

## Towards a Fairer Taxation scheme in Lebanon

### Consultation Meetings

**Date:** May 10, 2023

**Time:** from 10:00 till 12:00

**Location:** Institute of Finance Basil Fuleihan, Beirut

#### Introduction

Since October 2019, Lebanon has been witnessing a series of unprecedented crises that drained its vital resources and led to the greatest economic contraction of the country's history, plunging it into abject poverty. The disorderly devaluation of the Lira has devastated lives and impoverished millions pushing more than 70% of residents below the national poverty line and putting almost 50% of nationals out of the labor market.

Inequality has remained at outrageous levels for years. Even before the crisis, the richest 10 percent received five times more income than the bottom 50%. This was exacerbated by a tax system that rewards the banking sector, encourages tax evasion, and concentrates wealth in the hands of the few. In the meantime, the population is subject to regressive taxes that hit the poorest.

In this context, the Lebanese government is called to re-think its taxation scheme, not only as a mean to replenish needed funds for recovery, but also as a mean to support growth while helping the country maintain fiscal sustainability and reduce inequalities. The expected reform is an opportunity to build a fairer and more efficient tax system for Lebanon.

**In light of this context, Financially Wise (FIWI) in collaboration with the Institute of Finances Basil Fuleihan (IOF) is organizing a consultation meeting to discuss the results of a diagnostic report that aimed at analyzing gaps and challenges in the current taxation scheme and providing action-oriented recommendations and corrective measures that, once implemented, can render the tax system more efficient and fairer.**

#### Target Audience

The consultation meeting gather high officials from the Ministry of Finance and other line ministries, representatives from donor community, CSOs and media in addition to economists and fiscal policy experts.

## Agenda

Time	Activity
10:00 – 10:30	<b>Welcoming</b> <b>Opening session</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Mr. Ghassan Zeeny, Acting President, Institute of Finance Basil Fuleihan</li><li>• Representative of Financially Wise</li><li>• Representative of Open Society Foundation</li></ul>
10:30 – 11:00	<b>A diagnostics Review of the Lebanese Taxation System</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Presentation of the main results of the report</li><li>• Fairness and Efficiency Gaps</li></ul> <b>Mr. Iskandar Boustani, PFM consultant</b>
11:00 – 11:30	<b>Building a better Taxation System in Lebanon: What can be done for Lebanon?</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Group Discussion and Recommendations</li></ul>
11:30-12:00	<b>Concluding Remarks</b>