



MALTA EMPLOYERS' ASSOCIATION

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Press Release

Smart City will increase Malta's International Visibility - MEA

“The Smart City project is a milestone in Malta’s economic development and it is up to all stakeholders to ensure that Malta maximizes the benefits that should result from this investment. The project should increase Malta’s visibility abroad and will become part of the national branding exercise. Therefore the exposure that the country obtains from the project will also benefit other sectors of the economy, such as tourism and also act to attract other investment project to our shores.” This statement was made by the President of the Malta Employers’ Association, Mr. Pierre Fava during a meeting at the MEA premises that was held between MEA officials and with the Minister for Investment, Industry and IT Dr. Austin Gatt.

The meeting was held to explain the details of the project’s implementation. The Association was satisfied that the project will generate thousands of high value added jobs in Malta, which is essential to reduce the gap in living standards between Malta and the more advanced economies in the world. Mr. Fava said that all stakeholders need to have ownership of this exciting project, and underscored the need to build synergies between the social partners, government and educational institutions to ensure that the country is prepared to seize the opportunities that will result in the coming years. Such synergies are crucial to ensure that the development of Smart City does not lead to structural imbalances in the human resource in Malta, which can have negative side effects on other sectors in the economy. This can happen not just in the IT sector, but also in other areas. Mr. Fava said that, over the past months, many employers have been complaining about the lack of personnel to fill various vacancies, and this is a major reason why the number of applications for work permits for foreigners submitted to ETC is increasing exponentially. Therefore we need to take advantage of the fact that the project will be developed over a number of years which should give us sufficient lead times to involve all parties concerned and to build a strategy that will result in a smooth development of the project.

Mr. Fava also mentioned the need for fast-track processing so that the project will immediately start to take shape. He said that the projections for employment and the general impact on the economy, as revealed in the KPMG report all point to the fact that Smart City will lead to a substantial

increase in Malta's GDP, and make a healthy impact on public finances. This will be all the more accentuated through the multiplier effect that such a project will have on the economy. Mr. Fava expressed his satisfaction that the Ministry had taken action on many of the proposals that were included in the position paper that MEA had issued on the need for a human resources strategy for Smart City last year, and pledged that the Association will definitely offer its full cooperation to make Smart City a major pillar of the Maltese economy.