



e-Newsletter

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"Syria, the cradle of civilization and the gateway to history."

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Syria Sees Influx of Arabic Language Students



Syria may be a largely closed society, but students from Europe and America are flocking there to study Arabic. They're drawn by the inexpensive tuition and housing rates, as well as the relative purity of the Syrian dialect, which is considered close to classical Arabic. At Damascus University, not far from the heart of the capital, students gather in small groups or study alone. Snatches of conversations in English, German, French, Italian and Japanese, in addition to Arabic, resound outside the school's Higher Language Institute. With the increased demand for Arabic speakers in the United States and elsewhere since 2001, Syrian language programs expect their enrollment of foreign students to keep rising. To read more please click [here](#).

Syria & Lebanon, Business Prevails!



While political tensions are running high between the Syrian and Lebanese governments, with Damascus suspected by Beirut of complicity in a series of assassinations and interference in domestic affairs, it is a different story on the business front. Both the Syrian state and the nation's business community have welcomed Lebanese companies. Nowhere is this enthusiasm more apparent than in the banking world. After Damascus's decision in 2001 to open up the sector, a number of overseas commercial and Islamic institutions have branched out into Syria in the past few years. Lebanese financial interests have benefited most from the new open door policy, with five separate Lebanon-based banks crossing the border and another two, Banque Libano-Française and the Bank of Beirut, having flagged their intention to join them. To read more please click [here](#).

WOMAN at the Mid Ulster Film Festival



After winning the Golden Palm Award at the 2008 Beverly Hills Film Festival, WOMAN the documentary feature film written, directed, and produced by our Syrian compatriot Ziad Hamza has been selected to premiere at the 5th Mid Ulster Film Festival. It is a yearly tribute to independent cinema, showcasing a diverse program of features, documentaries shorts, animation, workshops and seminars, for an appreciative audience seeking non-Hollywood fare. To find more about WOMAN please lick [here](#).

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