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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

For more than half of 2013, Lebanon was without a government. Culture in external relations in this small country is in fact mostly a non-state activity whose reach extends far beyond Lebanon's confines, principally through the efforts of many cosmopolitan artists and cultural operators who work to the highest international standards of excellence. The Lebanese diaspora and numerous links with the Arab world have made Lebanese professionals cultural brokers internationally. The practical inexistence of state structures as regards the cultural sector (apart from surviving elements of censorship and a few modest projects) enables creative freedom and ground-breaking initiatives to exist. It also encourages informal connections between cultural stakeholders and private funding in a context of constant political and security crisis. This may imply painful compromises for cultural professionals in a country ruled by religious and linguistic communities, powerful families and the informal (if not illegal) economy. Cultural relations with Europe are dominated by bonds with France, but there is a general appetite among the country's westernized cultural stakeholders for closer relations with Europeans in general. Today, the direct impact of the Syrian crisis, on top of the presence of Palestinian refugees, has serious social and cultural consequences for the stability of Lebanese society.

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## OVERVIEW

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There was general agreement among our informants that in Lebanon, 95 per cent of external cultural relations have no connection with state policy or structures. There is in fact no government policy or strategy on culture in external relations, just as there are still no public concert halls or opera houses/theatres to host foreign partners. The main drivers of culture in external relations are independent organisations, events and cultural managers funded by private or foreign donors. They thus operate according to the logic of a wholly unregulated market (and are hence very aware of the economic value of culture as well as its linkages with tourism) while they also attempt to establish partnerships with sponsors and grant-providers. Most live and work in Beirut and are part of an internationalised elite that values the status of artists and cultural workers, unlike more traditional segments of Lebanese society. The artistic scene in Lebanon is so developed that it even has its own independent magazine, *L'Agenda culturel*, which has become a reference in terms of cultural life and an unprecedented instance in the Arab world.<sup>1</sup>

Working in the cultural sphere in Lebanon is often depicted by its practitioners as an act of resistance against war and violence, but also as part of the permanent struggle for survival that requires enormous amounts of resourcefulness.<sup>2</sup> Cultural work, some stakeholders say, can also help achieve unity, pride and trust among the Lebanese people (including those in the diaspora, who have had enough of the endless conflict between communities) and engage young people in combating conflict. More generally, culture in the Arab world is a way of expressing contemporary debates on identity, religion and economic inequalities. All this, in the eyes of the stakeholders consulted, justifies supporting cultural work in Lebanon.

Because of the country's history of internal conflicts, its current political instability and its geographical proximity with neighbours at war (Syria, Israel and Palestine, not to mention the influence of other Middle Eastern powers and forces), being a Lebanese cultural stakeholder – or for that matter an international one seeking to work in Lebanon – requires a particular kind of personal resilience. For example, the 2013 edition of the Baalbek International Festival had, for the first time, to be relocated in Beirut because of the Syrian conflict. Everyone in the cultural sector in Lebanon is aware that all their projects are potentially subject to cancellation or last-minute hurdles, but they keep planning them anyway. A case in point is the performing arts festival *Du Bois des Pins* organised

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<sup>1</sup> *Agenda culturel* website: <http://www.agendaculturel.com/Qui-sommes-nous>

<sup>2</sup> 'A Beyrouth, la scène vit grâce au système D' is the title of a reportage in *Le Monde* dated 28 December 2013 about theatrical life in the city. The title can be translated into English as 'In Beirut, theatre lives on through sheer resourcefulness'.

Another article in the same issue on Lebanese cultural life as a whole is entitled 'Un milieu artistique florissant malgré la crise et les conflits' (The cultural milieu flourishes despite crises and conflicts); the article cites the architect Youssef Tohme who says, 'Lebanon is like Giacometti's *Walking Man*, who has no clothes, yet nevertheless advances, but he knows not in which direction.'

by the NGO Assabil that was maintained in September 2013 when international talk about US strikes against Syria was at its peak.<sup>3</sup>

One of the main challenges for culture in external relations is the achievement of sustainability, as well as greater strength, by an autonomous and internationalised cultural sector in the absence of state action. In an analytical note prepared for the consultation, one stakeholder underlines that ‘Lebanon is bigger than its geography’. Culture in external relations in Lebanon has wide and deep ramifications in the Arab world, the francophone world (there are 20,000 French-Lebanese in Lebanon), the Mediterranean region, and the Lebanese diaspora (spread all over the world and historically engaged in business and sponsorship). Resourceful Lebanese find ways – even illegally through piracy – to have access to international TV channels and broadcasts abroad as well.

The limited resources and power of the government in the field of culture are mostly deployed by the Ministry of Tourism, which concentrates most of its funding on international festivals in Lebanon. Sometimes, the Ministry also funds trips of Lebanese artists abroad such as with the Caracalla Troupe in Italy in 2012. The Ministry of Culture was created more recently and has a minuscule budget (0.1 per cent of the total state outlay) and staff. While it used to fund Lebanese cultural weeks abroad, it had to stop in the last two years because of budgetary constraints. Its objective is to raise funding in partnership with private and international organisations and support public cultural institutions, such as the national music conservatory. Another emblematic project funded outside the state budget (thanks to the Sultanate of Oman) was the construction of the House of Arts and Culture of Beirut, attributed in 2009 to Milanese architect Alberto Catalano.<sup>4</sup> In some areas of Grand Beyrouth (Beirut itself and the adjoining urban areas along the coastline), several organisations play a fundamental role, acting as funding platforms and institutions supporting culture in external relations.

Solidere is a private real estate reconstruction and development company, set up in the early 1990s to rebuild Beirut’s city centre and to position Beirut as a business and cultural hub in the Middle East region.<sup>5</sup> It finances numerous cultural projects related to heritage preservation and promotion, architecture, contemporary arts and design, out of its 800 million euros portfolio. Solidere works in partnership with the city of Beirut or the Ministries of Culture and Tourism, but its financial weight makes it ‘a State within the State’. Some artists view Solidere’s funding for culture as ‘the worst available money in Lebanon’, quoting warlords supporting international festivals. The company has developed the heritage trail in the centre of Beirut, funded the renovation of numerous historical buildings and archaeological sites. It has also launched the Beirut Exhibition Centre, an exhibition and contemporary art space on the new city’s waterfront.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> Another example given during the consultation is the November 2012 International Archaeology Symposium which took place despite high tensions in the country.

<sup>4</sup> Wafta Hamadi, Rita Azar, ‘Lebanon’, in *Cultural policies in Algeria, Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon, Morocco, Palestine, Syria and Tunisia*, Amsterdam: Boekmanstudies, Culture Resource (Al Mawred Al Thaqafy) and European Cultural Foundation, 2010.

<sup>5</sup> Solidere website: <http://www.solidere.com/>.

<sup>6</sup> Beirut Exhibition Center website: [beirutexhibitioncenter.com](http://beirutexhibitioncenter.com).

UMAM Documentation and Research (D&R) is a cultural organisation located in the southern part of Beirut founded in 2004 by Lokman Slim, a publisher, activist and political analyst, together with his German wife, Monika Borgman. They both worked on the documentary film *Massaker* about the 1982 Sabra and Shatila killings. The main focus of UMAM's work is on collective memory and history of Lebanese trauma and conflicts. UMAM is a documentation and research centre on archives with approximately a third of its work having an international dimension. It has also expanded its work with the opening of a cultural space, le hangar, with some Dutch and Danish financial support. The overall budget of UMAM varies from US \$ 300,000 to 500,000 per year and mostly comes from European funds (including the German Institute for Foreign Cultural Relations, Ifa (the Institut für Auslandsbeziehungen, Stuttgart) for the Zivic civil conflict resolution programme focusing on the experience of Lebanese political prisoners in Syria).<sup>7</sup>

The Arab Image Foundation (AIF) was established in 1997 to collect from wherever they are in the world, preserve, and study photographs taken in or about the Middle East, North Africa and Arab countries. It provides 'a public service' with a mix of private funds and grants. Its collection makes up around 600,000 photographs; some have been digitalised and made accessible online. The foundation targets an audience and users far beyond Lebanese borders and has invested in web-based tools for its outreach. Over the years it has benefited from the support of numerous sponsors and partners, including European foundations, organisations and the EU, but also private donors and friends from the whole Middle East region.<sup>8</sup> With funds from the EU and the Heinrich Boell Foundation, the AIF, the Arab Center for Architecture, the Association for Arabic music and the Cinémathèque de Tanger have together launched the Modern Heritage Observatory, a professional network in the Middle East on the preservation of modern cultural heritage.<sup>9</sup>

The Fondation Liban Cinéma (FLC) created in 2003 preserves, promotes and distributes Lebanese films.<sup>10</sup> In 2013, approximately a third of its work was linked to relations outside Lebanon and the management's strategy is to expand its international connections further (so far 80 per cent of Lebanese films are co-produced with France) in order to reach larger audiences abroad. So far the audience remains small (only 11-13 per cent of the population goes to cinemas), representing around 400 people, mostly in Beirut. The ambition of the FLC is to become an intermediary between cinema professionals and state structures, the equivalent of a national committee for cinema. Its yearly budget is approximately 220,000 euros. The foundation has two private sponsors, Bankmed and BLC bank, and numerous private and public partners (the Ministries of Culture, Tourism and Information, Berytech, the EU, the Institut français au Liban, Air France, to name but a few).

The Arab Fund for Art and Culture (AFAC) is an independent organisation based in Beirut and funded by a number of Arab (Arab Fund for Economic and Social Development, The Cultural and Scientific Association), American (Ford, Open Society Foundations) and European (in The

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<sup>7</sup> 'Dealing with experiences from Syrian prisons by former Lebanese political prisoners', *zivik – Civil Conflict Resolution*. Ifa. Online. Available at: <http://www.ifa.de/en/funding/zivik-civil-conflict-resolution/current-projects/umam.html>.

<sup>8</sup> The full list of supporters is available on the Arab Image Foundation website: <http://www.fai.org.lb/Home.aspx>.

<sup>9</sup> Modern Heritage Observatory website: [www.modernheritageobservatory.org](http://www.modernheritageobservatory.org).

<sup>10</sup> Fondation Liban Cinéma website: <http://www.fondationlibancinema.org/about.html>

Netherlands, the Doen Foundation, the Prince Claus Fund for Culture and Development and HIVOS) donors, as well as corporate (Armex, UBS, Projacs, Pegase partners) and private donors. It provides around 1.5 million euros worth of grants every year all across the Arab world, including to Arabs living in Europe (20 per cent of grantees). AFAC does not pursue national diplomatic objectives or the promotion of a particular national culture. In addition to its grant work, AFAC plays many roles behind the scenes by facilitating connections and initiatives, and advising and spreading information to support culture in the Arab world. The chairman of AFAC is Professor Ghassan Salamé, former Minister of Culture of Lebanon under Rafiq Hariri and an active French scholar in La Francophonie.

Outside Beirut, a number of private foundations are also very active. The founders of these foundations are often politicians or businessmen with political and economic stakes which may sometimes create dilemmas for their Lebanese and international partners, for example the Hariri Foundation or the Safadi Foundation.

The Safadi Foundation (based in Tripoli, North Lebanon) is named after Mohammad Safadi, a Sunni businessman and politician from Tripoli who has also served as Minister of Finance. The foundation provides a number of public services in Tripoli. It is involved in numerous cultural projects aimed at boosting regional and local development and has established working relationships with most of the European cultural institutes and foreign embassies (around 20 per cent of its activities is outward looking). In the framework of a EU-funded regional project called Umayyad, the foundation has been cooperating since 2012 with a dozen partners on a tourist-cultural itinerary.<sup>11</sup> The foundation also received funds from USAID.

The Saradar foundation is a corporate foundation that works throughout Lebanon on the visual arts.<sup>12</sup> It estimates that 30 per cent of its work has an international dimension. Its funds fluctuate depending on the budget available (between 3,000 and 30,000 euros for each project).

A limited number of cities – usually famous for their rich archaeological heritage – have historically been active in external cultural relations. They host international festivals which have positioned Lebanon as a cultural hub in the Middle East: Beiteddine, gathering around 50,000 spectators each summer;<sup>13</sup> the Baalbek International Music Festival, over five decades old, also supported by numerous partners;<sup>14</sup> Byblos, with its festival on heritage and traditions; and Zouk Mikael, which hosts an international festival close to Beirut.

Finally, dozens of smaller artistic structures and NGOs, which are often less directly connected to the business and political world of Lebanon, have managed to maintain their existence

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<sup>11</sup> *Strategic Project, aiming to achieve a better seasonal and geographical spread of tourism arrival, UMMAYYAD*, ENPI CBCMED & Regione Autònoma de Sardinia. Online. Available at: [http://www.enpicbcmec.eu/sites/default/files/umayyad\\_final\\_0.pdf](http://www.enpicbcmec.eu/sites/default/files/umayyad_final_0.pdf).

<sup>12</sup> See at: <http://fondationsaradar.org/Fondation/Visual-Arts>.

<sup>13</sup> Beiteddine Art Festival website: [http://beiteddine.org/#art\\_festival](http://beiteddine.org/#art_festival).

<sup>14</sup> Sponsors on the Baalbeck International Festival website: <http://www.baalbeck.org.lb/index.php/en/sponsors>.



in the last few years. They are cultural managers and artistic creators, usually young and internationalised, connected to the world through social networks.

In theatre and music, the Festival de Printemps is a popular and convivial event. The Zoukak theatre company and cultural association is a respected group of artists well connected abroad and very keen to remain independent from any outside influence.<sup>15</sup> The company applies psycho-social methods to theatre teaching with children and disabled audiences in Lebanon refugee camps. Its work and sidewalk events, hosting internationally celebrated artists, are recognised widely.

As for contemporary dance, the most renowned festival has become the Beirut International Platform of Dance (Bipod) organised by Omar Rajeh (and the organisation Maqamar). Each year, Bipod gathers international choreographers and experts to exchange their experience and launch new collaborations.<sup>16</sup>

The Fête de la Musique (held on 21<sup>st</sup> June) has lately been supported by numerous sponsors and has hosted Arab and Western groups performing in various parts of the city of Beirut.<sup>17</sup> Apart from this huge event and the Baalbek festival, the smaller actors of the music scene have to struggle with limited means.

Assabil is an organisation focused on the access to books, literacy and reading. It has developed a network of libraries and library buses across Beirut. Its work targets a local Lebanese audience but is partly supported by international funders, namely Le Conseil Régional d'Île-de-France (CRIF), the Open Society Institute (OSI), The Heinrich Boell Foundation (HBF), La Fondation Ousseimi, La Fondation Hachette, IOCC, and the Ford Foundation.

The Beirut Art Centre is a dedicated space for contemporary art exhibitions and events. It is mainly sponsored by private donors in Lebanon as well as foreign (including European) cultural organisations. In the past few years, it has developed an auction event which can cover, at times, up to 15 per cent of its budget.

It is estimated that there are around 20 galleries in Beirut, a high average for the size of the Beirut audience. Many of them probably have an international outreach and target international visitors.

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<sup>15</sup> Zoukak theater company and cultural website: <http://zoukak.org/front-page>.

<sup>16</sup> 'Bipod et Leymoun ou la célébration de la danse', *Agenda Culturel*, 29 March 2013. Online. Available at: [http://www.agendaculturel.com/Scene/Bipod\\_et\\_Leymoun\\_ou\\_la\\_celebration\\_de\\_la\\_danse](http://www.agendaculturel.com/Scene/Bipod_et_Leymoun_ou_la_celebration_de_la_danse).

<sup>17</sup> Hanaa al-Raheem, 'Beirut Music Festival Cools Lebanese Tensions', *Al Monitor*, 19 June 2013. Online. Available at: <http://www.al-monitor.com/pulse/fr/contents/articles/culture/2013/06/lebanese-fete-de-la-musique.html>.

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## THE CULTURAL POLICY LANDSCAPE AND RELATIONS WITH THE EU

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The international dimension of the Lebanese cultural sector is highly dependent on the funding it gets from private philanthropy and sponsorship. For many informants, this trend can only grow, given the decreasing budgets of all the foreign cultural sponsors and the absence of a clear legal framework regulating private sponsorship for culture in the country. Private sponsorship 'is not even a choice', but a necessity. Lebanese professionals speak of funding from 'civil society', understood as either in the private sector (banks, insurance, traders) or not-for profit organisations and foundations, philanthropists and individual donors.

There are distinct divides between Beirut and the rest of the country, as well as between various areas in Beirut. In Tripoli for instance, two private foundations replace state structures in many areas, including culture.

English speaking cultures are gaining influence in Lebanon, favoured by the increasing use of the Internet and the new technologies. The Internet has become instrumental in enabling Lebanese cultural operators to make their work known abroad. They have therefore invested substantially in these tools – including digitalised outputs – despite uneven use and access in Lebanon itself. However, the new technologies do not necessarily guarantee that the existence of a collective memory in the cultural sector: some consider that foreign initiatives repeatedly propose the same projects (like a film archive in Lebanon) because there is so little synergy and coordination between cultural stakeholders.

Lebanese cultural professionals have diversified their partnerships and pathways of cooperation in the last decade. More and more artists are invited to perform or work in Asia. The United States are very active in the field of higher education in Lebanon, less in the field of the arts and culture; a few large grants have been made by American foundations. Funding from Arab countries is also scarce, but many people from other Arab countries visit Beirut and constitute a significant audience in times of peace or calm when they can travel to Lebanon. Direct cultural exchanges with the Arab world function smoothly thanks to their informality and lack of heavy procedures. This, for instance, is true for film distribution, which is far less costly than in Europe. Some think of broadening their partnership to other continents such as Africa and Latin America, where Lebanese diaspora is numerous, but this has not yet really materialised on a large scale.

For many in the Lebanese cultural field, 'Europe is the only way out', as stated by one informant.

### **Strategies are also very diverse, depending on each cultural organisation**

Given these conditions, the strategies of cultural organisations are very diversified. For instance, Assabil mostly targets a young Lebanese audience but also partners with foreign sponsors and, involves itself at times in Mediterranean projects. On a much larger scale, and through very different methods, Solidere is working on developing a new position for the city of Beirut on the international cultural scene, notably through partnerships with the Arab world, by promoting

Lebanon as a gateway between Europe and the Middle East, as well as with Europe (the UK and Venice were cited as targeted partners) to attract more visitors to the city of Beirut. Its 'cosmopolitan night life' has become one of its selling points.

As for museums, most of the international exchanges of the National Museum in Beirut (with the Louvre and Musée Rath in Geneva to cite recent examples) are done on a bilateral basis through direct cooperation between curators. Cooperating with Europe is a necessity for the international cooperation of the archaeological department (the *Direction générale des antiquités*). There are a few instances of EU funding in the museum sector, like the regional projects Corpus Levant<sup>18</sup> and Qantara<sup>19</sup> in the framework of Euromed Heritage, both of which saw the participation of the national museum.

Other cultural organisations and artists have built up strong partnerships directly with artistic counterparts in Europe, on a bilateral basis and thanks to private funding or support from foreign cultural donors. In these cases, Lebanese professionals conceive their projects and fundraise for them afterwards. The approaches to fundraising of the dance and theatre company, Maqamat (organisers of the BIPOD festival) and the Beirut Art Center (in partnership with the British Council, the Goethe-Institut and the Institut français) are a good illustration of this.

When asked how they would like to be perceived, most of the public organisations focus on their role vis-à-vis culture itself and their audiences, and not vis-à-vis Lebanon or Europe. This said, most of the stakeholders involved in the Preparatory Action acknowledged that their European audience is far broader than the Lebanese one, described as a microcosm.

The UNESCO Regional Office in Beirut together with the UNESCO Chair of Comparative Religious Studies, Mediation and Dialogue at Saint Joseph University produced, in 2011, a trilingual manual/CD about the cultural dimensions of Christianity and Islamism, to be distributed in all Lebanese schools. From 2008 to 2012, in cooperation with the Ministry of Culture, the organisation developed a regional project on the protection of intangible heritage – poetic lyrics/*poésie chantée* – in Lebanon, Egypt, Syria and Jordan.

France plays a very specific role in the cultural sector of Lebanon for historical reasons. In many instances, the French cultural presence is the only European one, as in Tripoli for instance, where the European festival is exclusively managed by the Institut français (IF). The Fête de la Musique, orchestrated by the IF, has been operating since the early 2000s and is cited as a success in promoting young Lebanese musicians. The budget of the Institut français has decreased by 50 per cent however in the last six years and, in order to maintain its activities, it has to fundraise with private sponsors or through the box office. Direct cooperation between the National Music Conservatory (CSNM) and the Conservatoire de Lyon has taken off the ground at the initiative of the IF.

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<sup>18</sup> *Manuel pour l'entretien et la réhabilitation de l'architecture traditionnelle Libanaise*. Online. Available at: [http://www.meda-corpus.net/eng/gates/visit/atl\\_frn.htm](http://www.meda-corpus.net/eng/gates/visit/atl_frn.htm).

<sup>19</sup> Qantara, Patrimoine méditerranéen website: <http://www.qantara-med.org/index.html>.

In the framework of EU programmes for culture, several regional funds (often Euromed) include Lebanon. An overview of EU programmes and projects in Lebanon is provided in annexes. The Anna Lindh Euro-Mediterranean Foundation for Dialogue between Cultures (ALF) is also active in the country, although some participants in the workshop considered that there is room for improvement in the way it operates (in particular with regard to youth programmes). Lebanon will be included in the new EU Creative Europe programme 2014-2020.

The EU Delegation in Lebanon has launched a number of projects to be implemented in 2014 (see list in annexes). However, it has a very limited capacity as regards culture, with one staff member who is also in charge of press and communication. This is a lack felt by cultural stakeholders who acknowledge that, when looking for funding support, primarily turn to Member States' embassies rather than to the EU Delegation.

There is a EUNIC cluster in Lebanon which meets on a regular basis but as it is not yet registered in Lebanon, it cannot apply for EU funding. The creation of a trust fund is envisaged for 2014 but its functioning and legal features remain unclear. The work of EUNIC Lebanon and its relationship with the EU Delegation are regularly discussed at the level of Heads of Missions meetings. During the workshop it appeared that the potential for synergies between EUNIC and the EU delegation is underused.

### Special situation

The Syrian crisis has had a direct impact on Lebanese society, but it is extremely difficult to obtain clear figures in this regard: it is likely, however, that at least 1.5 million Syrians have sought refuge in Lebanon, in addition to 400,000 Palestinians who have been present for many years in refugee camps. This humanitarian, political and security emergency continues to impose specific requirements on European action but also raises new questions about its place, its role, and its priorities. In the refugee camps where living conditions are very harsh, culture is not a priority – while it is estimated that Palestinians represent around 12 per cent of the population in Lebanon. Very few European cultural organisations are present in the camps. The headquarters and the Lebanese regional office of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) cooperate with European States (France/Institut français, Italy, inter alia) in the organisation of cultural events (performing arts). The UN agency also supports Palestinian NGOs that promote Palestinian culture.

Syrian cultural professionals have tried to find some space in Lebanon, particularly in Beirut. This has been particularly visible in the television sector. Some cultural stakeholders in Beirut are trying to address the question of the presence of Syrian counterparts and trying to find solutions to their difficult professional and human situation.

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## CONCLUSIONS, PERCEPTIONS AND EXPECTATIONS

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Europe is still seen by many Lebanese stakeholders as an essential partner in external cultural work, as well as a connector to other Arab artists from different countries. Hence they also see some value in regional European programmes covering the Arab region and the Mediterranean. The idea of developing inter-regional cultural relations, for instance between Europe and the Middle East, was suggested during the consultation. In parallel, there was consensus about the fact that the Euro-Mediterranean concept, though attractive per se, had not really delivered positive change in Lebanon, and was still ‘in search of itself’. Some were of the opinion that Euro-Mediterranean experiences are more successful in North Africa than in Lebanon. Finally, others suggested that Euro-Mediterranean initiatives should include more systematically European partners from non-Mediterranean countries.

Participants in the workshops recognised that European governments and institutions pursue political objectives and interests through cultural work in their country. One interviewee even said ‘I know that Europe has plans to shape the future Middle East’. They generally feel more comfortable with the idea of cultural exchange, cooperation, partnership, strategy and co-creation than with the concept of cultural diplomacy or foreign cultural policy (two words which do not have any equivalent in Arabic, as some noted) as such. Indeed, most cultural professionals would like to be perceived as equal partners by European counterparts and the EU. Thus cultural stakeholders working with or supported by the Institut français underlined their appreciation for its lack of interference in their work, in a spirit of equal partnership.

Some however, recognised the value of ‘cultural projection’ (*rayonnement culturel*) carried out deliberately by foreign partners as long as it was of assistance to them. Others emphasised the economic dimension of culture and the role of markets, in particular in the field of film and cinema, or of culture as a catalyst for local economic development, for example as in Northern Lebanon. In the end, it was recognised that culture in external relations required some negotiation and compromise between stakeholders in the country and their international partners. This reflected the diversity of approaches to culture in external relations by various Lebanese cultural professionals. The absence of governmental policy on culture in external relations makes it hard, however, to formalise or officialise any of these approaches.

There is certainly a demand for more exchanges with Europe among the already active and engaged cultural stakeholders. There is even a shared curiosity and desire to do more with the EU itself, but this comes with the realisation that there is a need to better understand how to work more with EU funds. What kind of European presence and action would be needed and favoured? Different but mutually complementary views were expressed in this regard. A first strand of opinions favours the strengthening of existing systems of relations that have proved effective. In the case of Lebanon, this would consist of the further empowerment of the role of cultural institutes and the channelling of resources to those that could play a catalyst and hosting role for other European initiatives, especially outside Beirut (the Institut français being a case in point). The second option is to strengthen EUNIC so that it becomes a more credible and valued interlocutor of the EU Delegation. Some cultural stakeholders would like to see the latter more directly involved with their

work. The third direction of effort would be the enhancement of the Delegation's capacities on cultural issues.

As for EU funding and application procedures, most of the informants expressed constructive criticism. One statement summarises the mindset in Lebanon: 'we want to do more with the EU, but not under these conditions'. Because of its cumbersome procedures, the EU's nickname among cultural stakeholders in Lebanon has become '50 pages'. Its highly formatted procedures leave next to no room for free expression as regards the nature of projects proposed. Local stakeholders often have the impression that the right kinds of projects are pre-defined, hence excluding de facto certain stakeholders who would have specific needs. Some also find the EU disconnected from Lebanese realities and in fact not really interested in what Lebanese cultural operators are actually doing. The latter hope therefore that the EU will make new efforts to listen to non-governmental stakeholders. Numerous cultural professionals express their surprise at receiving, several times a month, emails from unknown contacts offering them to become partners in tenders for EU funding, sometimes on topics that have nothing to do with their expertise.

Those few, however, who have had direct experience of EU-funded projects report an unexpected value, which is that the existence of so many rules force cultural organisations to be better organised and managed; it also pushes them to join forces and form lobbying platforms. In the field of higher education, stakeholders express their satisfaction with EU-funded programmes such as Erasmus Mundus. One underlined the need to open EU calls on cultural issues to universities and to find ways to merge funding more efficiently for high education and culture respectively. Others mentioned what they see as best practices: the funding and operating method used by the Prince Claus Fund for Culture and Development in The Netherlands and the flexible funding system of AFAC, both of which allow swift support to local cultural initiatives. It was also suggested that the EU conduct more systematic, light and user-friendly feedback surveys about the efficiency of its work.

Because the cultural contact point to Europe in Lebanon is mostly France and the Institut français, a number of cultural stakeholders seriously care about La Francophonie and wonder how the EU might guarantee that the positive influence of French-speaking cultural practice and heritage could be preserved and promoted. Some go even further by calling on the EU to find ways to support France in its cultural work in Lebanon as the gateway to Europe. Following those lines, it was also recommended for future culture-related work to take into account more often the fact that Lebanon is a trilingual country.<sup>20</sup>

Finally, workshop participants explicitly stated their hope for concrete action to be taken in the wake the Preparatory Action to act on their recommendations.

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<sup>20</sup> One recent example of trilingual projects is the cooperation between the Ministry of Tourism, the Institut français, the British Council and the École Supérieure des Affaires on the creation of a trilingual label for the hotel sector.

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## ANNEXES

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### Annex I: Methodology and list of people consulted

The consultation mission took place on 23-25 September 2013 and consisted of four workshops, co-organised with and hosted by the Institut français du Liban. The four groups consisted of 1) state and public officials, 2) independent cultural managers and artists, 3) non-governmental cultural funders, foundations and platforms and 4) European organisations in charge of culture in Lebanon (EUNIC cluster and other stakeholders). In total, 37 people were consulted.

#### Wednesday 25 September 2013, 10h

- **Hana El Amil**, Ministry of Culture
- **Lynn Tehini**, Presidency of the Republic
- **Silke Hofs**, EU Delegation
- **Antoine Boulad**, Assabil
- **Joelle El Bittar** and **Dolly Choucair**, Ville de Zouk Mikael
- UNRWA
- **Joseph Kreidi**, UNESCO
- **Salwa Nacouzi**, AUF
- Directors of the Instituts français in Tripoli, Zahlé, Saïda, Jounieh and Deir El Qamar

#### Wednesday 25 September 2013, 15h

- **Hania Mroué**, Métropolis cinema
- **Michèle Paulikevitch**, Musiques actuelles
- **Walid Moussalem**, Conservatoire national
- **Rima Mokaiesch**, Fondation Arabe pour l'Image
- **Sandra Dagher**, Beirut Art Center
- **Mia Habis**, Festival Bipod (contemporary dance)
- **Randa Asmar**, Festival de Printemps
- **Nayla Tamraz**, Director, Curatorial Master's, USJ
- **Hind Darwich**, L'orient des livres
- **Omar Abi Azar**, Collectif Zoukak

#### Thursday 26 September 2013, 10h

- **Monika Borgman**, UMAM
- **Maya de Freige**, Fondation Liban Cinéma
- **Zena Takieddine**, AFAC-Arab Fund for Arts and Culture
- **Vanessa Yakan**, Fondation Safadi
- **Nada Boulos Al Assaad**, APEAL-arts visuels
- **Tania Helou**, Fondation Saradar

- **Randa Armanazi**, Solidere

Thursday 26 September 2013, 15h – Directors of European cultural institutes in Lebanon

- **Ulrich Nowak**, Goethe-Institut
- **Christophe Lechat**, Belgium
- **Stéphane Kozak** and **Angelo Commeno**, Italy
- **Boris Richard**, Switzerland
- **Eunice Crook** and **Elie Gemayel**, British Council
- **Dan Stoenescu** and **Caroline Najjar**, Romania
- **Silke Hofs**, EU Delegation

**Individual interviews**

- **Raghida Tawileh**, *Agenda Culturel*
- **Nada Sardouk Ghandour**, General Director, Ministry of Tourism
- **Nayla de Freige**, President, Baalbeck International Festival



## Annex II: EU-Lebanese joint programmes and initiatives

### A. EU-Lebanese cultural cooperation activities run by the EU Delegation<sup>21</sup>

Small grants cultural projects that were just signed and will be implemented in 2014 (ongoing):

Name	Brief Description/Overall Objectives	EU Funding / Duration
<b>Promoting rapprochement between Lebanese and Syrian children in South Lebanon Prales through theatre</b>	The project implemented by <b>ALPHA Association</b> is designed to promote rapprochement between Lebanese and Syrian children (6-18 years old) in South Lebanon and raising awareness of the target groups on issues related to solidarity and human rights. In particular, the project will focus on play and ludic methods, mainly theatre, to promote harmony and mutual understanding amongst the two communities. Moreover, public performances will be organised during the last month of the project to target also parents and adults.	23,814 €
<b>Multi History Multi Memory</b>	<b>Multi History Multi Memory</b> of the <b>Sustainable Democracy Center</b> will support inter-communal, intercultural and intergenerational dialogue and rapprochement in Lebanon through the use of tangible and intangible cultural heritage. Focusing on youth, this project will seek to break down barriers between people from different religious, regional and political backgrounds for a better understanding of the other's views and promoting respect for diversity in a pluralistic society. It will also promote the development of a collective memory through the gathering of individual testimonies, amongst others. Artistic and educational workshops as well as festivals of diversity and exchange will be organised.	29,500 €
<b>Circus for Unity and Solidarity – CIRQUS II</b>	<b>'Circus for Unity and Solidarity – CIRQUS II'</b> of the <b>Association Arc-en-Ciel</b> will promote exchange and intercultural dialogue between young people from different communities and nationalities in Lebanon through circus arts. During introductory workshops in a multicultural environment the young participants will learn together cultural and artistic skills as well as how to perform and help others accessing those skills. The trained participants will collaborate closely with local authorities and institutions in order to give the opportunity for disadvantaged youth to benefit from circus performances in 5 regions.	29,166.06 €
<b>Photography, reading, storytelling, competitions and workshops</b>	<b>'Photography, reading, storytelling, competitions and workshops'</b> implemented by the <b>Union of Municipalities of Jabal Amel</b> is designed to improve cultural activities in South Lebanon through capacity building and promoting convergence between cultural and artistic activities. The inhabitants of 16 villages will benefit from organised cultural lectures, seminars, workshops as well as training on photography, reading, storytelling and competitions. In addition, cultural exhibitions will be organised to show and sell the professional photos and other competitive activities.	30,000 €

<sup>21</sup> Information provided by the EU Delegation to Lebanon.

<b>AL SUNUNU: Music Education for Choirs of Palestinian Children</b>	<b>AL SUNUNU: Music Education for Choirs of Palestinian Children (refugees and marginalised population)</b> implemented by <b>Association Rostropovich-Vishnevskaya</b> is designed to introduce Palestinian children living in challenging social conditions in Lebanon to the world of music, allowing them to learn new skills and bond with one another, their teachers, and their scattered communities. In this regard, the project aims at preserving and promoting traditional music as an expression of cultural heritage and identity of the Palestinian community. In the course of the action around 70 children and youth from 11 to 15 years old from UNRWA schools in Lebanon will receive music education including lessons of singing, music theory and music history. Additionally, local music teachers will be trained to be choirmasters and a concert will be organised uniting choirs from different countries via satellite link.	30,000 €
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## B. EU-Lebanese cultural cooperation activities run by the Commission Headquarters

Euromed Heritage IV <sup>22</sup>			
<p><b>Euromed Heritage IV</b> (2008-2012) carries forward the achievements of Heritage I + II + III, in the process of recognising culture as a catalyst for mutual understanding between the people of the Mediterranean region. Today embedded in the European Neighbourhood Policy and with a budget of 17 million €, Euromed Heritage IV contributes to the exchange of experiences on cultural heritage, creates networks and promotes cooperation. It is based on the objectives defined in the ‘Strategy for the Development of Euro-Mediterranean Heritage: priorities from Mediterranean Countries (2007-2013)’ and focuses on local populations’ appropriation of their cultural heritage and favours access to education on this subject. It supports a framework for exchanging experiences, channelling the dissemination of best practices and new perspectives aimed at the development of an institutional cultural environment.</p> <p>Duration: 2008-2012            Budget: 17 million €  <a href="http://www.euromedheritage.net">www.euromedheritage.net</a></p>			
Name	Brief Description/Overall Objectives	EU Funding / Duration	Contact
<b>Mare Nostrum</b> <b>A heritage trail along the Phoenician maritime routes and historic port-cities of the Mediterranean Sea</b>	<p>The Mediterranean port-cities and their correspondent archaeological sites within the Mediterranean Phoenician routes share a lack of awareness by the local population towards the value of their heritage and the importance of their preservation and a lack of valorisation by the local authorities of the tangible and intangible heritage of their areas of competence.</p> <p>MARE NOSTRUM intends to contribute to the promotion and awareness-raising of the heritage value of historic port cities of the Mediterranean Sea, scattered along the Phoenician maritime</p>	15.01.09 – 01.03.13  1,365,272 €	<a href="http://www.eh4-marenostrum.net/">www.eh4-marenostrum.net/</a>

<sup>22</sup> Regional Programme covering the following countries: Algeria, Egypt, Israel, Jordan, Lebanon, Libya, Morocco, Occupied Palestinian Territory, Syria and Tunisia.

	<p>routes.</p> <p>MARE NOSTRUM aims at providing a sustainable mechanism for the protection and management of cultural heritage resources in the targeted countries, leading to an awareness of cultural heritage in the public conscience. In order to enhance cultural heritage as part of the sustainable development of Mediterranean cultural heritage, the action will adopt a holistic approach which satisfies economic and social objectives as well as high quality cultural tourism needs.</p> <p>The action, whose main result will be the revitalisation of the targeted areas, turning them into places of life for the local people (which is the main target group of the action), enhancing synergies between past and present, will be implemented by a team of project partners – Medieval City of Rhodes in Greece; City of Tyre in Lebanon; Université Saint Joseph &amp; MAJAL/Academic Observatory for Construction and Reconstruction/University of Balamand in Lebanon; Paralleli in Italy – coordinated by DIRES University of Florence in Italy.</p>		
<p><b>Foundations for a strong future</b></p> <p><b>Youth in Lebanon and Jordan promote cultural heritage</b></p>	<p>Mercy Corps' civil society experience in Lebanon and Jordan has affirmed the need to place Arab young people, both children and youth, at the centre of the process of building a knowledge society: both groups are inheriting countries that are built on diverse histories and traditions of rich cultural heritage that will serve to unify and instill confidence and pride.</p> <p>The aim of this project is to support cultural heritage as one aspect of 'public wealth' that should be collectively celebrated and protected, by promoting a message of ownership at the local level through multilingual educational resources for schools, multimedia activities with youth and children, public events for the broader public, and capacity building of cultural heritage NGOs and museums to engage young people through developmentally-appropriate tools.</p> <p>The events and activities of the project will engage young people through online resources, field visit and local and national cultural events. Moreover, national museums and heritage sites in Lebanon and Jordan will become hubs for education, celebration of cultural heritage and knowledge dissemination.</p> <p>The target and beneficiaries of the project will be youth, educators, students, NGOs and Museums, parents, and the general public Mercy Corps has partnered in Lebanon with the Lebanese NGO 'APSAD' and the Beirut National Museum and in Jordan with JOHUD and the Jordan Museum, providing a team with expertise in cultural heritage, youth outreach and dialogue, community development and multimedia education.</p>	<p>15.01.09 – 30.04.12</p> <p>919,121 €</p>	<p><a href="http://www.asassat.com">www.asassat.com</a></p>

<p><b>Hammed</b></p> <p><b>Raising awareness for the hammam as a cultural heritage for the Mediterranean area and beyond</b></p>	<p>The whole Mediterranean region shares a common object of cultural value – the hammam, the public Turkish bath.</p> <p>The hammam has very specific features which reflect its importance and call for its promotion among the public: it is an architectural legacy and a living cultural heritage and as such it combines tangible and intangible heritage; it is well embedded in urban communities, filling an important role for neighbourhoods and, in many cases, for the Medina as a whole, and yet it runs the risk of disappearing.</p> <p>The <i>main aim</i> of Hammamed project is to raise awareness of the hammam as a common cultural heritage in the Mediterranean area and beyond mostly through public awareness raising activities, conferences and workshops, dissemination activities and specific actions for two selected hammams (Hammam Ammuna in Damascus and Hammam Saffarin in Fez).</p> <p>Among the <i>expected results</i>, social studies, rehabilitation design on ecological basis, hammam and neighbourhood days in Mediterranean cities, an exhibition and a documentary film.</p> <p>The <i>target group</i> will be the scientific community of hammam related disciplines, selected governmental agencies and local population (especially youth, students and women) and stakeholder representatives (teachers and hammam staff).</p> <p>The partnership of Hammamed project is headed by Oikodrom, the Vienna Institute for Urban Sustainability, in association with the University of Liverpool, the French Institute for Near East of Damascus and ADER (Agence pour la Dédensification et la Réhabilitation de la Medina de Fès).</p>	<p>01.01.09 – 01.04.12</p> <p>1,193,470 €</p>	<p><a href="http://www.hammamed.net/index.html">www.hammamed.net/index.html</a></p>
<p><b>MedLiHer</b></p> <p><b>Safeguarding Mediterranean Living Heritage</b></p>	<p>In 2003, the UNESCO adopted the text of the Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage, a multilateral binding instrument to safeguard intangible cultural heritage. Amongst the Mediterranean partner countries, seven participated in the Convention: Algeria, Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon, Morocco, Syria and Tunisia. However, no coordinated information about structures, programmes and experience connected with managing intangible cultural heritage is available to date in Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon and Syria. For this reason, the Medliher project intends to reinforce the institutional capacities of these four partner countries, and facilitate their effective participation in the international mechanisms established by the Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage.</p> <p>The envisaged strategy is in three phases: the first phase will be devoted to drawing up surveys of existing structures and programmes connected with safeguarding of intangible cultural heritage in the countries mentioned above, the second phase will involve developing national projects conceived on the basis of the needs of each partner country, the third phase to implementing national projects, and to preparing candidatures for inscription on the UNESCO</p>	<p>05.01.09 – 01.04.13</p> <p>1,338,279 €</p>	<p><a href="http://www.unesco.org/culture/ich/index.php?pg=00233">www.unesco.org/culture/ich/index.php?pg=00233</a></p>

	<p>Convention lists.</p> <p>The project, addressed to the partner countries' governmental communities and institutions, will lead to the safeguarding of the regional intangible cultural heritage according to the Convention's criteria, as well as with the reinforcement of governmental institutions' capacities. The Medliher project is lead by the UNESCO, in partnership with the Maison des cultures du Monde Association and the concerned ministries in Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon and Syria.</p>		
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### Euromed Audiovisual III<sup>23</sup>

*run by EC Headquarters*

**Objectives:**

The programme aims to contribute to intercultural dialogue and cultural diversity through support for the development of cinematographic and audiovisual capacity in the Partner Countries. It promotes complementarity and integration of the region's film and audiovisual industries, while seeking to harmonise public sector policy and legislation.

Developed on the basis of the Strategy for the Development of a Euro-Mediterranean Audiovisual Cooperation, it builds on the achievements of Euromed Audiovisual I and [Euromed Audiovisual II](#), aiming to tap into the potential of a developing audiovisual market in the region, and to assist Mediterranean films in securing a place on the global scene.

**What does it do?**

The programme contributes to the reinforcement of a Southern Mediterranean film industry through actions supporting the emergence of an audience for such films and the creation of a market for their distribution.

It contributes towards a job-creating film industry through the sharing of technologies and know-how, the encouragement of cooperation between producers, distributors and other operators at a Euro-Mediterranean level, and assistance towards the harmonisation of legislative frameworks and professional practices.

It also seeks to prepare the ground for a regional support mechanism for the film industry, which will examine the implementation of a regional financial support mechanism, update existing financing systems in each country and make easier co-productions between the Partner Countries and Europe.

Duration: 2009-2014

Budget: 11 million €

[www.euromedaudiovisuel.net](http://www.euromedaudiovisuel.net)

### Media and culture for development in the Southern Mediterranean region<sup>24</sup>

**Objectives**

The overall objective of the programme is to support the efforts of the Southern Mediterranean countries' in building deep-rooted democracy and to contribute to their sustainable economic, social and human development, through regional co-operation in the fields of media and culture.

<sup>23</sup> Ibid.

<sup>24</sup> Implementation starts in 2014.

Specifically, the programme seeks to reinforce the role of media and culture as vectors for democratisation, and economic and social development for societies in the Southern Mediterranean.

**What does it do?**

In the media field, the programme embraces people as well as public and private organisations that provide online and offline news reporting/journalism. Inter alia, the programme targets the mainstream public media in the Southern Mediterranean (e.g. print, TV and radio, and online) as well as independent media outlets including community media.

The programme develops capacities of the media operators as a vector for democratisation and human rights, and also supports efforts to improve media legislation and enhance the capacities of media regulators.

The programme supports activities fostering cultural policy reform and reinforcing the capacity of cultural policy makers, as well as promoting investment and the development of cultural operators' business capabilities. In the context of the programme, culture covers core arts areas (performing arts, visual arts, cultural and architectural heritage and literature), cultural industries (film, DVD and video, television and radio, video games, new media, music, books and press), and creative industries (industries, which use culture as an input but whose outputs are mainly functional, including architecture, advertising, design and fashion).

Duration: 2013-2017

Budget: 17 million €

[www.enpi-info.eu/mainmed.php?id=486&id\\_type=10](http://www.enpi-info.eu/mainmed.php?id=486&id_type=10)

### Regional Programme

**Towards Cultural Heritage Governance – A framework for the Preservation, Documentation and Accessibility of Cultural Heritage under Threat**

The Arab Image Foundation (AIF), the Association for Arabic Music (IRAB), the Arab Center for Architecture (ACA) and the Cinémathèque de Tanger are partners in this initiative aiming to advocate for the preservation of modern cultural heritage – with an emphasis on photography, music, architecture, video and film – in the Middle East and North Africa.

As they struggle for sustainability, cultural heritage actors in the MENA region are seeking to raise awareness of the need to support and improve the preservation of modern cultural heritage among political and institutional sectors and the general public. The project partners have come together to mobilise for joint action to impact policies and legal frameworks, and to generate political commitment towards modern cultural heritage.

Through the creation of a network of professional bodies from the MENA region, the project seeks an exchange of experience, the pooling of expertise and the elaboration of strategies for joint advocacy actions. By organising various activities such as trainings, national and regional meetings, film screenings, exhibitions, and the publication of articles, the partners in the project will contribute to making the modern cultural heritage of the Arab world more extensively preserved and widely accessible.

This initiative is funded by the European Union and the Heinrich Böll Foundation.

Budget: 400,000 €

Implementation period: 1 January 2012 – 31 December 2013

<http://www.modernheritageobservatory.org/about.php>

### Annex III: Bibliography and references

- Hill, Stephen, *Creative Lebanon: Framework for Future Prosperity*, London: British Council, 2008. Online. Available at: <http://www.britishcouncil.org/lebanon-creativelebanon-full-report.pdf>.