



**AMERICAN
UNIVERSITY
OF BEIRUT**



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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

AUB's Good Governance and Citizenship Observatory and Civic Influence Hub Forge Partnership to Champion Governance and Citizenship in Lebanon

The American University of Beirut (AUB)'s Good Governance and Citizenship Observatory (GGCO) at the Asfari Institute for Civil Society and Citizenship signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the Civic Influence Hub (CIH) on June 4, 2024. This significant event marks a collaborative effort aimed at providing comprehensive insight and actionable solutions to pressing governance and citizenship related issues facing Lebanon today.

The MoU signing ceremony was held at AUB and was attended by AUB President Fadlo Khuri, AUB Provost Zaher Dawy, Founding Director of the Good Governance and Citizenship Observatory at AUB Simon Kachar, and Director of the Asfari Institute at AUB Lina Abou Habib. Representing the Civic Influence Hub were CIH President Faysal El Khalil, Vice President Abdel Salam Hasbini, Executive Director Ziad El Sayegh, and board members. The ceremony was also attended by senior administrators and academics from the university, as well as CIH team members.

Valid for three years, the MoU establishes a partnership that entails hosting four workshops, each accompanied by a policy paper. These workshops will address topics crucial to Lebanon's development, including the transition towards a citizenship state, challenges and pathways to good governance, the role of civil society and academia in constitutional reform, and strategies for collaboration between residents and the diaspora.

Commenting on the event, Dr. Fadlo Khuri stated, "The American University of Beirut is Lebanon's oldest, most prestigious, and most internationally respected institution. As we enter our 159th year in this country, it is critical that we assume more responsibility for its well-being, in collaboration with civil society and other academic institutions, as well as critical governmental institutions. We have seen the erosion of the sense of civic responsibility and citizenship over the last several decades and it is incumbent upon us to work with like-minded allies to ensure that this is not only reversed, but that major steps forward are undertaken. It is in this spirit that we are pleased to sign a memorandum of understanding with the Civic Influence Hub."

Khuri added, "Through our Good Governance and Citizenship Observatory, an initiative housed at the Asfari Institute for Civil Society and Citizenship at the American University of Beirut, we are dedicated to exploring the notion of citizenship in the Middle East and North Africa region and its interrelation with the process of good governance. Working together as Lebanon enters its second century, we can ensure more engaged and committed citizens who will build a better nation for all."

President of Civic Influence Hub Faysal El Khalil said, "In this historical moment, as Lebanon faces identity threats, constitutional paralysis, and control by a non-state actor, the Civic Influence Hub is committed to this strategic partnership with AUB. Together, we will strive to build a free, independent, sovereign, and

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just citizenship state. This strategic partnership will pave the way for a dynamic new era of change. The Civic Influence Hub is pleased to announce the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding with the American University of Beirut. This collaboration aims to jointly develop research materials that promote inclusive citizenship and good governance. By fostering greater collaboration between academia and civil society, CIH and the American University of Beirut aspire to make significant strides in these important areas.”

The partnership will focus on a range of topics that cover key areas such as Lebanon’s transition towards a citizenship state, addressing complications and developing roadmaps for good governance, exploring the role of civil society and academia in constitutional paralysis and reform, and strategizing for effective collaboration between Lebanon’s residents and its diaspora.

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Note to Editors

About AUB

Founded in 1866, the American University of Beirut bases its educational philosophy, standards, and practices on the American liberal arts model of higher education. A teaching-centered research university, AUB has more than 750 full-time faculty members and a student body of over 8000 students. AUB currently offers more than 120 programs leading to bachelor’s, master’s, MD, and PhD degrees. It provides medical education and training to students from throughout the region at its Medical Center that includes a full-service 365-bed hospital.

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About the Civic Influence Hub

Founded in 2012, the Civic Influence Hub is a non-profit, non-partisan pressure group, formed by Lebanese citizens who share the same passion and commitment for the creation of a better Lebanon through the pursuit of good governance.

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