

A FORUM FOR **Y**EU

Since its accession to the European Union on May 1, 2004, Malta has proactively participated in the formulation of EU legislation, policy and decisions. It is therefore important that Malta continues to ensure that matters of national interest are raised high on the EU Agenda, while continuing to be a team-player in the day-to-day construction of a strong European Union built on a culture of consensus and compromise.

In this context, Forum Malta fl-Ewropa (FME), first set up in 2005, acts as the national reference point on EU-related affairs. Its three main areas of competence are disseminating information on EU-related issues; facilitating consultation with stakeholders on EU pipeline acquis; supporting and raising awareness regarding access to EU funding opportunities.

New Faces at the Forum...

FME is currently in the process of enhancing its human resources complement with a view to offering a better service. Dr Gabriella Pace was appointed Chief Executive Officer of Forum Malta fl-Ewropa and assumed her new responsibilities on 1 September 2006, taking over from Sylvia Sciberras. Dr Pace specialises in EU law, with a particular focus on internal market, competition and labour law issues, and her career has focused almost exclusively on EU affairs. She read law at the University of Malta, graduating as Doctor of Laws in 1997, and pursued postgraduate studies in EU Law, obtaining a Magister Juris with distinction from the University of Malta and a Masters of European Legal Studies from the College d'Europe in Bruges.

Since January 2004, she had been heading the Malta Office of the Malta Business Bureau (MBB), the EU advisory office of the Malta Chamber of Commerce and Enterprise, the Malta Federation of Industry and the Malta Hotels and Restaurants Association, where she offered tailor-made information and assistance on all EU related matters to members of the business community, at constituted body and individual firm level. In the course of her career, Dr Pace served as Trainer for Members of the Judiciary on EU legislation and formed part of a two-member team entrusted with a training programme for the Maltese judiciary. This after having been selected to represent Malta in its participation in the European Commission's 'Training of Judges in Community Law' initiative, funded by the PHARE programme and managed by the European Institute of Public Administration (EIPA), Maastricht. She is currently a member of the European Labour Law Network and TEAM Europe (Malta). Dr. Pace is also a Visiting Lecturer in

European Law at the University of Malta and lectures at both undergraduate and postgraduate level. Up to 2003, Dr. Pace was actively engaged in private practice and in research and consultancy services on EU matters. In the course of her career, Dr Pace has in fact advised many constituted bodies and organisations on EU-related issues.

Three other new officials have joined Forum Malta fl-Ewropa as part of a recruitment exercise that will eventually increase the staff to a total of 14. Cleavon Vella, who has spent the past two years in the EU Directorate at the Ministry for Competitiveness and Communications, has joined FME as a Civil Society Coordinator. Cleavon, a graduate in Psychology from the University of Malta, has also worked with the Richmond Foundation and brings with him five years of broadcast journalism.

Julian Micallef, a Sociology graduate, is the second new Civil Society Coordinator at FME. Having joined the Civil Service in 2004, he spent his first month at the Department of Citizenship and Expatriate Affairs, after which he was posted to the EU Affairs Directorate within the Ministry of Finance. He has been, and still is, involved with various voluntary organisations, and has also worked with a Government Agency supporting disabled persons. For the last five years, he has been in charge of a public branch library.

Svetlana R. Curmi, a graduate in English, is FME's new Media Officer. Svetlana joined the Civil Service in 2002 as Deputy Registrar at the Criminal Registry, Courts of Justice, moving on to the Department of Information within the Office of the Prime Minister, where she served as Information Officer for the past four years. Svetlana was also involved in the public relations sphere at the DOI, having been responsible for the Customer Care Unit as well as for the Government Information Service Freephone 153.

....and New Initiatives

The FME team is committed to reach out, consult and be of assistance to the Maltese public, trade unions, NGOs and the business community, not only at constituted body level, but more importantly, at individual firm level.

FME has embarked on various new initiatives. Besides featuring as guests on various television and radio programmes, the FME team is responsible for the production of its own television and radio programmes. The 30-minute television programme, entitled 'L-Unjoni Ewropea ghalija', shows every Sunday on TVM at 6.05pm as of 15 October. The radio programme, entitled 'Sehmnja fl-Ewropa', is broadcast every Friday on Radio Malta 2 at 6.30pm as of 6 October.

FME has also launched the European Business Test



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Panel (EBTP) in Malta. This initiative constitutes a unique link between European businesses and the Commission by providing a representative group of enterprises with opportunities to give direct input to the development of important legislative proposals. Thus, businesses can indicate the extent to which such proposals are likely to generate or reduce costs and administrative burdens, or improve the environment in which they operate.

In the coming months FME will be taking a proactive role in raising awareness about EU funding opportunities. The various funding programmes and opportunities will be promoted mainly via articles and workshops. The focus will be on highlighting success stories which will also be diffused via various information channels. ■



MORE INFORMATION MAY BE OBTAINED FROM
FORUM MALTA FL-EWROPA ON 2590 9101 OR INFO.FORUM@GOV.MT



Wall-mounted canvas enhances MIA

MIA has installed a 60m2 wall-mounted canvas in the new Arrivals Area depicting various images of Malta embedded in the air terminal architecture. The mural was installed to cover the partitioning that closes off the area where works are being carried in connection with the 2nd phase of the Schengen Implementation project. It therefore enhances the area and complements with the other installations that are in place. The photos were reproduced courtesy of artist Daniel Cilia and the production of the canvas was entrusted to MPS Limited.

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