

Cultural Industries and Cultural Policies in Lebanon

Narrative Report

**Beirut
December 2001**

The Lebanese Center for Policy Studies (LCPS) organized, in cooperation with the Konrad Adenauer Foundation (KAF), a national workshop on “Cultural Industries and Cultural Policies in Lebanon”.

The workshop was prepared by documentation, background research, planning meetings, and extensive consultations conducted by LCPS.

For the purpose of the project, the cultural industries sector was defined to include the branches of the Lebanese economy that produce tangible or intangible cultural and intellectual products.

The major such-sectors were as follows:

- The printing and publishing sectors.
- The music recording sector.
- The audio-visual sector (features films and multi-media production).
- The artistic design sector (graphic design, fashion design, architectural and interior design, craft design...).
- The software and web design sector.

At the **macro-level**, the workshop aimed at assessing the significance of this sector for the Lebanese economy and its major features in terms of competitive advantage, employment potential, use of national human resources and talents and export opportunities.

In the absence of sufficient or detailed national or sectoral statistics, a paper contributed to estimate the share of this sector in the gross domestic product, the national employment and the Lebanese exports. The estimates were based on the analysis of available statistical data (mainly trade statistics) and on information collected from professional and trade associations, market research firms, firms active in each of the sectors, and leading experts, analysts and observers.

The purpose could not be to obtain a precise measurement of the economic weight of the cultural industries, but to arrive at a reasonable estimation of the overall size of the sector, the balance between its major sub-sectors and the growth trend over the last decade.

In a **second part**, the workshop reviewed and discussed the legal and regulatory framework affecting the Lebanese cultural industries.

The discussion included major laws on printed matters, intellectual property, customs, taxation and others as well as regulations and regulatory practices on censorship, trade in cultural goods, copyright enforcement and collective management of copyright and neighboring rights. The review relied both on an economic and legal analysis of the major documents and on perceptions and evaluations as expressed in the jurisprudence and the opinions of major actors.

In a **third part**, the workshop included a round table discussion of the sectoral structure (firm size, market structure, ownership, location...), and the policy issues (technological policy, price policy, innovations, external connections, use of cultural assets, marketing policy...) of firms operating in the Lebanese cultural industries sector (mainly in the information technologies sector, publishing, music and movie production).

The workshop opened by the Minister of Culture, Dr. Ghassan Salamé, included officials and key actors, leaders and analysts from the various cultural industries, including printing, publishing, music recording, movie making, artistic design, software, performing arts and others.

The workshop contributed to an informed public debate, about the best ways for Lebanon to build on its comparative advantage, in a world where the knowledge economy and the creative industries are becoming major factors of economic growth and social development.