Press release

Forum

Media and young people: a love-hate relationship?
80 young people from North Africa and the Middle East to gather together in Beirut on 15 and 16 March 2017

Young people make up a sizeable proportion of the population in the countries surrounding the Mediterranean Basin, and thus represent a major concern for these countries. Going beyond economic issues and employment in particular, today’s young generation are also facing another challenge: the transformation of their society and the clash between their ‘traditional’ culture and their modern way of life. Thanks to the media, and in particular social media, young people now have the opportunity to express their opinions and exchange ideas and debate issues with others. However, the importance that they are afforded by traditional forms of media still appears inadequate. As a result, young people are increasingly turning their backs on traditional media and flocking to social media instead, for better... and for worse.

In order to focus on the issues surrounding the relationship between the young generation and the media, the Beirut forum will give 80 young people from Algeria, Egypt, Lebanon, Libya, Jordan, Morocco, Tunisia, Palestine and Syria, who have all been behind media-related projects and initiatives, the chance to make their voices heard and take part in public debates.

A wide variety of topics will be tackled at the forum, such as the role played by the media in helping young people find jobs, media literacy, young people using the media to bring authorities to account, young people's expectations of the media, and many more.

Two major debates have been scheduled:

- Traditional media and youth: falling out of love
- The media – a gateway to employment for young people?

In addition, there will be twelve workshops and nine presentations of projects/initiatives.

The forum is being funded by the European Union as part of its Neighbourhood Policy with countries lying to the south and east of the Mediterranean, and is being jointly organised by CFI, the French media cooperation agency, and the Samir Kassir Foundation in Lebanon. The event will be officially opened on 15 March by Ambassador Christina Lassen, Head of the Delegation of the European Union to Lebanon, in the presence of Ms Gisèle Khoury, President of the Samir Kassir Foundation, and Mr Etienne Fiatte, CFI’s Managing Director.