

# Publishing houses and industry in the UAE

# Publishing: a soaring industry

---

The United Arab Emirates are characterized by a cultural buoyancy that is expanding both nationally and internationally. The continuous uptrend in the publishing industry is the result of an advanced service infrastructure and legislation regulating this continuously upgrading sector.

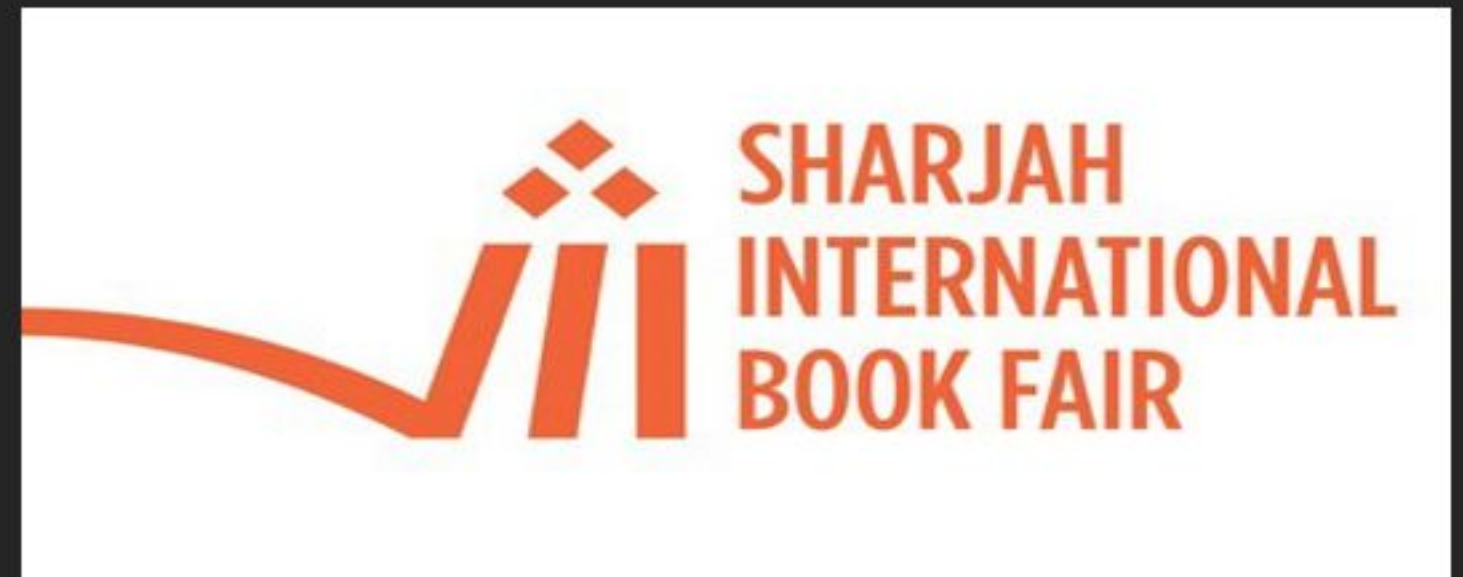
Bodour Al Qasimi is the founder of the **Kalimat Group**, one of the most active publishers in the Emirates, also known for having contributed to creating the Emirates Publishers Association (EPA).

The EPA, by representing Emirati publishers in local, regional and international book fairs, plays a key role in promoting the publishing industry. Its goal is to disseminate the intellectual production of the Emirates not only in the Arab world but also globally. In particular, it focuses its attention on translations from and into Arabic and on the protection of intellectual property rights and the royalties thereon.





# Sharjah, the Emirates' cultural capital



- **The Sharjah International Book Fair (SIBF):** is the world's third-largest book fair and is held annually, connecting international authors and publishers, facilitating meetings in which to discuss current trends and potential business opportunities. The 2019 edition was particularly important as Sharjah was designated **World Book Capital** by UNESCO.
- 2017 marked the opening of the **Sharjah Publishing City**, the world's first free-trade zone in the publishing sector.
- Italy actively participates in the SIBF with a pavilion organized by the **ICE – Foreign Trade Agency**, in association with the Italian Embassy in the United Arab Emirates and the Italian Culture Institute in Abu Dhabi.

In 2015, Italian publishing houses sold the rights of almost 6,000 books abroad and purchased the rights of more than 10,000.

# The public utility of the publishing industry

---

In the Emirates, the publishing industry is grounded on a strong commitment to promote literature with a view to its social utility mission. The United Arab Emirates Board on Books for Young People (UAEBBY) has launched several campaigns and initiatives to encourage the reading culture among children and adolescents:

- the Etisalat Award for Arabic Children's Literature (2009)
- the «Read, Dream, Create» campaign (2013)
- the «Kan Yama Kan» initiative (2015)
- «Books – Made in UAE» (2012)
- l'iniziativa «1.001 Titoli» (2016)



# New opportunities and challenges

The United Arab Emirates are developing an operational hub for topmost international publishers and distributors for the whole Middle Eastern region, thus building a bridge between Europe, the Arab world and South Asia.

The goal is to establish the UAE as an emerging market and a key platform for the global exchange of books, learning and knowledge.

