



# **THE MALTA BUSINESS BUREAU** **ANNUAL REPORT 2021**

**SPECIAL 25<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY  
COMMEMORATIVE EDITION**

1996-2021

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Distributed to all leading businesses including all members of the Malta Chamber of Commerce and of the Malta Hotels & Restaurants Association (MHRA)



## Foreword by the CEO

Seeing as sustainability is at the heart of the European Commission's new term, with a strong focus on the European Green Deal and Sustainable Development Goals, I am delighted to present our Annual Report 2019/2020 which focuses on the role of businesses in driving sustainability forward.

Despite the COVID-19 pandemic, the long-term climate objectives will remain a priority and the challenge now is to outline the impact that the crisis has on sustainability objectives, and how to make it work taking into account the more difficult post-crisis economic scenario. This is what we seek to analyse throughout this year's publication.

This publication also provides an overview of the organisation's work over the past year, including our efforts to safeguard Maltese business interests in EU developments, by assisting our parent organisations (The Malta Chamber of Commerce, Enterprise and Industry and the Malta Hotels and Restaurants Association) in contributing to the formulation of the Maltese business perspective on EU policies and legislation.

In Brussels, we continued to be active in EU policy working committees of the biggest pan-European business organisations: BusinessEurope, HOTREC and EUROCHAMBRES. This enables us to stay updated about EU policies and to feed Maltese business' views back to Brussels. Our team also conducts advocacy work on priority legislation for Maltese business with key legislators within the EU Council and the European Parliament.

The MBB also continued to tap into EU-funding opportunities for the benefit of the local business

community, with various project initiatives relating to energy efficiency, food waste, training in financial, digital and people skills, and business support services. I am proud that we managed to reach out to hundreds of employees and employees in the process. On this note, I wish to express my acknowledgment to all those stakeholders for their ongoing collaboration without whom we would not have been able to carry out our project initiatives.

Next year, the MBB will be celebrating 25 years since its foundation. The organisation has gone a long way since its inception with a head office based in Valletta, and a representation office in Brussels. Thanks to the support of successive governments, we are the only Maltese private sector organisation with a permanent presence in Brussels, continuing to identify opportunities at EU-level as well as to build a network of reliable partners to cooperate on work areas of common interest. For this, I would like to thank the Ministry for Foreign and European Affairs for its support throughout the years.

In conclusion, I would like to thank the MBB President and Board of Directors, as well as the Malta Chamber of Commerce, Enterprise and Industry, and the Malta Hotels and Restaurants Association for their trust, guidance, and support. A special thanks also goes to the MBB executive team for their sterling work and commitment to continue being of service to the Maltese business community.

I hope you enjoy reading through this publication!

Joe Tanti  
CEO  
Malta Business Bureau

The Annual Report of the Malta Business Bureau is a high-profile, annual business publication reaching thousands of CEOs, business leaders, business-people and companies. The 2021 Edition of the MBB Annual Report is also a one-off commemorative edition to mark the 25th anniversary of the establishment of the Malta Business Bureau. The MBB is a reputable business body set up by the Chamber of Commerce and the Malta Hotels & Restaurants Association (MHRA) to offer ongoing business and EU information services to local businesses.

The MBB has headquarters in Malta and Brussels. Over the years, the MBB has played an important role in ensuring that Maltese businesses are conversant with the latest financial and economic developments at EU level, and also by informing and updating them on the various EU funding and business development opportunities.

The Malta Business Bureau Annual Report is published by Content House, Malta's largest and leading publishing house in the online and print sectors.

## DISTRIBUTION

The MBB Annual Report enjoys one of the best corporate and B2B distribution models as its distribution network includes all members of the Chamber of Commerce as well as all members of the MHRA. The following is the distribution network of this prestigious publication:

- All members of the Malta Chamber of Commerce
- All members of the Malta Hotels and Restaurants Association (MHRA)
- Business Database of the Malta Business Bureau (MBB)
- Leading public/private institutions in Malta & Brussels
- Government Ministries and Government Entities
- Embassies
- A significant number of businesses around Europe that form part of the prestigious Enterprise Europe Network

## QUALITY

The 2021 edition (size: 210mm W x 297mm H) will have very high printing specifications including lamination on the cover and will be perfect bound.



"This experience should start a discussion on whether a review of the Treaties is required for the EU to have stronger means to coordinate such future crises in a transparent and democratic way."

## On embracing change and rebuilding the EU post-COVID-19

President of the Malta Business Bureau, SIMON DE CESARE, chats with RAY BUGEJA about the organisation's achievements over the past year, the goals set out by the von der Leyen Commission, as well as the efforts needed to rebuild the EU post-COVID-19.

The Malta Business Bureau, which focuses on pushing advocacy efforts at EU level for the benefit of local businesses and on tapping into EU funds to create projects for Malta, deems 2019 to have been a very successful year. For Simon De Cesare, President of the MBB, the most important achievement during the past year was a study on the impact of the European Single Market on Maltese businesses, which shows how much Maltese businesses benefitted, and highlights the administrative and legislative burdens they face.

"We were pleased to see that some of the suggestions pushed by the MBB were taken up by the European Commission in its Action Plan for Better Implementation and Enforcement of Single Market Rules". Key among these recommendations were the better transposition of existing rules, improved access to information on rules and requirements for businesses, preventing barriers to providing goods and services in the Single Market, and reinforcing SOLVIT to make it more attractive and useful as a tool for Single Market dispute resolution," Mr De Cesare notes.

In its continuous efforts to provide funding and project-based benefits to Maltese businesses, the MBB embarked on five new initiatives over the past 12 months: the

Business Energy Cluster, LEADER, INVEST+, the Business Against Food Waste Campaign, and Funding Innovation.

More recently, it also played an active role after the COVID-19 outbreak to ensure Maltese businesses are kept fully updated about the EU's initiatives. "We will, of course, keep fighting for the business' interests in the EU on this, as well as other matters of importance," the MBB President pledges.

Reflecting on the von der Leyen Commission's programme for 2019-2024, which stresses six key priorities, Mr De Cesare welcomes the Commission's swift response to the crisis, announcing it will update its work programme and political priorities to reflect an appropriate response to the pandemic. However, he admits it is also concerning that member states took so long to pull together to agree on a rescue package, however insufficient it could be, considering the magnitude of the crisis.

Mr De Cesare also deems extremely worrying the lack of coherence by member states in the effort to contain the pandemic, saying it does not bode well for a future coherent response, simply because the EU has no competence delegated to it by the Treaties in such matters. "This experience should start a discussion on whether a review of the Treaties is required for the EU to have →



Shining light on  
**solidarity** and  
a need for a  
**deeper EU**

The outbreak of the coronavirus is, possibly, not only the biggest test for solidarity but also stresses the need to deepen the European Union, according to two former Maltese European Commissioners, **JOE BORG** and **KARMENU VELLA**, who chat to **RAY BUGEJA** about the major challenges currently facing the EU, and their thoughts on what lies ahead. →



“The COVID-19 crisis is, possibly, the biggest test for the EU’s solidarity,” Karmenu Vella, who served as European Commissioner for the Environment, Fisheries and Maritime Affairs between 2014 and 2019, states.

Malta’s first European Commissioner, Joe Borg, an advocate of a deeper EU, does not mince words: “If you ask me whether the need to deepen the EU is still a priority (even as the coronavirus wreaks havoc), my reply is very simple and straightforward: now more than ever.”

Dr Borg, who was European Commissioner for Fisheries and Maritime Affairs from 2004 till 2010, notes that, even when faced with such a huge problem as the outbreak of the coronavirus, there still is “sacrosanct” between member states with regard to the assistance they expect.

“The hickering that has taken place has not helped the image of the EU out there. It has certainly played into the hands of those whose interest is to throw as much dirt onto the EU and its institutions as possible. It has served as fodder for the ever-growing populist politics we are experiencing within individual member states of the EU.”

In his opinion, huge efforts will be required on all fronts to regain normality and restore the lost momentum on an economic and social front. “In my view, the major problem experienced by the European institutions in making the necessary decisions relating to this pandemic have been twofold: first, the length of time needed to come to a final decision and second, the subservience of the European interests to the national ones,” says Dr Borg, who, as then Foreign Minister, had conducted Malta’s EU accession negotiations.

He notes that too much time passes from when a problem arises to when a decision is made on how to deal with it, and too many different national considerations come into play. This is what happened in the case of immigration, among many others, where member states look at matters differently or have varying interests, he adds.

“Whether we would like to swallow the pill or not, the solution is to have a deeper union that will speak with one voice.”

JOE BORG

“Although, almost invariably, we put the blame on the EU and on the European Commission (the Brussels bureaucracy) in particular for the present state of affairs within the EU, the reality is that, more often than not, it is the individual member states that cause delays and put spokes in the wheels of decisions being made one way or the other,” Dr Borg asserts. “We have to accept to live with this and with the negative image it portrays of the EU, unless we go for a deeper Union where the individual member states will not be able to block decisions in their own interests at the expense of the overall interest, the common good,” the former European Commissioner insists, acknowledging that “this is easier said than done”. →

## ADVERTISING RATES

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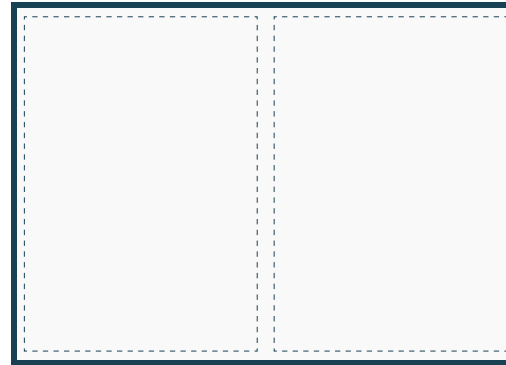
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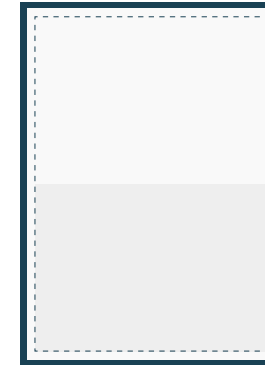
Trim Size: 420mm W x 297mm H (A3)  
Text Safe Area: 406mm W x 283mm H  
Gutter Allowance: 7mm  
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Bleed: 5mm bleed all round

### INSIDE FRONT COVER DOUBLE PAGE SPREAD ADVERT

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Bleed: 5mm bleed all round

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### HALF PAGE ADVERT

185mm W x 130mm H  
No bleed

### GENERIC SPECIFICATIONS

Crop Marks: Not required  
Binding: Perfect bound  
Format: PDF / JPG  
Resolution: Minimum 300DPI  
Convert to CMYK: ISO Coated (ECI)  
FOGRA39 (ISO 12647-2:2004)



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