



AID DEVELOPMENTS

European Union strengthens its support to culture in Lebanon

Arts, education and cultural activities provide opportunities for dialogue between people. To promote mutual understanding and rapprochement between people through cultural and artistic exchanges, the European Union Delegation to Lebanon awarded three proposals for a total of Euro 87,000, as follows:

In November 2012, the European Union allocated Euro 28,000 for A Door to Multiculturalism, a project of the Arab Resource Center for Popular Arts designed to provide Lebanese and Palestinian youth with tools to work towards a more cohesive community. The association will organize workshops on media and an International Film Festival for Children and Youth, which will screen films made by and for children and youth from all over the world, in various regions of Lebanon.

In November 2012, the European Union funded Euro 29,000 for the project Fenetre a la Participation, Porte vers la Paix, a project of the Sustainable Democracy Center, which supports intergenerational, intercommunity and interconfessional exchange through the development of the rich cultural heritage of Lebanon. This project will promote the development of a collective memory through the gathering of individual testimonies, amongst others. Visits to local monuments and celebrations to promote peaceful exchange and multicultural dialogue will also be organized.

In December 2012, the European Union allocated Euro 30,000 to the project Graffiti # 2 Lebanon, implemented by Les Militants des Savoirs, which sees artists as important social actors and agents of change. The association will promote street arts - mainly graffiti - and multicultural dialogue through workshops, debates and performances. The association also aims at tutoring emerging young Lebanese artists and encouraging cultural cooperation between Lebanon and Europe.

Italy supports UNRWA in Lebanon to organize sports activities for children and youth in refugee camps

On 27 December 2012, the Government of Italy, through the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, allocated a grant of Euro 34,250 in favor of UNRWA. The donation renews for the sixth consecutive year the collaboration for the organization of the Palestiniadi, a sports competition aimed at encouraging intercultural dialogue and tolerance and creating exchange between Palestinian and Lebanese youth, and supports the organization of the mini-marathons Vivicitta in Saida and Baalbek. The grant will be transferred in March 2013.

Kuwait supports the electricity sector

On 4 February 2013, the Minister of Energy and Water and the Kuwait Fund for Arab Economic Development signed an \$85 million loan agreement to upgrade and rehabilitate the Zouk and Jieh power plants as part of efforts to overhaul the electricity sector. The loan will partially finance the project to boost production at the Zouk and Jiyeh plants by 272 MW, which is part of the general plan to increase electricity production by 1,500 MW in the medium term.



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SANAD (Germany, European Union) supports SMEs

On 5 February 2013, SANAD, a German fund for small and medium enterprises (SMEs) in the MENA region, signed a \$20 million loan facility with Bank Audi aimed at expanding lending to small businesses in Lebanon. Initiated by the German Development Bank in August 2011 and funded by the German government and the European Union, SANAD provides medium and long-term debt guarantees to financial institutions that work with SMEs. Through the partnership with Bank Audi, Lebanese SMEs will benefit from improved access to finance. SANAD and Bank Audi are looking for partnerships in other countries in the region.

World Bank supports innovation and SMEs

On 13 February 2013, the World Bank, the Minister of Finance and Kafalat signed a \$30 million loan agreement for a project that aims to encourage the equity investment market to increase the supply of early-stage investment finance for financially viable, new and existing innovative firms. The project will support the preparation of innovation business concepts, strategies, studies and plans. The project will target beneficiaries in three categories of risk: 1) \$25,000 to \$200,000 for seed capital loans, 2) \$200,000 to \$500,000 for venture capital loans, and 3) \$500,000 to \$2 million for growth capital loans. The goal is to offset the losses from seed capital loans - approximately 60 percent of startup and early-stage companies typically fail - with more stable returns from the lower-risk categories.

UNIDO introduces a new Country Program Framework for Lebanon

On 19 February 2013, the Ministry of Industry and the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) signed a new Country Program Framework, which envisages new activities in the fields of energy efficiency, renewable energy, youth employment, food safety and olive oil production, among others. Furthermore, UNIDO introduced a micro-credit facility of Euro 21 million to provide soft loans to SMEs and to assist them in the areas of innovation, green industry development and industrial upgrading. The program was prepared in close cooperation with the Ministry of Industry and other national counterparts in response to the current needs and requirements of Lebanon; it builds on the long-standing cooperation and partnership between UNIDO and Lebanon, including the private sector of the country, and is part of an overall strategy to build local capacity, transfer know-how and promote the use of policy, technical and management tools and methodologies needed to achieve higher competitiveness in the industrial sector. The CPF for Lebanon addresses four key areas: 1) industrial governance and institutional building; 2) improving enterprises performance; 3) trade capacity building; and, 4) environmental management and energy. The financial contributions and support to UNIDO projects and programs in Lebanon are provided by the governments of Austria, Italy and Switzerland, in addition to the Government of Lebanon.



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The European Union increases its support to reform the judiciary

On 21 February 2013, the European Union approved a budget increase of Euro 4,000,000 (grant) for the implementation of extra activities to contribute to a more independent and performing judiciary system, thus increasing its legitimacy and trust among the Lebanese public. The European Union support aims at strengthening the institutions linked to the independence of the judiciary; supporting the efforts of the Lebanese authorities to improve prison conditions, bring it to international standards; completing the transfer of the management of the prison from the Ministry of Interior to the Ministry of Justice; and, reinforcing and further developing the system of legal aid to improve the access of vulnerable populations to justice. Recent events in the neighborhood region reflect the urgent need for greater respect of human rights, pluralism, rule of law and social justice. The EU Partnership, Reform and Inclusive Growth (SPRING) program ensures practical measures to support democracy, human rights, social justice, good governance and the rule of law. In Lebanon, the improvement and reform of the justice sector is a strategic axis of the EU cooperation.



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Donors support the displaced Syrians in Lebanon

On 30 January 2013, donors pledged \$1.5 billion at the Kuwait Conference to assist the Syrian displaced population inside Syria and in the neighboring countries hosting displaced. The Lebanese President addressed the meeting highlighting the severity of the situation as reflected by the recent statistics reported by UNHCR and emphasizing that the response capacity of Lebanon has been exceeded by far and that this explains why assistance is a must. He called on the international community and the donor countries to help Lebanon avoid the negative repercussions on both Syrian and Lebanese hosting communities.

On 19 February 2013, Lebanon was also present in Geneva at the 7th Humanitarian Forum on Syria. The forum reviewed and considered the recent developments of the humanitarian situation of Syrian displaced families inside as well as outside Syria. This forum aimed at building on the momentum generated following the donor meeting in Kuwait and advocated to make the pledges a reality. The position of Lebanon focused on the massive influx of Syrian displaced families into mostly the poorest regions of an already economically-struggling country, which has proven to be a massive burden. The lack of resources at all levels has been alarming, especially when it comes to public institutions and physical and social infrastructure. On this issue in particular, the Lebanese hosting communities need all the attention and assistance they can get. Consequently, Lebanon called upon its friends and the international community to meet their pledges for assistance so Lebanon can, not only sustain its efforts to protect and assist the Syrian families until their safe return to Syria but also be able to adequately mobilize resources in case of any arising contingencies.

The Ministry of Social Affairs (MOSA) and UNDP announced a new partnership between the Government of Lebanon and the United Nations to address the critical challenges outlined in the Government of Lebanon response plan and the UN Regional Recovery Program 4 (UN RRP4) and bringing together the national and international response in support of Lebanese host communities through one coherent action plan. The Lebanon Host Communities Support Program will provide a multi-donor implementation and funding platform that provides an efficient means of engaging a range of implementation partners in support of host communities, including UN agencies, international and national NGOs, municipalities and other local actors against an agreed results and reporting framework. The Lebanon Host Communities Support Program, managed jointly by MOSA and UNDP, provides an effective option for the international community to support the GOL in its efforts to alleviate the growing crisis facing host communities through looking at three strategic areas: Basic service delivery, livelihoods and income generation and, social cohesion.

European Union contributes to develop the capabilities of Lebanon for Integrated Border Management

On 8 February 2013, representatives of diplomatic missions, international organisations and Lebanese government institutions participated in an event on Developing National Capability for Integrated Border Management in Lebanon in Beirut. This event was organized in the framework of the new Integrated Border Management programme funded by the European Union and implemented by the International Centre for Migration Policy Development (ICMPD). The key objectives of the programme Developing National Capability for Integrated Border Management in Lebanon are : 1) to support Lebanon in the gradual definition and implementation of a national Integrated Border Management Strategy; 2) to improve operations at legal crossing points; 3) to upgrade the border management training systems in Lebanon, and 4) to increase public awareness regarding border management through outreach activities. As



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reported in the Aid Coordination Newsletter of October 2012 (issue 59), the programme has a three-year duration and a total budget of Euro 3.7 million. Over the next three years, IC-MPD will work directly with these agencies as partners. The European Union is very committed to Integrated Border Management across the globe. Since 2002, Euro 870 million have already been committed by the EU to Internal Border Management in more than 44 countries.

Second EU-Lebanon Cooperation Days to take place in UNESCO Palace

On 18 and 19 March 2013, the European Delegation to Lebanon - in close collaboration with the EU Member States - will organize the second EU-Lebanon Cooperation Days. This two-day event will be open to all interested audiences and will provide a unique opportunity for Lebanese and EU partners to showcase their activities, present their results, extend their professional networks and increase their knowledge about EU-Lebanon cooperation in general. Whilst the exhibition area will be composed of various thematic booths, a series of panel debates and question and answer sessions will elaborate several topics in more depth. The sectors that will be covered in this event range from Economic Development, Human Rights and Governance, to Social and Cultural Development and Heritage, Humanitarian Aid, and many more. For more information contact: silke.hofs@eeas.europa.eu