



**SME  
WEEK**

**20  
16**

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## BETTER ACCESS OF INFORMATION FOR SMES: SMETOOL A POSSIBLE SOLUTION?

Half day seminar | Friday, 30th September 2016  
Le Meridien Hotel, St Julian's

Co-Sponsors



# PROGRAMME

08:15 **Registration & coffee**

09:00 **Introduction**

*Arthur Muscat, President  
Malta Employers' Association*

09:05 **Address**

*The Hon. Dr Chris Cardona  
Minister for the Economy, Investment & Small Business*

09:15 **The advantages of having an SMETOOL –  
using network analysis approach**

*Joseph Farrugia, Director General  
Malta Employers' Association*

09:25 **Video clip**

09:30 **Keynote speech**

*Ludger Odenthal, Head – SME Performance  
Review Team, DG for Internal Market, Industry,  
Entrepreneurship & SMEs  
European Commission*

10:00 **Workshops Session**

**Workshop 01: Better Access? But what do really  
SMEs expect?**

*Moderator: Anton Vella, SME Helpdesk Executive,  
Malta Employers' Association  
Rapporteur: Dr. Nadine Lia, Legal Advisor,  
Ministry for the Economy, Investment & Small Business*

**Workshop 02: If SMEs, through this SMETOOL, will  
start to have better access to information, how  
should this help them grow and prosper?**

*Moderator: Marika Tonna, Chief Operating Officer,  
Malta Enterprise  
Rapporteur: Alexandra Zammit, European Semester  
Officer, European Commission  
Representation in Malta*

**Workshop 03: How should we work, to make  
sure that the SMETOOL will reach all potential  
entrepreneurs?**

*Moderator: Denise Borda, eCommerce Analyst, Malta  
Communications Authority  
Rapporteur: Yanika Cachia, Manager (Enterprise Policy),  
Policy Development & Programme  
Implementation Directorate*

11:15 **Workshops rapporteur reports,  
followed by panel discussion**

*Moderator: Dr. Charlotte Camilleri, Executive in EU &  
Legal Affairs, Malta Employers' Association*

**Panel:**

- *Hon. Anthony Agius Decelis, Commissioner for  
Simplification and Reduction of Bureaucracy*
- *Anton Vella, SME Helpdesk Executive, MEA*
- *Marika Tonna, Chief Operating Officer, ME*
- *Denise Borda, eCommerce Analyst, MCA*

12:30 **Closing remarks**

*Joseph Farrugia, Director General  
Malta Employers' Association*

12:45 **Networking Lunch**



ARTHUR MUSCAT  
*President, MEA*



HON. CHRIS CARDONA  
*Minister for the Economy,  
Investment and Small Business*



JOSEPH FARRUGIA  
*Director General, MEA*



LUDGER ODENTHAL  
*Head – SME Performance  
Review Team, DG for  
Internal Market, Industry,  
Entrepreneurship and SMEs  
European Commission*



HON. ANTHONY  
AGIUS DECELIS MP  
*Commissioner for  
Simplification and Reduction  
of Bureaucracy*



DR. CHARLOTTE  
CAMILLERI  
*Executive in EU and  
Legal Affairs MEA*

## MALTA EMPLOYERS' ASSOCIATION

THE MEA IS A MULTISECTORAL ASSOCIATION DEDICATED TO THE PROMOTION OF HEALTHY INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS BY PROVIDING MEMBERS WITH A RANGE OF ADVISORY SERVICES ENABLING THEM TO BE BETTER INFORMED ABOUT THEIR RIGHTS AND OBLIGATIONS REGARDING THEIR EMPLOYEES.

Our association provides numerous services to its members, and all these are included in the membership fee. These services include:

- Representation on Government bodies;
- Representation on International relations;
- Consultancy services in industrial relations;
- Collective bargaining, representation on the Industrial Tribunal, and assistance in human resources management issues;
- The MEA is also formally registered as an employers' union, and this provides our members with the same rights as unions, including the right to lock out.
- The Malta Employers' Association is *the* leading lobby group for employers in Malta on issues related to Industrial Relations and Human Resources.

## SME HELPDESK

### THE MEA'S SME HELPDESK

THE MEA SME HELPDESK WAS INAUGURATED IN 2013 AND IS ADMINSTRATED BY ANTON VELLA. A 24/7 TELEPHONE HELPLINE (TEL: 2122 2006) HAS BEEN SET UP. SMES CAN CALL US AT ANY TIME AND LEAVE A MESSAGE WHEN OUR OFFICES ARE CLOSED. MR VELLA WILL THEN RETURN THE CALL ON THE NEXT WORKING DAY.

The Helpdesk, besides giving advice and important information on how an SME can be fully compliant with all local employment legislation, and other regulatory bodies, offers also handholding services when an entrepreneur decides to apply to benefit from any existing grant schemes, or other EU funded programmes. The SME Helpdesk organises seminars, courses and information sessions whenever the need arise in order to keep SMEs aware of all eventual changes in policies and regulations, and guide them accordingly. It also publishes a monthly newsletter which is sent electronically to SMEs. For further information, contact Anton Vella at [anton.vella@maltaemployers.com](mailto:anton.vella@maltaemployers.com).

In a nutshell, the MEA's SME Helpdesk is another tool in the hands of small business entrepreneurs, which can be used to empower their skills to achieve success in their business. Now it's up to SME and Micro employers to take this opportunity to join in the MEA's family, and make use of all services offered including those which are available through the SME Helpdesk.

## THE MINISTRY FOR THE ECONOMY, INVESTMENT AND SMALL BUSINESS

THE MINISTRY FOR THE ECONOMY, INVESTMENT AND SMALL BUSINESS IS COMMITTED TO CONTINUALLY IMPROVE ON THE SERVICES IT OFFERS AND INNOVATE THE MALTESE ECONOMY TO ENSURE STABILITY AND GROWTH.

We believe that we will attain our targets in time as we are determined to maximise all opportunities that occur in our external environment. Our efforts will diversify our economy to facility new opportunities for SMES and will ensure sustainability in the long term.





**MALTA ENTERPRISE**

## MALTA ENTERPRISE

MALTA ENTERPRISE IS THE COUNTRY'S ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AGENCY, TASKED WITH ATTRACTING NEW FOREIGN DIRECT INVESTMENT AS WELL AS FACILITATING THE GROWTH OF EXISTING OPERATIONS.

In operation under various guises since the 1950s, which is almost since the beginning of Malta's industrial development, the Corporation contains within it a great deal of accumulated experience in the field. Furthermore, it acts as an adviser to government on economic policy due to its close and constant interaction with the main economic players in the country. It is the driving force behind the creation of IFDIS, the Institute of Foreign Direct Investment Studies, an institution which offers research and training for FDI management to stakeholders involved in the development of FDI attraction and retention strategies.

Malta Enterprise is also the national contact point for the Enterprise Europe Network through which companies based in Malta can develop links with counterparts in over 60 other countries. The long term presence of an investor in the country is a priority for Malta Enterprise. We therefore work constantly with our clients to find solutions to any issues they may be facing and to help them adapt to changing circumstances. This has resulted in symbiotic relationships being maintained for decades, for the benefit of all concerned.

Malta Enterprise is also responsible for the growth and development of Maltese enterprises locally through Business First (B1st), the first port of call and one stop shop for the essential business services.

Malta Enterprise also operates the Malta Life Sciences Park. The Park provides first-class facilities in order to promote research, inspire collaboration between the University of Malta, Mater Dei Hospital, Oncology and private and public enterprise. The Park also houses innovative, leading edge projects in the production of digital games to create synergies with life sciences.



## THE EUROPEAN COMMISSION REPRESENTATION IN MALTA

THE "REPRESENTATION" IS THE LOCAL OFFICE OF THE EUROPEAN COMMISSION IN EACH MEMBER STATE, INCLUDING MALTA. ITS ROLE IS TO:

- Explain how EU policies will affect citizens in Malta;
- Be a source of EU-related information for the government and other authorities and stakeholders in Malta;
- Offer press & media services in Malta;
- Speak for the European Commission as its voice in Malta;
- Report back to the Commission in Brussels on important political, economic and social developments in Malta.

The Commission has Representations in all 28 EU countries, as well as Regional Offices in Barcelona, Belfast, Bonn, Cardiff, Edinburgh, Marseille, Milan, Munich and Wrocław that inform the media and public about EU policies and report to the European Commission on significant developments in these countries. The work of the Representations mainly consists in a two-way communication link between headquarters and local stakeholders: officials in Representations inform citizens and other stakeholders about the EU and its policies and in turn report back to Brussels on developments in Malta. SMEs are, therefore, assisted through the dissemination of information and in ensuring that their requests and queries reach the right officials in Brussels or in Malta. In addition the European Semester Officers, working within the Representations, consult with stakeholders on areas affecting the business environment throughout the European Semester calendar that culminates in the publication of Country Specific Recommendations in May each year.

## MALTA COMMUNICATIONS AUTHORITY

THE MCA WAS SET UP TO REGULATE A HOST OF COMMUNICATIONS SERVICES, WHICH INCLUDE, FIXED AND MOBILE TELEPHONY, INTERNET AND TV DISTRIBUTION SERVICES, POSTAL SERVICES AND TO MANAGE MALTA'S RADIO SPECTRUM RESOURCES.

It is also responsible for promoting eCommerce, developing Malta's ICT potential through innovation and to implement initiatives aimed at ensuring that every business and individual has the competences to actively engage in a digital society.





**ANTON VELLA**  
*SME Helpdesk Executive  
& SMETOOL coordinator*



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## **SMETOOL: MEA'S ENTERPRISE PORTAL**

*The SMEs first electronic point of reference, helping Malta's SMEs to grow and prosper*

THE MALTA EMPLOYERS' ASSOCIATION, THROUGH ITS SME HELPDESK ( ESTABLISHED IN DECEMBER 2013 ) HAS BEEN WORKING CLOSE TO A NUMBER OF SMES, WITH VARIOUS ELECTRONIC PUBLICATIONS, ASSISTING THEM IN THEIR BUSINESS NEEDS AND GUIDING THEM ACCORDINGLY, HELPING THEM BY FACILITATING ACCESS TO INFORMATION, AND KEEPING THEM UP-TO-DATE IN WHAT'S HAPPENING AROUND, ESPECIALLY REGARDING INCENTIVES, TAPPING EU FUNDS, AND OTHER INVESTMENT OPPORTUNITIES.

As from day one, we realised that this sector need a point of reference. SMEs need not only a one-stop-shop, to reduce bureaucracy, and avoid visiting various different Departments to get applications filled, get licence authorisations, and comply with a number of regulatory forms, but they also need some kind of comprehensive point of reference, where they can search and find it all.

That is from where we got the idea of creating an SMETOOL- portal, which will be including everything (or almost everything) which a person in business (an entrepreneur), can refer to, and where they can find a clear guidance how to start-up, about how to run a business, and where he/she can find assistance when in need.

Yes this SMETOOL (works in progress) must include, clear guidance about what you should consider prior to deciding to open your own business, information about all licensing authorities, and a list of all different commercial licences. The SMETOOL shall also include a step by step analysis of how to open a business, list of all other business regulatory bodies, the different licence conditions, a summary of OHS basic regulations, a list of FAQs and so on and so forth.

A tool like this, definitely will help SMEs, and start-ups by facilitating better access to information for them, and for the first time in Malta, we will establish a state of the art single point of reference, which will include and compliment the "Business First" services, assistance which is being given by the SME Support Coordination Unit, opportunities offered by the Malta Enterprise, and Government's ongoing initiative to reduce bureaucracy amongst others.

At the moment, under my direction, the MEA is holding various meetings, with different entities, Government Departments, Authorities, NGOs, and others, to collect the right business related information. This project must be an ongoing exercise, which requires continuous updating, and inputting of fresh information. It's a challenge, but surely it will fill up a vacuum which at moment exists between the source of information and SMEs.

May today be another important milestone for MEA, with the conception of this SMETOOL, a tool which is going to be of great benefits not only to MEA members, but must be beneficial also to each and every person who will eventually decide to enter the business world.





## SME WEEK 2016

THE MALTA SME WEEK 2016 IS BEING HELD FOR THE EIGHTH CONSECUTIVE YEAR. DURING THIS PERIOD, SEVERAL EVENTS ARE HELD TO PROVIDE INSIGHT INTO WHAT THE EU AND NATIONAL INSTITUTIONS OFFER TO SUPPORT MICRO, SMALL AND MEDIUM-SIZED BUSINESSES.

The SME Week aims to generate public awareness, especially amongst those people who wish to start a business or are already in business and wish to grow and expand their business activities. The SME Week is organized by the Ministry for the Economy, Investment and Small Business (MEIB).

This year, the Malta SME Week will be held during the months of September and October and amongst other things aims to:

- provide information on what the EU and national, regional and local authorities are offering as support to micro, small and medium-sized businesses;
- promote entrepreneurship so that more people, and in particular younger ones, seriously consider becoming an entrepreneur as a career option;
- give recognition to entrepreneurs for their contribution to Europe's welfare, jobs, innovation and competitiveness

### UPCOMING EVENT

*Organised in collaboration with MEIB*

Focus Discussion session

"Equipping Employers for a more Equal and Inclusive Labour Market, ..... the research study is done – now let's discuss the way forward!"

Scheduled for Friday, 14<sup>th</sup> October 2016 at 14:00hrs  
Venue: MEA's Training Centre, 35/1, South Street, Valletta

Registration is FREE.

Due to limited capacity, early registration is recommended.

After participants' registration and a welcome coffee, the event will commence with a keynote speech, followed by workshop sessions, and comes to an end with the Minister's address. The event should be over by 16:45hrs.

To register your interest in attending, kindly send an email at [admin@maltaemployers.com](mailto:admin@maltaemployers.com)

### MEA TV PROGRAMME

THE MEA TV PROGRAMME "MEA" SHALL RESUME IN SEPTEMBER 2016. WE ARE ALREADY WORKING ON A NUMBER OF EXCITING TOPICS – ALL RELATED TO EMPLOYMENT – AND IMPROVEMENTS TO MAKE THE COMING SERIES MORE INTERESTING TO VIEWERS.

MEA TV programme is broadcasted once a week every Tuesday at 20:30 hrs on TVM2 with repeats as follows:

- Every Monday at 15:30 hrs on TVM2
- Every Saturday at 08:00 hrs on TVM
- Every Tuesday at 09:30 hrs on TVM

All past programmes may be viewed on our YouTube channel



35/1, South Street, Valletta VLT 1100, Malta

Tel: (+356) 2123 7585 / (+356) 2122 2992

24/7 Helpline: (+356) 2122 2006

[www.maltaemployers.com](http://www.maltaemployers.com)

 [MaltaEmployersAssociation](https://www.facebook.com/MaltaEmployersAssociation)