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Media Release

Covid-related Absenteeism is causing many Companies to reduce Operations

A survey conducted by the Malta Employers' Association among its members reveals that the surge in absenteeism caused by covid related absence is having a significant impact on companies. 32% of the 325 respondents reported having an absence rate of higher than 15% which is making coping with the shortage of workers a problem in many workplaces. 58% of respondents said that they are coping with absenteeism through teleworking where this is possible, while 51% said that they have resorted to reducing operations. The survey covered companies operating in all sectors of the economy.

The fact that the spike in the number of positive Covid cases during the past three weeks has also amplified the number of employees who have been in primary contact with such cases has led to a dramatic increase in absenteeism because of quarantine. The disruption in business activity will have a negative impact on GDP and government finances, given that the wage supplement will have to be extended to at least the first quarter of 2022 to many businesses as a result.

In these circumstances, the Association appeals to the authorities to constantly re-examine the measures that are being taken to safeguard public health – e.g. duration of quarantine and other restrictions - to ensure that they are commensurate with the risk level of the pandemic. It is also important that issues that have risen at the work place due to ambiguous regulations are clarified to avoid unnecessary absence and industrial unrest which comes at a great cost to employers.