



MALTA EMPLOYERS' ASSOCIATION

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Media Release

MEA - European Parliament is in a State of Denial

The Malta Employers' Association stated that the European Parliament is in a state of denial about the current international economic situation. People have a fundamental right to work, and to work as much as they like provided that this is voluntary and that the working conditions respect decent standards. It is inconceivable that the European Parliament has voted in favour of restricting the number of hours an employee is willing to work, and such a decision will only lead to an expansion in the informal economy, where workers risk exploitation and substandard conditions of employment.

The Association said that employees were adequately protected by the opt out clause which gave them the option to refrain from working beyond an average of 48 hours per week. This was a workable arrangement which suited both employees and employers. In fact, the vast majority of employees in Malta willingly signed the opt out clause. What will happen now is that either the new limitations will be ignored, or there will be an increase in demand for part-time employment, which means employees will suffer from the added cost of commuting and lower rates of pay (single rate against overtime rates.) A number of companies and sectors in Malta will be adversely hit, and there will be negative consequences on competitiveness.

The Association said that there will clearly be no winners from this decision, which is a clear demonstration that the EP is completely detached from the realities facing employers, workers and their families not just in Malta, but all over Europe.