



## **EU PROMOTING HUMAN RIGHTS IN LEBANON**

Lebanon's approach to human rights protection and promotion is quite open. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights has constitutional force and Lebanon is a state party to nearly all core human rights conventions and treaties; however more systematic implementation of international commitments at the national level is still lacking.

Challenges regarding the protection and promotion of human rights in Lebanon include, but are not limited to: improving the independence and efficiency of the judiciary system, improving parliamentary effectiveness and independence, revising the electoral framework, abolishing the death penalty, preventing torture, aligning prison and detention conditions with international standards and eliminating arbitrary detention, criminalising the use of children in armed conflict, promoting women's rights and the rights of Palestinian and non-Palestinian refugees, protecting migrants and the rights of relatives of disappeared as well as fighting discrimination against lesbians, gays, bisexuals and transgenders.

Lebanese civil society often plays a vigorous role as a catalyst for change in the protection and promotion of human rights through advocacy and through legal and social support to vulnerable populations.

The EU supports the protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms through continuous political dialogue with Lebanese authorities and human rights defenders, to ensure that international conventions are effectively incorporated into national legislation and implemented. As such the EU encourages Lebanon to join the international community of 140 countries opposing capital punishment. The EU also promotes the principles of effective governance and accountability as a prerequisite for the realisation of human rights, and the need to respect the right to life, dignity and safety of all.

The EU also provides financial assistance to Lebanese institutions to develop and implement human rights policies and reforms. For instance the EU supports the Ministry of Labour and the Ministry of Social Affairs in developing a protective legal framework for migrant workers and the Ministry of Interior and the Ministry of Justice in supporting the reform of the justice system and prison management.

Lastly the EU supports civil society initiatives through the European Initiative for Democracy and Human Rights (EIDHR). The EU currently funds initiatives tackling several issues: protection of migrants, reducing arbitrary detention, protecting torture victims, enhancing freedom of expression, working towards the abolition of death penalty, enhancing the right to work of Palestinians, fighting drug abuse and corruption, promoting women's rights in prisons and the rights of disabled.

Recently the government and the EU concluded negotiations on a revised Action Plan 2013-2015 in the framework of the European Neighbourhood Policy.

