

DELEGATION FROM THE MIGRATION EU EXPERTISE (MIEUX) PROGRAM TO MAP AND ATTRACT DIASPORA DIRECT INVESTMENTS VISITS THE LERC

LERC Staff
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The Lebanese Emigration Research Center (LERC) at the Faculty of Law and Political Science, Notre Dame University-Louaize (NDU), received on October 8, 2015, Dr. Jorge Portugal, Adviser to the President of Portugal on Innovation, Competitiveness, and Globalisation, and Member of the Portuguese Diaspora Council, and Mr. Naozad Hodiwala, Project Officer with the International Centre for Migration Policy Development (ICMPD). Ms. Rana Moughabghab, Senior Marketing and Communications Officer (UNDP) and the Investment Development Authority of Lebanon (IDAL), accompanied both men. The purpose of their visit was to learn more about the Center's work and to discuss with LERC Director Dr. Guita Hourani issues related to mapping and attracting Diaspora Direct Investments (DDI) in the context of Lebanon.



The delegation with Ms. Haddad in the LERC Archive Room, Oct. 2015

The team that was formed of the above-mentioned and Mr. Oleg Chirita, Programme Manager with at the ICMPD and Ms. Thelma Harris of Connect Ireland were in Lebanon at the invitation of the IDAL to assist Lebanon in formulating a diaspora direct investment policy, especially as Lebanon's diaspora has played an

important role in the socio-economic development of the country and is needed to play this role through a targeted effort from the public sector especially in trade and direct investments.

Lebanon, through the Investment Development Authority of Lebanon, has been taking part over the last year in workshops and policy advocacy meetings organized by various international institutions, such as the EUROMED MIGRATION III Conference (an EU initiative), the MedGeneration project, and various projects initiated by the ICMPD. Since IDAL is Lebanon's investment promotion agency that is entrusted with encouraging investments inflows, and being that one of IDAL's main target audience is the Lebanese diaspora, IDAL took the initiative to spearhead a mapping exercise and the development of a national strategy to target diaspora direct investment with the support of international expertise mainly EU's Migration Expertise Program, (MIEUX), in order to build a strategy and work with a third party, mainly the IOM or the World Bank, on a diaspora mapping exercise. IDAL and Lebanon will benefit particularly from the experience of both Ireland and Portugal who have been successful in mapping their respective diasporas and in attracting DDI.

Following a brief presentation by Ms. Liliane Haddad, LERC Senior Archivist and Indexer, about the Center and its Lebanese Emigration Archive and Database (LEAD), Mr. Hodiwala explained what ICMPD and MIEUX are doing in this field and was followed by Dr. Portugal who described the steps taken by Portugal to attract DDI in Portugal.

The meeting was beneficial to both parties and the assembled agreed to continue communication in the coming months to articulate the role that LERC and Dr. Hourani will play in this important exercise.