



**AMERICAN  
UNIVERSITY  
OF BEIRUT**

**OFFICE OF COMMUNICATIONS**

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

## **Ministry of Labor and AUB Sign MoU to Advance Evidence-Informed Labor Policies and Institutional Reform**

Driven by a shared commitment to strengthening Lebanon's labor sector through evidence, innovation, and institutional capacity building, the Lebanese Ministry of Labor and the American University of Beirut (AUB), through its Government Engagement Platform (GEP), signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) establishing a comprehensive framework for long-term collaboration.

The signing ceremony at AUB brought together Dr. Mohamad Haidar, minister of labor; Dr. Fadlo Khuri, AUB president; Dr. Imad Baalbaki, AUB senior vice president for advancement and business development; Dr. Yusuf Sidani, dean of the Suliman S. Olayan School of Business at AUB; Dr. Kamal Badr, deputy vice president and dean of the Faculty of Medicine at AUB; Dr. Abla Sibai, dean of the Faculty of Health Sciences at AUB; Dr. Mohamad Karaki, director general of the National Social Security Fund; and Marlene Atallah, acting director general of the Ministry of Labor, alongside senior university leadership, faculty members, researchers, and representatives from the Ministry of Labor.

The MoU lays the foundation for coordinated action to advance evidence-informed policymaking, strengthen institutional capacities, and promote innovation across Lebanon's labor sector. Leveraging AUB's multidisciplinary expertise, the partnership brings together the university's Faculty of Health Sciences, the Faculty of Medicine, the Faculty of Arts and Sciences, the Suliman S. Olayan School of Business, and the Maroun Semaan Faculty of Engineering and Architecture.

Under the agreement, AUB and the Ministry of Labor will collaborate on research and policy support addressing key national priorities, including child labor, unemployment (particularly among youth), fair and sustainable wage policies, labor market dynamics, and the alignment of labor market needs with the education system. The partnership also places strong emphasis on strengthening occupational health and safety standards across sectors.

A key component of the MoU is the establishment of a structured educational collaboration between the Ministry of Labor and the Faculty of Medicine at AUB. Through a dedicated Program Letter of Agreement, fellows from AUB's Occupational and Environmental Medicine Fellowship Program will undertake supervised training rotations within the ministry, gaining hands-on experience while contributing to national efforts to enhance workplace health and safety in line with international educational standards.

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In addition, the collaboration will support the ministry's digital transformation agenda through research, technical assistance, and advisory support focused on automation, data systems modernization, and improved analytics to enhance efficiency, transparency, and service delivery. Joint efforts will also include mapping and analyzing the foreign workforce in Lebanon, entrepreneurship and innovation initiatives, and targeted training and capacity-building programs for ministry staff.

The MoU further extends to supporting reform efforts at the National Social Security Fund, through evidence-based research, digital transformation, improved data governance, and enhanced coordination among government entities, employers, workers, and healthcare providers.

Speaking at the ceremony, Dr. Fadi El-Jardali, managing director and co-lead of AUB's Government Engagement Platform, emphasized the importance of connecting academic knowledge with public-sector needs. "This partnership reflects our commitment to advancing evidence-informed policymaking and institutional reform in the labor sector. Through the Government Engagement Platform, we aim to translate research and expertise into practical solutions that respond to Lebanon's most pressing labor and social challenges," he said.

Dr. Fadlo Khuri, AUB president, highlighted the university's national role, noting that the agreement reinforces AUB's mission to place its academic excellence and innovation ecosystem in the service of the public good. He emphasized that, at a time when emigration continues to shape Lebanon's reality, working closely with the Ministry of Labor is more important than ever to help create meaningful employment opportunities that enable people to build their futures at home.

Dr. Mohamad Haidar, minister of labor, underscored the importance of the partnership in strengthening the ministry's ability to respond to complex labor challenges, emphasizing the value of research, training, and digital modernization in supporting effective governance and sustainable reform.

This MoU marks a significant step in fostering collaboration between academia and government, positioning evidence, innovation, and capacity building at the center of labor sector reform. By translating research into action and engaging students and professionals in real-world policy challenges, the partnership aims to generate lasting impact for workers, institutions, and society at large.

## **ENDS**

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### **Note to Editors**

About AUB

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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 790 full-time faculty members and a student body of over 9000 students. AUB currently offers more than 140 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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