

Cultures of adaptation and black markets

by Aref Alsoufi

Only few - and certainly not the ruling class - can understand what it means to have an education system totally shattered down as it is happening now or risks to happen soon in Lebanon. Losing a whole generation is equal to losing a future and going into an irreversible course in a world progressing in an unprecedented pace. Despite the fact that the education system in Lebanon in all its pre-university, higher education and vocational sectors, has been suffering from a fundamental deficiency in terms of a lack of coordinated strategies and its fast development into sectarian, family business, or business-oriented trends, education remains for Lebanon a societal spirit so that losing education is like losing one's soul.

What is most worrying in this battle is that the response of the real stakeholders - and surely not that of a completely impotent state - is not adequate and follows the principle of adaptation. Lebanese

people are good of adapting to the situations no matter how dramatic and destructive they are. This culture of adaptation has been gained over the years and at some historical moments was a sign of survival. In this particular crisis, it is the worst scenario preventing real change and evolution and it is certainly backfiring. Adaptation in the education sector means losing the battle of change not only at sectorial level but also at society level. If the education sector does not stand up and defend itself with a well-coordinated and collective response to this historical crisis then there is a real risk to descend and deteriorate towards a more dangerous culture already spread in the country and practiced even by the state, that is the culture of the 'black market'.

We should all understand that losing this battle means pushing down towards dangerous choices at social and political levels.

**A NEW ERASMUS+ CALL FOR PROPOSALS IS EXCPECTED
SOON
SO BE PREPARED!!**

The new Erasmus programme 2021-2027 has been launched. The programme's budget is €26.2 billion, compared with €14.7 billion for its precedent generation 2014-2020. With this increased budget, Erasmus+ will be more inclusive, more digital, and more green. The first full call for proposals is expected to be out in October.

https://ec.europa.eu/programmes/erasmus-plus/news/erasmus-2021-2027-programme_en

For more info read the press release on the programme launch:

https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/IP_21_1326

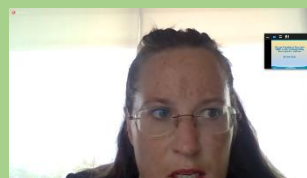
As from 10 September 2021, Lebanon has Professor Abbas Al Halabi as a new Minister of Education and Higher Education opening a new phase of challenges and perspectives

Events: local & International

Meeting of all Capacity Building Projects coordinated by Lebanese institutions

A meeting about the impact of coordinating a CBHE project on the institutional capacities of the Lebanese Higher Education Institutions, as well as the challenges faced by Lebanese grantholders was virtually held by NEO Lebanon on July 26 in presence of Mr. Clivio Casali from EACEA, Ms. Orla Colclough from the EU Delegation to Lebanon and up to 60 participants from the different Lebanese Higher Education Institutions including professors, deans, VPs and administrators. A total of 8 CBHE projects, E-TALEB, TLQAA+, StEER-LEB, MORALE, LEBPASS, CONECTE, SWaTH and GLOB-SM, were invited as panelists to the meeting to discuss the management issues, impact of coordinating CBHE projects on institutional and individual levels, as well as challenges and lessons learnt. This meeting provided an opportunity for new and ongoing projects to learn from the experiences of closed projects

For more info about the meeting: <http://erasmusplus-lebanon.org/event/11299>



Capacity Building in HE (CBHE) Projects News

Monitoring visit to CBHE project MORALE

The second monitoring visit to the CBHE project, MORALE, was held virtually by NEO LB on July 27, 2021 in presence of Pr. Dr. Amr El Adawi, President of Beirut Arab University, the institution that is leading the project MORALE. The project involves from Lebanon the Lebanese University (LU) and the Modern University for Business and Science (MUBS); from Syria Damascus University (DU), Arab International University (AIU), International University for Science & Technology (IUST) and Bilad Al-Sham University (BSU); and from Europe University of Alicante (Spain), Oldenburg University (Germany), University of Bologna (Italy) and 4-elements NGO (Greece). The project aims at providing the sector of NGOs with high skilled professionals trained to effectively manage and operate in NGO environments by means of modernising social and behavioural sciences curricula and by offering Lifelong



Learning courses targeting NGOs professionals at partner universities. This monitoring enabled the team from NEO Lebanon to understand the project's status quo, achievements and challenges. It was also an opportunity for the project to benefit from NEO's advices and recommendations.

MORALE 4th module training

The fourth Training of Trainers of the CBHE project MORALE was conducted on July 13, 14 and 15. This ToT was organised by University of Oldenburg about topics of interests including NGO business economics, decision making, psychology, soft and administrative skills, etc. in presence of 26 participants. This training followed a self-learning approach where every participant was able to access the modules and learn independently.

For more information: <http://www.moraleproject.org>



Closing conference of CBHE project HEBA

A closing conference for the CBHE project, HEBA (High Level Renewable and Energy Efficiency Master Courses), was held virtually on July 6, 2021. The conference gathers project partners and stakeholders to wrap up the work of a 3-year project and celebrate accomplishments of its results.

This conference was a crucial event for the partners to discuss ways to sustain the project's results. HEBA aims to reform and improve existing master programs in Energy Efficiency (EE) and Renewable Energy (RE) on single technology and energy systems level, improving existing or establishing Centers/Laboratories of EE+RE in Jordan, Lebanon, and Egypt. The project is coordinated by the University of Innsbruck in Austria. It includes the following Lebanese partners: American University of Beirut and Lebanese University, in addition to other partners from Cyprus, Italy, Germany, Egypt and Jordan.



For more info:

<http://sites.ju.edu.jo/en/heba/Home.aspx>

Higher Education Reform Experts (HERE) Activities

Annual HERE conference

The SPHERE team (Support and Promotion for Higher Education Reform Experts) announced a save-the-date for the annual HERE conference entitled "Looking Back, Looking Forward: Perspectives on Higher Education Reform" planned to be organised on November 18-19. The conference will be held exceptionally in a virtual mode this year.

Upcoming Events

Local:

- 1- **Information campaign for the full call:** NEO LB is preparing a targeted information campaign at the national level for the upcoming full call for proposals expected in October.
- 2- **Meeting on the visibility of Erasmus+** in websites, media platforms and communication tools of LHEIs. This meeting is foreseen during fall 2021 and aims at bringing together LHEIs to exchange about universities' dissemination and communication strategies with a particular focus on the visibility of Erasmus+ and other EU-funded programmes. It also focuses on how Erasmus+ appears on the websites and media tools of the different LHEIs
- 3- **Fall monitoring campaign:** a monitoring campaign of 5 CBHE projects is about to start

International:

- 1- **A Virtual Fair for CBHE projects** will be organised by the National Erasmus+ Offices and the Executive Agency (EACEA) of the European Commission on October 26 and 27, 2021. In this Fair, CBHE projects will have the chance to showcase their most relevant outputs among a varied audience of practitioners and stakeholders from different countries. This event presents a good occasion for all potential candidates of Erasmus+ capacity building projects to learn from other funded projects in Lebanon and elsewhere about new ideas and more relevant fields of interest.
- 2- **Regional impact meeting:** is expected during December and aims to study and shed light on the impact of CBHE regional projects implemented between 2015 and 2017.
- 3- **#ErasmusDays2021:** The #ErasmusDays 2021 will take place on the **14, 15 and 16th of October**. This international celebration is an opportunity to highlight the diversity of educational projects all over Europe and beyond. Read more: [Erasmusdays 2021 - 3 days of celebration of the Erasmus+ programme](#)



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