

LAU Economics Networking Event – Spring 2025**Panel discussion – Concept note****16 April 2025****1:00 – 2:00 p.m.****AKSOB903**

Panel title: Next-Gen economies: Insights on work, technology and institutional reform in Lebanon and the Arab Region

Background

As part of LAU's Economic Networking Event, this panel discussion will explore the future of work and evolving labour market trends in Lebanon and the broader Arab region. It brings together high-level experts from international and regional organizations to share insights on workforce readiness, public sector reform, technology integration, and sustainable economic development, as well as progress towards the 2030 Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals.

Lebanon's labour market continues to face significant pressures—including economic contraction, high youth unemployment, talent emigration, and persistent mismatches between education and employment. These challenges are unfolding against the backdrop of wider transformations across the Arab region, driven by the Fourth Industrial Revolution, digitalization and the emergence of green and care economies. At the same time, fiscal instability and institutional fragility have reinforced the need for targeted reforms and regional cooperation.

The panel will unpack these multidimensional shifts, drawing on lessons from Lebanon as well as regional and global experiences. Speakers will discuss how inclusive policymaking, strategic investment and innovation can help the region adapt to these trends while promoting shared prosperity, institutional resilience and long-term economic competitiveness. With a focus on Lebanon, the session will also explore public financial management and the role of the state in creating enabling environments for recovery and reform. Finally, the session offers students and participants a unique opportunity to engage directly with thought leaders on the future of work and economic development.



Agenda

Welcome and opening remarks – [3 mins – Ms. Stephanie Karam]

Panel presentations – [30 mins, 10 mins per speaker]:

- **Mr. Maroun Keyrouz**, Director of the World Economic Forum for the Middle East and North Africa Region
 - What regional trends are emerging in MENA when it comes to innovation, competitiveness and economic transformation?
 - How does the World Economic Forum engage with public and private sector stakeholders in the MENA region to address pressing economic and social challenges?
- **Dr. Niranjan Sarangi**, Senior Economic Affairs Officer, Shared Economic Prosperity Cluster, ESCWA
 - What are some of the most promising policy interventions you have seen in the Arab region that foster inclusive and shared prosperity?
 - How does ESCWA support governments in addressing inequality and promoting sustainable economic growth?
- **Institut des Finances Basil Fuleihan (TBC)**
 - How is the Institute supporting public sector reform and capacity development in Lebanon and the wider region?
 - What innovative tools or approaches are you using to enhance transparency and accountability in public finance?
- **Moderator** – Mr. Anthony Fakhoury

Moderated Q&A – [30 min]

Closing remarks [3 mins – TBC or moderator]

Question addressed to **Mr. Maroun Keyrouz**, if time permits

How can regional economies better integrate into global value chains, especially in light of shifting geopolitical and technological dynamics?

Question addressed to **Dr. Niranjan Sarangi**, if time permits

What role do regional cooperation and data-driven policymaking play in reducing economic disparities across Arab countries?