

TRADITIONAL HANDICRAFT SECTOR

Selected Facts & Figures

Types of products

- The traditional handicraft sector produces a wide variety of materials, including textiles, garments, leather goods, embroidery, wooden boxes, furniture, copper, and metal goods
- Out of a total of 14,000 business establishments in the Old City, 14.2 percent or roughly 1,960 represented production activities in 2005
- The 14,000 businesses employed some 18,000 workers, of which 20.9 percent or a bit over 5,000 were employed in production establishments
- textiles represents 37.3 percent of all businesses, and 44.7 percent of all workers
- Leather products, which at the time made up 209 or 10.7 percent of all handicraft establishments, and 12.9 percent of all handicraft workers
- Wood products, which made up 194 or 9.9 percent of all handicraft establishments representing 8.4 percent of all handicraft workers
- Engineering products including steel and iron, metal products, and machine and tool products, which combined made up 370 or 18.9 percent of all handicraft establishments, representing 13.5 percent of all handicraft workers
- Furniture, which represent 12.2 percent of handicraft establishments and 9.1 percent of handicraft workers

Types of demand

- Demand for traditional upholstery textiles
- Demand by Syrian residents for traditional garments, still worn in mainly rural areas,
- Demand by Syrian urban residents for traditional home furnishings
- Demand by Syrian urban residents and businessmen for gifts, presented either to domestic or international friends and clients
- Demand by Middle Eastern customers for gifts
- Demand by tourists, mostly cultural tourists who buy keepsakes to remind them of their trip or to bring home as gifts. These items have a folklore quality.
- Demand by tourists in high income niche markets for expensive handmade items.
- Demand for Aleppo traditional (ghar) soap