



MALTA EMPLOYERS' ASSOCIATION

35/1, South Street, Valletta VLT 11, Malta.

Tel: (+356) 21 237585, 21 222992

Fax: (+356) 21 230227

E-mail: mea@maltanet.net

Web Site: <http://www.maltanet.net/mea>

24 December 2004

Press Release

Public Holidays on Weekends – MEA expresses support for Government Decision

The Malta Employers' Association has given thumbs up for Government's decision to proceed with the plans not to have extra leave days added in lieu of public holidays falling on weekends. By amending the law on national feasts and public holidays, the measure will have the desired effect without being in conflict with existing collective agreements and avoiding the need to change the EIRA.

MEA Director General Joseph Farrugia said that the unions should not object if the measure is introduced in this manner since collective agreement commitments will still be honoured. He said that the increase in working days should have a positive effect on productivity and competitiveness and gave a positive signal to existing employers and those who seek to invest in Malta. This will contribute, however marginally, to generate productive employment, and all social partners should welcome this. Mr. Farrugia said that such a measure should have been proposed to government through an agreement reached at MCESD as part of a more comprehensive package to improve Malta's competitiveness. He augured that discussions will still continue to reach agreement on such a package, and that the MEA is committed to give its full participation in such discussions. However, government is correct in its stand that, failing such an agreement, it has the responsibility to take the necessary actions in the national interest.