currencies | 103,163 | 107,475 | 106,806 | 107,070 | 108,253 |
| + Bonds | 272 | 265 | 263 | 270 | 270 |
| = M3 | 177,973 | 186,360 | 185,815 | 186,166 | 187,703 |
| + Treasury Bills Held by the Public | 10,537 | 11,009 | 11,029 | 11,106 | 10,761 |
| = M4 | 188,510 | 197,369 | 196,844 | 197,272 | 198,464 |
| Counterparts of the Money Supply | | | | | |
| Net Foreign Assets | 51,822 | 46,608 | 46,128 | 48,270 | 48,022 |
| o/w Gold | 16,480 | 14,846 | 15,479 | 17,089 | 17,157 |
| Net Claims on the Public Sector | 65,531 | 70,688 | 71,906 | 72,678 | 73,854 |
| Valuation Adjustment | -7,646 | -6,401 | -7,037 | -8,646 | -8,912 |
| Claims on the Private Sector | 71,743 | 75,695 | 75,888 | 75,928 | 76,511 |
| Claims in LBP | 20,169 | 21,733 | 21,849 | 21,907 | 22,061 |
| Claims in FC | 51,574 | 53,961 | 54,039 | 54,022 | 54,450 |
| Other Items (Net) | -3,476 | -229 | -1,070 | -2,064 | -1,772 |
| TOTAL | 177,973 | 186,360 | 185,815 | 186,166 | 187,703 |

Source: BDL.



OUTSTANDING PUBLIC DEBT BY TYPE OF HOLDER

(End of Period - Billion LBP) (Actual Value*)

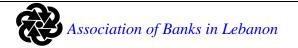
| Year | | Total | Local Currency | | | | Foreign Currency | | | | | |
|--------------|-----|---------|----------------|--------|-----------------------|--------|------------------|-------|-------------------|-----------------------|--------|--|
| And Month | | Debt | Central | De | ebt | | - | | Debt | | | |
| Month | | | Bank | Banks | Others ⁽¹⁾ | Total | IDI** | FG+ | Paris II loans | Others ⁽²⁾ | Total | |
| 2014 | Dec | 100,356 | 19,855 | 31,468 | 10,429 | 61,752 | 1,619 | 1,839 | 128 | 35,018 | 38,604 | |
| 2015 | Mar | 104,677 | 21,607 | 31,116 | 10,537 | 63,260 | 1,547 | 1,745 | 97 | 38,028 | 41,417 | |
| | Apr | 104,720 | 21,769 | 30,913 | 10,648 | 63,330 | 1,545 | 1,752 | 101 | 37,992 | 41,390 | |
| | May | 104,589 | 21,896 | 30,941 | 10,686 | 63,523 | 1,512 | 1,666 | 99 | 37,789 | 41,066 | |
| | Jun | 104,063 | 22,294 | 30,794 | 10,807 | 63,895 | 1,515 | 1,682 | 101 | 36,870 | 40,168 | |
| | Jul | 104,316 | 22,624 | 30,793 | 10,743 | 64,160 | 1,488 | 1,662 | 99 | 36,907 | 40,156 | |
| | Aug | 103,858 | 22,899 | 30,694 | 10,820 | 64,413 | 1,489 | 1,688 | 85 | 36,183 | 39,445 | |
| | Sep | 103,608 | 22,896 | 30,459 | 10,783 | 64,138 | 1,482 | 1,684 | 84 | 36,220 | 39,470 | |
| | Oct | 104,086 | 23,363 | 30,497 | 10,860 | 64,720 | 1,465 | 1,640 | 83 | 36,178 | 39,366 | |
| | Nov | 106,181 | 23,898 | 30,455 | 10,946 | 65,299 | 1,491 | 1,538 | 80 | 37,773 | 40,882 | |
| | Dec | 106,011 | 24,308 | 29,878 | 11,009 | 65,195 | 1,510 | 1,570 | 83 | 37,653 | 40,816 | |
| 2016 | Jan | 106,475 | 25,380 | 29,139 | 11,029 | 65,548 | 1,504 | 1,569 | 83 | 37,771 | 40,927 | |
| | Feb | 107,358 | 25,763 | 29,455 | 11,106 | 66,324 | 1,512 | 1,578 | 66 | 37,878 | 41,034 | |
| | Mar | 107,092 | 26,215 | 29,036 | 10,761 | 66,012 | 1,512 | 1,608 | 69 | 37,891 | 41,080 | |

Source :BDL.

TREASURY BILLS PORTFOLIO IN LBP (Face value, Billion LBP)

| Year And Month | | In Circulation End of period | Issue | Reimbursement | Weighted Average Life (days) | Weighted Average Interest (%) |
|----------------------|-----|------------------------------------|-------|---------------|---------------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| 2014 | Dec | 60,644 | 1,339 | 1,232 | 1,193 | 6.89 |
| 2015 | Mar | 62,203 | 1,231 | 629 | 1,231 | 6.91 |
| | Apr | 62,298 | 1,078 | 983 | 1,220 | 6.91 |
| | May | 62,433 | 1,136 | 1,001 | 1,223 | 6.92 |
| | Jun | 62,800 | 1,264 | 897 | 1,215 | 6.92 |
| | Jul | 62,968 | 1,422 | 1,254 | 1,218 | 6.92 |
| | Aug | 63,117 | 1,060 | 911 | 1,211 | 6.93 |
| | Sep | 63,021 | 1,661 | 1,757 | 1,228 | 6.93 |
| | Oct | 63,654 | 1,789 | 1,156 | 1,234 | 6.94 |
| | Nov | 64,165 | 1,032 | 521 | 1,218 | 6.93 |
| | Dec | 64,112 | 905 | 958 | 1,222 | 6.94 |
| 2016 | Jan | 64,368 | 1,689 | 1,433 | 1,217 | 6.93 |
| | Feb | 65,071 | 1,229 | 526 | 1,213 | 6.93 |
| | Mar | 64,940 | 2,004 | 2,135 | 1,250 | 6.95 |

Source:BDL.



^{*} The figures are equal to the principal paid plus the interests due.

 $^{** \}mathit{IDI}: \mathit{International\ Development\ Institutions}.$

⁺ FG: Foreign Governments.

⁽¹⁾ Include: public TB's, public entities TB's and financial institutions TB's.

⁽²⁾ Include: Eurobonds holders (banks, non banks, residents and non residents), foreign private sector loans and special TB's in FC (expropriation bonds).

AVERAGE INTEREST RATES

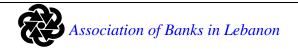
| Yea | ır | Average I | ending ** | Average | Deposit | Inter | 3m | Interest rates on TBs (last issue) | | | | | | | | | | |
|------|-----|-----------|-----------|---------|----------|--------|-------|------------------------------------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|-------|-------|-------|
| And | d | Rate on | Funds in | Rate on | Funds in | Bank | Libor | 3-m | 6-m | 12-m | 24-m | 36-m | 60-m | 84-m | 96-m | 120-m | 144-m | 180-m |
| Mon | th | LBP | US\$ | LBP | US\$ | Rate * | \$ | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 2014 | Dec | 7.49 | 6.97 | 5.56 | 3.07 | 2.75 | 0.24 | 4.39 | 4.87 | 5.08 | 5.76 | 6.40 | 6.63 | | | | | |
| 2015 | Mar | 6.94 | 7.16 | 5.57 | 3.12 | 2.78 | 0.27 | 4.39 | 4.87 | 5.08 | 5.76 | 6.40 | 6.63 | | | 7.33 | | |
| | Apr | 7.10 | 7.08 | 5.61 | 3.16 | 2.84 | 0.28 | 4.39 | 4.87 | 5.08 | 5.76 | 6.40 | 6.63 | 6.96 | | | | |
| | May | 7.11 | 7.04 | 5.56 | 3.14 | 2.83 | 0.28 | 4.39 | 4.87 | 5.08 | 5.76 | 6.40 | 6.63 | | | 7.33 | | |
| | Jun | 7.12 | 7.03 | 5.51 | 3.16 | 3.27 | 0.28 | 4.39 | 4.87 | 5.08 | 5.76 | 6.40 | 6.63 | 6.96 | | | | |
| | Jul | 6.90 | 7.09 | 5.58 | 3.17 | 3.05 | 0.29 | 4.39 | 4.87 | 5.08 | 5.76 | 6.40 | 6.63 | | | 7.33 | | |
| | Aug | 6.89 | 7.12 | 5.61 | 3.19 | 2.89 | 0.32 | 4.39 | 4.87 | 5.08 | 5.76 | 6.40 | 6.63 | 6.96 | | | | |
| | Sep | 7.08 | 7.19 | 5.57 | 3.14 | 3.05 | 0.33 | 4.39 | 4.87 | 5.08 | 5.76 | 6.40 | 6.63 | | | 7.33 | | |
| | Oct | 7.13 | 7.05 | 5.67 | 3.20 | 3.03 | 0.32 | 4.39 | 4.87 | 5.08 | 5.76 | 6.40 | 6.63 | 6.96 | | 7.33 | | |
| | Nov | 6.93 | 7.15 | 5.56 | 3.17 | 3.03 | 0.37 | 4.39 | 4.87 | 5.08 | 5.76 | 6.40 | 6.63 | 6.96 | | | | |
| | Dec | 7.45 | 7.06 | 5.56 | 3.17 | 3.03 | 0.54 | 4.39 | 4.87 | 5.08 | 5.76 | 6.40 | 6.63 | | | 7.33 | | |
| 2016 | Jan | 8.28 | 7.34 | 5.52 | 3.22 | 3.00 | 0.62 | 4.39 | 4.87 | 5.08 | 5.76 | 6.40 | 6.63 | 6.96 | | | | |
| | Feb | 8.18 | 7.31 | 5.57 | 3.22 | 3.05 | 0.62 | 4.39 | 4.87 | 5.08 | 5.76 | 6.40 | 6.63 | | | 7.33 | | |
| | Mar | 8.62 | 7.36 | 5.59 | 3.27 | 3.06 | 0.63 | 4.39 | 4.87 | 5.08 | 5.76 | 6.40 | 6.63 | 6.96 | | | | 7.75 |

Sources: BDL, Société Financière du Liban s.a.l.

END OF PERIOD EXCHANGE RATES (LBP per other currencies)

| Year and | | US | Swiss | British | Japanese | Euro |
|----------|-----|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|
| Month | | Dollar | Franc | Pound | Yen | |
| 2014 | Dec | 1,507.50 | 1,524.27 | 2,341.75 | 12.62 | 1,833.87 |
| 2015 | Mar | 1,507.50 | 1,549.81 | 2,231.70 | 12.57 | 1,619.96 |
| | Apr | 1,507.50 | 1,610.58 | 2,325.62 | 12.67 | 1,687.34 |
| | May | 1,507.50 | 1,596.76 | 2,302.71 | 12.17 | 1,652.22 |
| | Jun | 1,507.50 | 1,621.84 | 2,369.64 | 12.32 | 1,685.99 |
| | Jul | 1,507.50 | 1,565.58 | 2,348.08 | 12.14 | 1,650.86 |
| | Aug | 1,507.50 | 1,562.99 | 2,324.11 | 12.43 | 1,690.06 |
| | Sep | 1,507.50 | 1,548.70 | 2,291.25 | 12.54 | 1,690.51 |
| | Oct | 1,507.50 | 1,527.05 | 2,312.66 | 12.51 | 1,659.31 |
| | Nov | 1,507.50 | 1,462.31 | 2,261.85 | 12.25 | 1,594.18 |
| | Dec | 1,507.50 | 1,520.88 | 2,232.46 | 12.51 | 1,646.64 |
| 2016 | Jan | 1,507.50 | 1,478.67 | 2,162.36 | 12.47 | 1,643.48 |
| | Feb | 1,507.50 | 1,504.64 | 2,088.49 | 13.34 | 1,640.91 |
| | Mar | 1,507.50 | 1,566.56 | 2,171.40 | 13.42 | 1,715.23 |

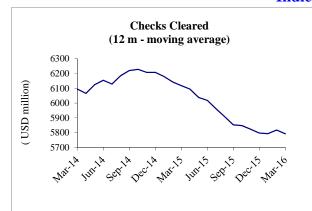
Source: BDL.

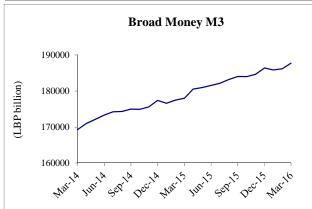


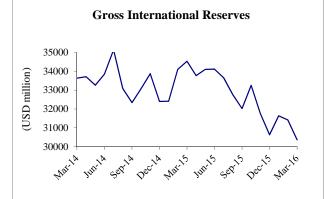
^{*} On Funds in LBP, weighted by daily volume.

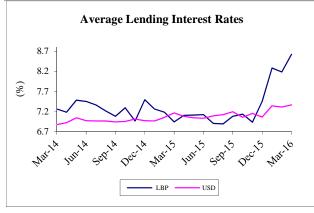
^{**} Starting January 2016, lending rates are calculated according to intermediary circular No 389.

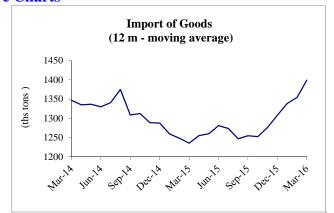
Indicative Charts



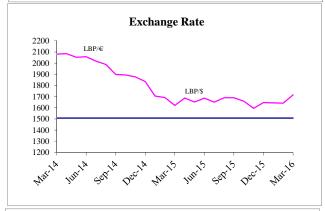


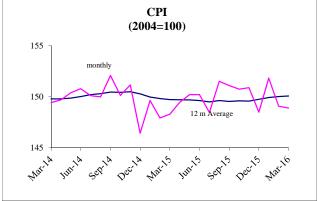












Research and Statistics Department Association of Banks in Lebanon P.O. Box 976 Beirut-Lebanon Tel: (961) 970 500

> Fax: (961) 970 501 E-mail: abl@abl.org.lb

The "Economic Letter" is designed as an internal publication of the Association of Banks in Lebanon, to make its in-house research and statistical information available to the observer of the Lebanese economy in general and the Lebanese banking sector in particular. Despite its value-adding analysis, this publication does not represent the Association's nor any of its member banks' official views on the economic policies, the financial market or the banking issues in Lebanon. This document is strictly for information purposes.

The "Economic Letter", published monthly by ABL, provides the reader with an overview of the most recent developments in the economic activities in Lebanon. The information contained in this document has been compiled in good faith from sources believed to be reliable but no warranty, expressed or implied, is made by ABL.

Reproduction, of the whole or a part of this document, is authorized subject to indication of "Economic Letter", Association of Banks in Lebanon.