



28th July 2021

A COLLABORATIVE PARTNER AGREEMENT SIGNED BETWEEN THE NATIONAL FOREIGN DIRECT INVESTMENT SCREENING OFFICE AND THE MALTA EMPLOYERS' ASSOCIATION.

[The National Foreign Direct Investment Screening Office](#) and the [Malta Employers' Association](#) have agreed to collaborate on the sharing of best practices and on promoting publicly available information to the benefit of the respective members.

Mr Mario Galea for NFDIS and Mr Joseph Farrugia for MEA today, signed a collaborative agreement which for the coming three years, establishes The National Foreign Direct Investment Screening Office as one of the main collaborative partners within the [meaindex.com](#) online platform.

For the last three years, the [Meaindex](#) online toolbox for business entrepreneurs, under the leadership of Mr Anton Vella, SME Helpdesk executive within the MEA, has been a source from where the business community and potential entrepreneurs were able to access important data and information related to our local business ecosystem. Nothing less than 15 Government entities already partnered with MEA as main collaborative partners and are continuously sharing relevant information for the benefit of this online platform subscribers. It's a platform available for everyone and subscription is free of charge. The online platform, so far, already reached the 55,000 followers, and over a 200,000 webpage hits.

On the other hand, The National Foreign Direct Investment Screening Office ('the Office') has now been set up for almost 18 months and operates from The Watercourse, Mdina Road, Zone 2, Central Business District in Birkirkara. The NFDIS Office was set up by government to implement EU Regulation 2019/452 and later on Chapter 620 of the Laws of Malta, and is run by a board of directors led by Mr. Mario Galea, Chairperson of the Office, while the day-to-day management is directed by Ms. Bethany Magro, Chief Operations Officer.

The scope and remit of the Office is to screen third-country foreign direct investments on grounds of security and public order. The purpose of the screening process is to protect European Union intelligence, knowledge, and technology as well as its security interests.

The Chairperson, Mr Mario Galea noted that, so far the Office has reviewed over 1000 notifications of third-country investments in Malta since April 2020. At the same time, the Office has vetted over 250 projects submitted through the EU screening mechanism, such projects relate to investments in the

EU. The NFDIS office has established an excellent rapport with the Commission [DG Trade] and its structures on investment screening.

Locally, the Office has organized activities with the Institute of Financial Services Practitioners, the Malta Institute of Accountants and the Chamber of Advocates, and has kept constant dialogue with individual stakeholders.

The MEA and NFDIS plan to organize activities in the future in order to promote reciprocal interests. For this scope, public material of MEA will be utilized by the NFDIS Office in order to inform their respective members of the activities, the functions and the results that the Office is achieving. On its part, the MEA will be informing its members of the regulatory aspect of the National Foreign Direct Investment Screening Act and guide its members to the Office whenever the screening regulation, legislation and practice shall apply.

MEA's Director General, Mr Farrugia said that such an agreement, strengthens the networking amongst the business community, facilitates access to information and helps employers gain knowledge and guidance, while assisting them to improve their managerial and entrepreneurial skills. "It's of extreme importance that employers are continuously updated with all business-related-developments and together we must encourage more synergy between different entities, and avoid working in silos".

Mr Mario Galea stated that this collaboration between the NFDIS and MEA shows how the two entities can work together to promote, share and at the same time increase awareness among the business community on the process and legislative function implemented by the NFDIS Office. "The framework for the screening of foreign direct investment inflows in Malta has been established for over a year, and as such we want to ensure now more than ever that our information is available to relevant stakeholders to ensure that EU's essential interests, including Malta's are not undermined. This collaboration will strengthen our efforts in promoting this legislative framework to business by facilitating access to our information and guidelines more effectively through meaindex platform."