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# The LEBANON WEEKLY MONITOR

# Economy

# p.2 GROWTH IN BDL COINCIDENT INDICATOR SUGGESTING REAL SECTOR SLOWDOWN THIS YEAR

The BDL coincident indicator, a gauge of Lebanon's real sector activity, grew over the first nine months of 2018 at almost half its growth during the same period of the past 5 years.

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# Markets In Brief

## p.9 LEBANESE BOND PRICES AT RECORD LOWS AMID CABINET UNCERTAINTIES

Amid heightened political tensions and a long-simmering cabinet formation gridlock, Lebanon's capital markets witnessed this week extended price falls on the Eurobond market, while the equity market registered price gains along with increased activity, and the FX market saw net conversions in favor of foreign currencies. In details, cabinet uncertainties continued to weigh on the Lebanese bond market, which pursued its downward trajectory amid price falls in MENA bond markets following an oil price collapse. The Lebanese weighted average yield increased by 38 bps week-on-week to reach 10.73%. On the equity market, the BSE total turnover increased tenfold, reaching US\$ 31 million, mainly helped by large cross trades on Solidere shares. The price index rose by 1.1% week-on-week. At the level of the FX market, the commercial demand for US dollar exceeded in terms of volume the offer for the greenback, while activity remained quite shy in the interbank market.

EEK OF N	Ovember 20 - December 02, 2	010
$\mathbf{+}$	BSE Equity Market	Ť
↔	GDR Market	$\mathbf{+}$
$\mathbf{+}$	Eurobond Market	$\mathbf{+}$
$\mathbf{+}$	CDS Market	$\mathbf{+}$
	↓ ↔ ↓	GDR Market Eurobond Market

### Week 48 November 26 - December 02, 2018

# ECONOMY

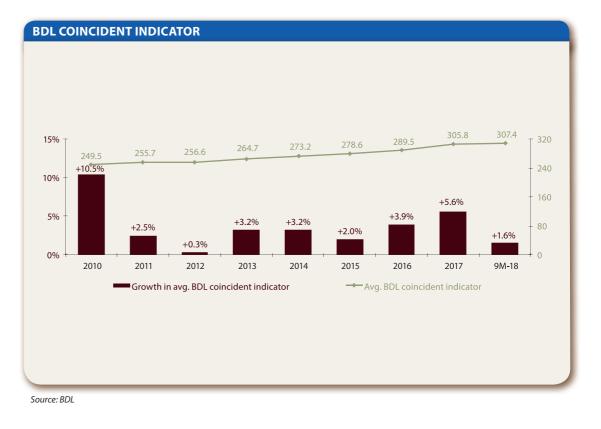
# GROWTH IN BDL COINCIDENT INDICATOR SUGGESTING REAL SECTOR SLOWDOWN THIS YEAR

The BDL coincident indicator, a gauge of Lebanon's real sector activity, grew over the first nine months of 2018 at almost half its growth during the same period of the past 5 years. The coincident indicator reported an average of 307.4 over the first 9 months of 2018, growing on average by 1.6% relative to the same period last year, against an average growth of 3.4% over the same period of the past five years.

The evolution of real sector indicators suggests that almost all economic sectors witnessed additional weaknesses this year. Out of 11 real sector indicators, 5 are up and 6 are down in the first nine months of 2018 relative to last year's corresponding period. Among indicators with positive growth, we mention the number of passengers at the Airport with an expansion of 7.1%, total imports with a growth of 4.8%, total exports with an increase of 4.0%, the number of tourists with a rise of 3.9% and electricity production with a growth of 1.6%. Among indicators with negative growth, we mention construction permits with a fall of 23.0%, value of property sales with a contraction of 16.8%, merchandise at the Port with a fall of 7.1%, new car sales with a decline of 6.6%, cement deliveries with a decrease of 4.1% and cleared checks with a decline of 1.2%.

The year 2018 has been clearly a difficult year for the Lebanese economy, sectors of activity and markets at large, under growing political uncertainties especially during the second half-year. The year has witnessed a low real GDP growth that Lebanon's Central Bank estimates at 2% and the IMF estimates at 1%.

Based on the condition of a successful Cabinet formation over the next few weeks, our macro forecasts for 2019 are based on a 2.5% real GDP growth forecast (a 6% nominal growth), along with a slow progress in Cedre reforms and implementation. Nominal growth would be driven by: (1) a 6.5% domestically driven growth in private consumption; (2) while private investment is likely to stagnate at its 2018 level amid



Week 48 November 26 - December 02, 2018

politico-economic uncertainties weighing on private investors initiatives; (3) a 24% growth in public investment from a relatively low base within the context of the State's new Capital Investment Program; (4) along with a 14% growth in exports on the basis of the recent reopening of Syrian/Jordanian routes for Lebanese land exports (mainly the Nassib border gate).

### SLOWDOWN IN THE ACTIVITY OF THE PORT OF BEIRUT IN FIRST TEN MONTHS OF 2018

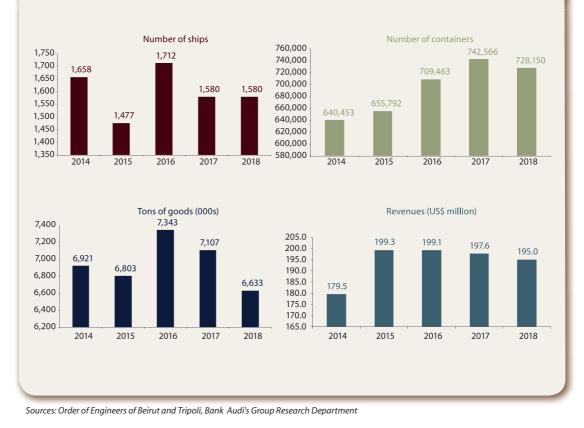
The latest statistics released by the Port of Beirut revealed a yearly 1.3% decrease in the Port's revenues in the first ten months of 2018 compared to the same period of the previous year.

The Port's revenues actually reached US\$ 195.0 million in the first ten months of 2018.

In parallel, the number of containers recorded an annual fall of 1.9% to attain a total of 728,150 in the first ten months of 2018. The number of ships remained constant at a total of 1,580 vessels in the first ten months of 2018. During the corresponding period of 2017, the former had registered an increase of 4.7% year-on-year and the latter decreased by 7.7%.

The quantity of goods decreased by a yearly 6.7% to 6,663 thousand tons in the first ten months of 2018, following a fall of 3.2% reported in the first ten months of 2017.

Transshipments rose by 10.8% year-on-year to attain 365,326 containers in the first ten months of 2018, following a rise of 34.5% in the corresponding period of 2017.



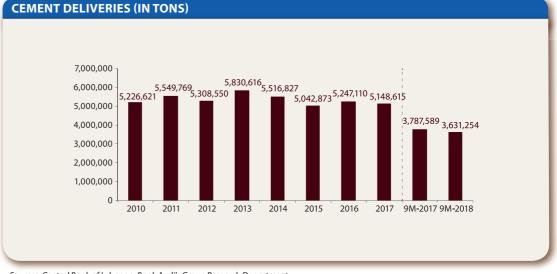
# ACTIVITY OF THE PORT OF BEIRUT (FIRST TEN MONTHS OF THE YEAR)

#### CEMENT DELIVERIES DOWN BY A YEARLY 4.1% IN FIRST NINE MONTHS OF 2018

Figures released by the Central Bank of Lebanon show that cement deliveries, a coincident indicator of construction activity, declined by a yearly 4.1% in the first nine months of 2018.

Cement deliveries actually reached circa 3,631,254 tons in the first nine months of 2018, down from 3,787,589 tons in the corresponding nine months of 2017.

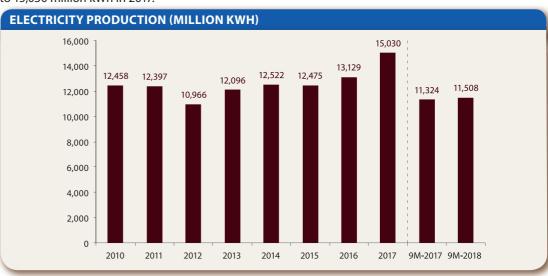
It is worth recalling that cement deliveries reached 5,148,615 tons in 2017, down from 5,247,110 tons in 2016.



Sources: Central Bank of Lebanon, Bank Audi's Group Research Department

# ELECTRICITY PRODUCTION UP BY 1.6% IN FIRST NINE MONTHS OF 2018

Data published by the Central Bank of Lebanon shows that electricity production rose by 1.6% year-onyear in the first nine months of 2018. The production totaled 11,508 million Kilowatt Hour (kWh) in the first nine months of 2018, up from 11,324 million kWh in the first nine months of 2017.



In a backward look, electricity production rose by a yearly 14.5% last year from 13,129 million kWh in 2016 to 15,030 million kWh in 2017.

Sources: Central Bank of Lebanon, Bank Audi's Group Research Department

# **SURVEYS**

# LEBANON RANKS 15TH REGIONALLY IN TERMS OF NATIONAL BRAND STRENGTH IN 2018

According to Brand Finance, a London-based independent brand valuation consultancy, Lebanon ranked 15th regionally in terms of national brand strength during the year 2018.

It is worth noting that Brand Finance recently published its 2018 edition of the Nation Brands Report, in which it assessed the world's most valuable nations. Brand Finance measures the strength and value of the nation brands of 100 leading countries using a method based on the royalty relief mechanism employed to value the world's largest companies. Nation Brand Strength is the part of the company's analysis most directly and easily influenced by those responsible for their country's nation brand campaigns. It is determined by reference to performance on dozens of data points across three key 'pillars'; Goods & Services, Investment and Society.

These are divided into sub-pillars; Tourism, Market, Governance and People & Skills. These are further subdivided into individual metrics. Each metric is scored out of 100 and together they contribute to an overall Brand Strength Index (BSI) score for the nation brand, also out of 100. Based on the score, each Nation Brand is assigned a rating from "AAA+ to "D" in a format similar to a credit rating.

In the report, Lebanon ranked 15th regionally and occupied the 95th position worldwide, down from 94th position in the previous year amongst all 100 countries covered by the report. In details, Lebanon's National Brand Value grew by 5% to reach US\$ 22 billion in the year 2018, up from US\$ 21 billion in the past year. The country's Brand Strength Rating stood at "A+" in the year 2018, unchanged from the previous year.

In the Middle East, Lebanon was surpassed by Tunisia and Yemen in the rankings, while ranking last. Globally, Lebanon came before the Democratic Republic of Congo and Cyprus, while being preceded by Paraguay.

The countries occupying pole position were unchanged this year. As a matter of fact, the United States of America ranked first with a National Brand Value of US\$ 25,899 billion and a Brand Strength Rating (BSR) of "AAA", followed by China with a National Brand Value of US\$ 12,779 billion and a BSR of "AA", and Germany with a National Brand Value of US\$ 5,147 billion and a BSR of "AAA".

MOST VALUABLE REGIONAL BRANDS	
Nation Brand	2018 Brand Value (US\$ billion)
United Arab Emirates	707
Saudi Arabia	677
Qatar	256
Kuwait	209
Egypt	121
Algeria	89
Iraq	73
Morocco	56
Oman	53
Sudan	42
Bahrain	30
Jordan	26
Tunisia	24
Yemen	24
Lebanon	22

Sources: Brand Finance, Bank Audi's Group Research Department

The report mentioned that the strong economic growth witnessed in the USA coupled with the reduction in tax rates resulted in a notable improvement in the country's National Brand Value and in an upgrade in its Brand Strength Rating. The report also highlighted the rise of China's nation brand on the back of its world class infrastructure and well-educated workforce, among other things. On the European front, Germany solidified its position as the strongest regional brand, with its brand value increasing by 28%.

# STABILIZATION OF SITUATION IN SYRIA TO RESTORE CONFIDENCE IN LEBANON INDUSTRIAL SECTOR, SAYS EIU

According to the Economist Intelligence Unit, Lebanon shows increases in industrial exports and licence issuance in 2018, with the stabilization of the situation in neighboring Syria helping to restore confidence in the sector.

The Ministry of Industry reported that it issued 333 industrial licences in the first half of 2018, a 56.3% increase on the same period of 2017. This contrasts with other recent economic indicators that still show a picture of dampened private-sector activity in Lebanon, including the purchasing managers' index, a measure of private-sector sentiment, which remains in negative territory, as per the EIU.

Despite indicators that Lebanon's economic climate still remains fairly fragile, the licence data suggest increased optimism over export prospects. Industry ministry data also show that the value of industrial exports grew by 2.6% year-on-year to US\$ 1.43 billion in the first seven months of 2018, as per the Economist Intelligence Unit.

Customs Authority data also point to a broader recovery in exports, with earnings up 4.1% year-on-year to attain US\$ 2.2 billion in the first nine months of 2018, compared to a small decline in the same period of 2017.

The main factor behind these improvements is growing demand for Lebanese products from neighbouring Syria, where the regime is attempting to rebuild its economy in the wake of its seven-year long civil war, having asserted increasing control of significant swathes of the country, as per the EIU.

A large section of Lebanon's industrial activity (and around 16% of total export earnings) is accounted for by food processing, which absorbed 31% of the licences in the first half of 2018. The more settled security situation in Syria also makes it easier for onward trade in the region.

Although a full reopening of Syria's border crossings to Jordan is still awaited, Lebanese exporters have benefited from the stabilization of the Syrian economy and the improved security for road-based transport, making Gulf markets more accessible too, as per the report.

Lebanon's industrial sector is also receiving multilateral support. In mid-November the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD) and the Association of Lebanese Industrialists signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to provide services and support to small- and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) in the industrial sector. The MoU would allow Lebanese SMEs to gain access to the EBRD's expertise.

# **CORPORATE NEWS**

# CREDITBANK'S NET PROFITS UP TO US\$ 12.4 MILLION IN FIRST HALF OF 2018

Creditbank announced net profits of US\$ 12.4 million in the first half of 2018, up from a total of US\$ 9.4 million posted in the corresponding period of 2017, as per Bankdata Financial Services.

The bank's net interest income reached US\$ 35.1 million in the first half of 2018 against US\$ 26.8 million in the same period a year earlier.

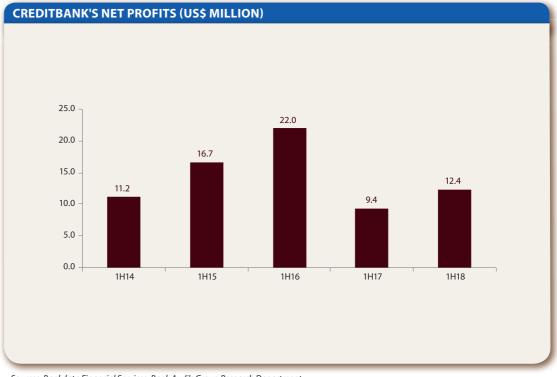
Net fee and commission income amounted to US\$ 8.5 million in the first six months of 2018, up by 31.3% from US\$ 6.5 million recorded in the corresponding period of 2017.

Creditbank's net operating income rose from US\$ 39.3 million in the first six months of 2017 to US\$ 44.0 million in the same period of 2018.

Total operating expenses expanded by 4.2% yearly from the first six months of 2017 to stand at US\$ 29.6 million in the same period of 2018. Out of the total, US\$ 17.2 million went to staff expenses (-5.2% year-on-year) and US\$ 10.7 million to administrative and other operating expenses (+24.3% year-on-year).

The bank's cost-to-income ratio fell from 69.7% in the first half of last year to 65.7% in the corresponding period of 2018.

Total assets of the bank reached US\$ 4.0 billion at end-June 2018, up by 6.0% from end-2017. Loans to customers edged up by 5.3% from end-2017 to reach US\$ 1.9 billion at end-June 2018. Customers' deposits amounted to US\$ 3.3 billion at end-June 2018, up by 4.2% from end-2017.



Sources: Bankdata Financial Services, Bank Audi's Group Research Department

#### SARADAR BANK'S NET PROFITS DOWN TO US\$ 1.2 MILLION IN FIRST HALF OF 2018

Saradar Bank's net profits reached US\$ 1.2 million in the first half of 2018, down from US\$ 2.8 million in the previous year's similar period, as per Bankdata Financial Services.

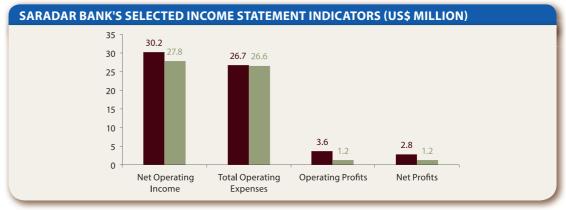
Net interest income improved by a yearly 10.3% to reach US\$ 15.6 million and net fee and commission income went up from US\$ 7.2 million to US\$ 8.3 million over the covered period. Net gains on financial assets declined to US\$ 0.8 million in the first half of 2018.

Total operating income inched down by 11.9% to stand at US\$ 26.5 million in the first half of this year.

Moreover, total operating expenses remained nearly unchanged from the same period last year at US\$ 26.6 million in the first half of 2018.

On the balance sheet side, total assets reached US\$ 2.7 billion at end-June 2018, up by 5.9% from end-2017. Customer deposits rose by 3.2% to reach US\$ 2.1 billion at end-June 2018, and loans to customers increased by 9.8% to US\$ 852.3 million.

The bank's gross doubtful loans to gross loans ratio improved over the covered period reaching 7.7% at end-June 2018 against 8.1% at end-2017. The loan loss reserves on doubtful loans to doubtful loans ratio reached close to 75.5% at end-June 2018.



The annualized return on average assets ratio reached 0.09% in 1H2018 (0.27% in 1H2017), and the annualized return on average equity was at 0.96% (2.40% in 1H2017).

Sources: Bankdata Financial Services, Bank Audi's Group Research Department

# CRÉDIT LIBANAIS GETS US\$ 50 MILLION SENIOR LOAN FROM IFC

Crédit Libanais obtained long-term financing from the International Finance Corporation (IFC) that it will use to provide loans to local Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs), the two parties said in a joint statement.

The financing granted by the IFC, which is a member of the World Bank Group, comprises a senior loan of US\$ 50 million with a hedged fixed interest rate.

# MIMOSA EXPANDS ITS FACILITY

Mimosa, a paper manufacturer, will expand its facility in Kaa El Rim, to be completed in early 2019.

The 5,000 square meters expanded area will include space for production lines and warehouses. Production capacity will increase by 10%.

The US\$ 2 million expansion will be partly funded by subsidized loans, according to company's CEO.

# **Bank Audi**

# **CAPITAL MARKETS**

### MONEY MARKET: OVERNIGHT RATE AT 7% AT THE END OF THE WEEK

The overnight rate reached 20% at the beginning of this week, mainly due to technical reasons related to CNSS deposit withdrawals, yet slid thereafter to close at 7% on Friday after CNSS re-deposited its funds in the banking sector and subsequently the local currency liquidity returned to the money market. Meanwhile, no subscriptions were made in shorter-term 45-day and 60-day Certificates of Deposits.

Total resident banking deposits contracted further by LP 386 billion during the week ending 15th of November 2018, as per the latest monetary aggregates released by the Central Bank of Lebanon. This was driven by a LP 326 billion fall in foreign currency deposits (the equivalent of US\$ 216 million) and a LP 60 billion decline in in total LP resident deposits amid a LP 68 billion drop in LP saving deposits and a LP 8 billion increase in LP demand deposits. These weekly variations compare to an average weekly increase of US\$ 63 million for foreign currency deposits and an average weekly decline of LP 27 billion for total LP deposits since the beginning of the year 2018. Within this context, the total money supply in its largest sense (M4) contracted by LP 530 billion over the covered week, amid a LP 188 billion fall in the currency in circulation and a LP 44 billion rise in the non-banking sector Treasury bills portfolio.

On a cumulative basis, total resident deposits grew by LP 2,684 billion since the beginning of the year 2018, amid a LP 3,952 billion growth in foreign currency deposits (the equivalent of US\$ 2,622 million) and a LP 1,268 billion contraction in total LP deposits.

INTEREST RATES				
	30/11/18	23/11/18	29/12/17	
Overnight rate (official)	3.90%	3.90%	2.75%	↔
7 days rate	4.00%	4.00%	2.86%	↔
1 month rate	4.75%	4.75%	3.31%	$\leftrightarrow$
45-day CDs	4.90%	4.90%	3.57%	$\leftrightarrow$
60-day CDs	5.08%	5.08%	3.85%	$\leftrightarrow$

Source: Bloomberg

# TREASURY BILLS MARKET: NOMINAL WEEKLY DEFICIT OF LP 66 BILLION

The latest Treasury bills auction results for value date 29th of November 2018 showed that the Central Bank of Lebanon allowed banks to subscribe in full to the three-month category (offering a yield of 4.44%), to the one-year category (offering a yield of 5.35%) and to the five-year category (offering a coupon of 6.74%).

In parallel, the auction results for value date 22nd of November 2018 showed that total subscriptions reached LP 236 billion and were allocated as follows: LP 5 billion in the six-month category (offering a yield of 4.99%), LP 8 billion in the two-year category (offering a coupon of 5.84%), and LP 223 billion in the ten-year category (offering a coupon of 7.46%). In parallel, total maturities reached LP 302 billion, resulting into a weekly nominal deficit of LP 66 billion.

6-month   4.99%   4.99%   4.99%   4.99%     1-year   5.35%   5.35%   5.35%   5.35%     2-year   5.84%   5.84%   5.84%   5.84%     3-year   6.50%   6.50%   6.50%   6.50%     5-year   6.74%   6.74%   6.74%   6.74%     10-year   -   7.46%   7.46%   6.74%     Nom. Subs. (LP billion)   236   225   20     Short -term (3&6 mths)   5   20   6     Medium-term (1&2 yrs)   6   105   105     Long-term (5 yrs)   -   100   100     Long-term (10 yrs)   223   -   100	REASURY BILLS				
3-month   4.44%   4.44%   4.44%   4.44%     6-month   4.99%   4.99%   4.99%   4.99%     1-year   5.35%   5.35%   5.35%   5.35%     2-year   5.84%   5.84%   5.84%   5.84%     3-year   6.50%   6.50%   6.50%   6.50%     5-year   6.74%   6.74%   6.74%   6.74%     10-year   -   7.46%   7.46%   7.46%     Nom. Subs. (LP billion)   236   225   20     Medium-term (3&6 mths)   5   20   105     Long-term (3 yrs)   -   -   100     Long-term (10 yrs)   223   -   100		20/11/10	22/11/10	20/12/17	
6-month   4.99%   4.99%   4.99%   4.99%     1-year   5.35%   5.35%   5.35%   5.35%     2-year   5.84%   5.84%   5.84%   5.84%     3-year   6.50%   6.50%   6.50%   6.50%     5-year   6.74%   6.74%   6.74%   6.74%     10-year   -   7.46%   7.46%   6.74%     Nom. Subs. (LP billion)   236   225   20     Short -term (3&6 mths)   5   20   20     Medium-term (1&2 yrs)   6   105   105     Long-term (5 yrs)   -   100   100     Long-term (10 yrs)   223   -   100					
1-year   5.35%   5.35%   5.35%   5.35%     2-year   5.84%   5.84%   5.84%   5.84%     3-year   6.50%   6.50%   6.50%   6.50%     5-year   6.74%   6.74%   6.74%   6.74%     10-year   -   7.46%   7.46%   7.46%     Nom. Subs. (LP billion)   236   225     Short -term (3&6 mths)   5   20   105     Long-term (3 yrs)   -   -   100     Long-term (10 yrs)   223   -   100	3-month	4.44%	4.44%	4.44%	$\leftrightarrow$
2-year   5.84%   5.84%   5.84%     3-year   6.50%   6.50%   6.50%     5-year   6.74%   6.74%   6.74%     10-year   -   7.46%   7.46%     Nom. Subs. (LP billion)   236   225     Short -term (3&6 mths)   5   20     Medium-term (1&2 yrs)   6   105     Long-term (5 yrs)   -   100     Long-term (10 yrs)   223   -	6-month	4.99%	4.99%	4.99%	$\leftrightarrow$
3-year 6.50% 6.50% 6.50%   5-year 6.74% 6.74% 6.74%   10-year - 7.46% 7.46%   Nom. Subs. (LP billion) 236 225   Short -term (3&6 mths) 5 20   Medium-term (1&2 yrs) 6 105   Long-term (3 yrs) - -   Long-term (10 yrs) 223 -	1-year	5.35%	5.35%	5.35%	$\leftrightarrow$
5-year   6.74%   6.74%   6.74%   6.74%     10-year   -   7.46%   7.46%   7.46%     Nom. Subs. (LP billion)   236   225   20     Short -term (3&6 mths)   5   20   105     Long-term (3 yrs)   -   -   100     Long-term (10 yrs)   223   -   100	2-year	5.84%	5.84%	5.84%	$\leftrightarrow$
10-year   7.46%   7.46%     Nom. Subs. (LP billion)   236   225     Short -term (3&6 mths)   5   20     Medium-term (1&2 yrs)   66   105     Long-term (3 yrs)   -   -     Long-term (10 yrs)   223   -	3-year	6.50%	6.50%	6.50%	$\leftrightarrow$
Nom. Subs. (LP billion)     236     225       Short -term (3&6 mths)     5     20       Medium-term (1&2 yrs)     6     105       Long-term (3 yrs)     -     -       Long-term (5 yrs)     -     100       Long-term (10 yrs)     223     -	5-year	6.74%	6.74%	6.74%	↔
Short -term (3&6 mths)   5   20     Medium-term (1&2 yrs)   6   105     Long-term (3 yrs)   -   -     Long-term (5 yrs)   -   100     Long-term (10 yrs)   223   -	10-year	-	7.46%	7.46%	↔
Medium-term (1&2 yrs)   6   105     Long-term (3 yrs)   -   -     Long-term (5 yrs)   -   100     Long-term (10 yrs)   223   -	Nom. Subs. (LP billion)		236	225	
Long-term (3 yrs) - -   Long-term (5 yrs) - 100   Long-term (10 yrs) 223 -	Short -term (3&6 mths)		5	20	
Long-term (5 yrs)     -     100       Long-term (10 yrs)     223     -	Medium-term (1&2 yrs)		6	105	
Long-term (10 yrs) 223 -	Long-term (3 yrs)		-	-	
	Long-term (5 yrs)		-	100	
Maturities 202 107	Long-term (10 yrs)		223	-	
Maturities 302 197	Maturities		302	197	
Nom. Surplus/Deficit -66 28	Nom. Surplus/Deficit		-66	28	

Sources: Central Bank of Lebanon, Bloomberg

#### FOREIGN EXCHANGE MARKET: NET CONVERSIONS IN FAVOR OF FOREIGN CURRENCIES

The foreign exchange market saw some conversions from FX holdings to LP holdings over this week, as some market players sought to secure enough LP liquidity at hand in order to pay employees' salaries towards the end of November 2018. Meanwhile, the FX market saw some demand for US dollar for commercial reasons, which exceeded in terms of volumes the offer for the greenback. Meanwhile, the interbank market remained governed by a sluggish mood, amid a lack of offer for foreign currencies.

EXCHANGE RATES				
	30/11/18	23/11/18	29/12/17	
LP/US\$	1,507.50	1,507.50	1,507.50	↔
LP/£	1,924.32	1,937.59	2,035.58	1
LP/¥	13.28	13.36	13.39	1
LP/SF	1,513.55	1,514.47	1,545.04	1
LP/Can\$	1,132.86	1,140.06	1,202.34	1
LP/Euro	1,714.33	1,715.23	1,806.59	Ť

Source: Bank Audi's Group Research Department

#### STOCK MARKET: LEBANESE EQUITIES UP BY 1.1% WEEK-ON-WEEK

The BSE total trading value surged from US\$ 3.0 million last week to US\$ 30.8 million this week, mainly supported by large cross trades on Solidere shares. This compared to an average weekly trading value of US\$ 6.8 million since the beginning of the year 2018. Solidere shares captured 82.6% of activity this week, followed by the banking shares with 17.2% and the industrial shares with 0.2%.

As far as prices are concerned, the BSE price index rose by 1.1% to close at 84.06, following two consecutive weeks of price declines, mainly supported by price gains in Solidere and some banking shares. Five out of ten traded stocks posted price rises, while four stocks registered price falls and one stock saw no price change week-on-week. Solidere "A" share price led the advance, surging by 9.8% to reach US\$ 6.86, followed by Bank Audi "listed" shares with +7.0% to US\$ 5.02, Solidere "B" shares with +6.6% to US\$ 6.81, Byblos Preferred shares 2008 with +1.4% to US\$ 72.0 and BEMO "listed" shares with +0.6% to US\$ 1.57.

The weekly performance of the domestic stock exchange compares to shy increases in prices in broader regional stock exchanges (+0.1% as per the S&P Pan-Arab Composite Index) and rises in prices across emerging markets (+2.6% as per the S&P Emerging Frontier Super Composite Index).

On a cumulative basis, the BSE total trading value reached US\$ 349 million during the first eleven months of 2018 as compared to US\$ 551 million a year earlier, moving down by 36.8%. As such, the total turnover ratio, measured by the annualized trading value to market capitalization, fell from 6.0% in the first eleven months of 2017 to 4.2% in the first eleven months of this year, spotting light on the lack of liquidity and the reduced activity on the local stock market.

AUDI INDICES FOR BSE				
22/1/96=100	30/11/18	23/11/18	29/12/17	
Market Cap. Index	385.17	380.88	445.80	Ť
Trading Vol. Index	261.32	41.95	64.70	1
Price Index	84.06	83.13	98.20	Ť
Change %	1.12%	-0.69%	0.35%	Ť
	30/11/18	23/11/18	29/12/17	
Market Cap. \$m	9,138	9,036	10,576	Ť
No. of shares traded (Exc. BT)	4,658,938	742,113	626,565	1
Value Traded \$000 (Exc. BT)	30,812	2,964	6,187	Ť
o.w. : Solidere	25,438	195	527	Ϋ́
Banks	5,293	2,588	5,603	1
Others	80	181	57	$\mathbf{+}$

Sources: Beirut Stock Exchange, Bank Audi's Group Research Department

# BOND MARKET: LEBANESE BONDS REMAIN ON THE DECLINE AMID CABINET UNCERTAINTIES AND MENA MARKET WEAKNESS

Lebanese Eurobonds continued to trace a downward trajectory during this week, as a prolonged cabinet formation deadlock continued to weigh on investor sentiment, while also tracking price declines in regional fixed income markets amid an oil price collapse.

International institutional investors were net sellers in low volumes this week, while local market players remained mostly outside the market. This put downward pressure on bond prices, with the weighted average bond yield rising from 10.35% last week to 10.73% this week. Concurrently, the weighted average bid Z-spread expanded further by 40 bps to reach 815 bps. As to the cost of insuring debt, Lebanon's five-year CDS spreads expanded further from 760-790 bps last week to bps 770-800 this week, in a sign of a deterioration in market perception for sovereign risks at large.

EUROBONDS INDICATORS				
	30/11/18	23/11/18	29/12/17	
Total tradable size \$m	32,214	32,719	27,148	$\mathbf{+}$
o.w.: Sovereign bonds	30,964	31,469	26,123	<b>1</b>
Average Yield	10.73%	10.35%	6.54%	Ť
Z-Spread (bid in bps)	815	775	464	1
Average Life	7.91	7.79	6.70	1
Yield on US 5-year note	2.84%	2.88%	2.22%	$\mathbf{+}$

Source: Bank Audi's Group Research Department

# **Bank Audi**

# WEEK <u>48</u>

# **INTERNATIONAL MARKET INDICATORS**

	30-Nov-18	23-Nov-18	29-Dec-17	Weekly change	Year-to-date change
EXCHANGE RATES					
YEN/\$	113.48	112.96	112.69	0.5%	0.7%
\$/£	1.275	1.281	1.351	-0.5%	-5.6%
\$/Euro	1.132	1.134	1.201	-0.2%	-5.8%
STOCK INDICES					
Dow Jones Industrial Average	25,538.46	24,285.95	24,719.22	5.2%	3.3%
S&P 500	2,760.17	2,632.56	2,673.61	4.8%	3.2%
NASDAQ	7,330.54	6,938.98	6,903.39	5.6%	6.2%
CAC 40	5,003.92	4,946.95	5,312.56	1.2%	-5.8%
Xetra Dax	11,257.24	11,192.69	12,917.64	0.6%	-12.9%
FT-SE 100	6,980.24	6,952.86	7,687.77	0.4%	-9.2%
NIKKEI 225	22,351.06	21,646.55	22,764.94	3.3%	-1.8%
COMMODITIES (in US\$)					
GOLD OUNCE	1,220.52	1,223.05	1,302.80	-0.2%	-6.3%
SILVER OUNCE	14.20	14.29	16.94	-0.6%	-16.1%
BRENT CRUDE (per barrel)	59.46	58.80	66.09	1.1%	-10.0%
LEADING INTEREST RATES (%)					
1-month Libor	2.35	2.32	1.56	0.03	0.79
US Prime Rate	5.25	5.25	4.50	0.00	0.75
US Discount Rate	2.75	2.75	2.00	0.00	0.75
US 10-year Bond	2.99	3.04	2.41	-0.05	0.58

Sources: Bloomberg, Bank Audi's Group Research Department

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