

GRTU NEWSTRING

GRTU establishes relations with the Federation of Small Businesses & the British Business Bank in the UK (Page 1), Compulsory Union Membership (Page 3), The SPOT Project (Page 4), EEE Open Scope (Page 6), Skill Kits (Page 8).



GRTU represented by President Mr Paul Abela, CEO Ms Abigail Mamo, Mr Andrew Aquilina, Vice-President Mr Michael Galea, Vice-President Mr Mario Debono and Council Member Ms Marthese Micallef.

GRTU establishes relations with the Federation of Small Businesses & the British Business Bank in the UK

As part of an ESF project awarded entitled 'SMEs tuning the Art of Representation', a delegation composed of council members and GRTU employees went on a visit to London primary with the aim to better understand the best practices that similar organisations offer to their members, specifically in terms of financial services and access to finance.

During this visit the delegation visited the Federation of Small Businesses (FSB) and the British Business Bank (BBB). Similar to GRTU FSB is totally funded through member subscriptions. FSB was founded in 1974 and represents around 165,000 members which in their majority are small to micro businesses.

During the meetings FSB thoroughly explained the main services it offers to its members specifically those services aimed to assist members which relate to access to finance and tailored insurance policies. Of the services offered FSB offers assistance to start-ups and also other established businesses in order to help them access finance.



This visit also served as a good opportunity for GRTU to increase its cooperation with FSB especially in light of BREXIT. GRTU President Mr. Paul Abela explained that GRTU is closely following BREXIT with the aim of ensuring that business remains and members are not negatively impacted in the case that the UK exits the EU or in the case of a no deal. The same sentiment was also expressed by FSB national chairman Mr. Mike Cherry.

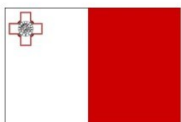
GRTU delegates were also invited to visit the British Business Bank. The BBB was created in 2013 following thorough negotiations with the state aid advisory board in order to clearly comply with the state aid requirements.

One of the meetings held during this visit was with the BBB CEO Mr. Keith Morgan. Mr. Morgan explained that The BBB has indirect contact with SMEs and their main relationship is with intermediaries. The BBB main functions are to provide equity to businesses, address geographical imbalances and to address access to finance issues which do not fall under the scope of traditional banks.

Mr. Abela explained the GRTU has always advocated the importance of access to finance for local businesses and how this leads to growth. Mr. Abela also mentioned that Malta lacks diversity in funding and this experience will help GRTU in increasing its knowledge on the tools available for businesses in the UK. Moreover, through GRTU's insistence the recently set up Malta Development Bank of which Mr. Abela is a board member aims to achieve more funding diversification and opportunities to local businesses.

The visit to the BBB was very fruitful in terms of the project success rate and also in terms of the capacity building for GRTU delegates. In the near future, GRTU will be evaluating and considering offering similar incentives to its members.

The visit to the Federation of Small Businesses and the British Business Bank (BBB) aimed to serve as a learning experience, exchanging views and also to learn and understand better the services offered by both organisations. Through this visit GRTU delegates were able to understand better which services would be beneficial to GRTU members in order to implement and start offering similar services to its members in the near future. Finally both visit helped to enhance collaboration and increase the relationship with FSB and BBB and also to enhance further future collaboration.



Operational Programme II – European Structural and Investment Funds 2014-2020
“Investing in human capital to create more opportunities and promote the well-being of society”

Project part-financed by the European Social Fund

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Compulsory Union Membership; The Case for Employers



A hot topic discussed briefly last year, that will be carried forward, hopefully in a more orderly manner, in 2019.



First off, being an employers' representative and registered as such with the Department of Industrial and Employment Relations, GRTU Malta Chamber of SME's expertise relates solely to represent business owners, SMEs and the self-employed. We do not have the experience and remit to talk on behalf of workers, especially on the case for union membership. This is a clear demarcation line that GRTU respects. Should workers be unionised is one matter and how this will affect the employer is another. It is however not our aim to discuss this.

Our focus is on whether employers and business entities should or should not be required to register or be a member of a social partner representative.

Governments in many EU, and also non-EU countries, have found different ways to support business representatives. There are 13 EU Countries who's governments have found ways to, either directly or indirectly, support business representation. Some do it through obligatory Union membership and others by committing a small fraction of the corporate tax paid by businesses towards reinvesting it into employer social partners. These are just two of a number of solutions and successful combinations that already exist.

What appears to be the greatest bone of contention is the freedom of association. GRTU has already voiced options on how this could be easily tackled. The general understanding is that compulsory membership is being considered because it is a valuable service that benefits everyone. The principle is therefore that it is a service everyone should contribute towards either directly or indirectly and this contribution can very well be an independent or government structure that reinvests funds towards the benefit of employers themselves.

The initiative is simply a recognition of the important function business representatives have and the economic value this signifies for the whole country. One needs to appreciate what a clear message the consideration of compulsory membership is. For the government to accept and help strengthen social partners and communicating the belief that membership benefits all. Rather than criticising the initiative we would rather rise to the occasion and hold a mature discussion because we believe in the service we offer and the greater contribution GRTU can give should this option materialise.

Opportunity for Businesses to enlist; SPOT MALTA Project



The Foundation for Information Technology Accessibility (FITA) has designed a platform dedicated to informing the public on the establishments that provide accessibility for all. FITA have collaborated with both the Vodafone Malta Foundation and the Office of the Prime Minister (OPM) to bring you this platform —spot.org.mt (SPOT) and it currently hosts 1,128 venues.

SPOT is a community driven platform which addresses the need to share and find information about accessible venues across the Maltese Islands. The more you use and share information on SPOT, the better it becomes for all its users.

To promote your business on SPOT, all you have to do is register as a user and provide the information requested. Moreover, SPOT provides an interactive map where one can research a place of business, making it easier for your potential clients to search for information.

GRTU encourages entrepreneurs to enlist their businesses on the platform, to highlight their accessibility. After which, clients will be able to rate your establishment and provide their own feedback. Therefore, we believe this is an excellent opportunity for businesses to provide details of the services they offer.

For more information, please visit the official [site](http://spot.org.mt).



eBiznify

Free Info Session
GRTU Offices
Thursday 24th January
15:00

Register [here](#).

GRTU gets Funding to keep representing Businesses in the EU.



GRTU along with four other organisations was granted a fund to continue working within the orbit of the EU.

Parliamentary Secretary for Voluntary Organisations Clifton Grima said that the government recognizes the importance of such organizations in Malta, and explained that this fund gives them momentum in operating for the good of civil society.

The funds were issued from the Fund for Civil Society, administered by the Maltese Council for the Voluntary Sector. Each organization is entitled to 80% of the expenses relating to for a participation, not only locally but also at EU level.

Surveys

Ms Kimberly Bartolo, a student at the Faculty of Well Being, is conducting a research survey entitled: 'Employers' Perspectives on the Integration of Ex-Prisoners into the Workforce.'



The main focus of this survey is upon the willingness of employers to employ ex-prisoners in their businesses, and also what influences their decision.

If interested in participating, please click [here](#).

Mr Matthias Agius, a student at the Institute of Applied Sciences, designed a survey on the benefits of Grey-Water Recycling.

The focus of this survey is to assess the public's perception towards grey-water recycling, and whether it would be feasible for small organisations and households to install a simple and efficient grey-water recycling system.

If interested in participating, please click [here](#).



Is your business affected by EEE Open Scope?

By Sergio Mallia, Chief Operations Officer, WEEE Malta

Did you know that as from 1st January 2019 the way producers/importers scope their Electrical and Electronic products is changing due to Open Scope? A number of changes came into force on 15th August 2018 as a result of the WEEE Directive 2012/19 – not only in Malta but throughout Europe. The existing ten product categories were reduced to six, and the so-called “Open Scope” was introduced. But what exactly does this mean?

Since 2015, the implementation of the WEEE Directive in Malta have applied to a range of products. The scope of the Directive is now extended so that more products are covered by the Directive than was previously the case. Before, products only had to comply with the law if they matched one of the ten WEEE categories. If they did not, they were not classified as electronic products and were therefore not considered within the scope of the law. This has now changed. All products that are by definition electrical or electronic devices are covered by the WEEE Directive and must be registered. The six new categories are more general than before, so that every product can be assigned to one category or another. In Malta, for example, products such as household lamps were not previously within the scope of the law but now they are. All EEE products must be listed under the following categories:

- 1: Temperature exchange equipment
- 2: Screens and monitors
- 3: Lamps
- 4: Large equipment
- 5: Small equipment
- 6: Small IT and telecomm equipment

WEEE Malta’s expert team is here to ensure that your business can correctly report under the more inclusive, broader open

scope rules. As interpretations of product inclusion within Open Scope can be sometimes confusing, we will guide you through the requirements and help you with your scoping decisions, saving you time and effort in the process.

WEEE Malta is the leading EEE compliance Scheme representing more than 400 importers. As a producer responsibility organization we make sure that producer members comply with their legal obligations, including the responsibility for the take-back and recycling of appliances discarded by consumers. The 2019 collection target of 55% of equipment sold, will once again be extremely challenging for almost producers and all Malta to achieve, unless we encourage cooperation among stakeholders, count all WEEE and improve law enforcement. Last year, WEEE Malta managed to have over 20% increase in the total WEEE collected, mainly in the large household equipment and consumer equipment. The Scheme had a significant increase in collections of refrigerators and TV sets from Civic Amenity Sites. Handling and treating WEEE from Wasteserv remains a challenging factor.

Work remains to be done to increase take back in certain categories of WEEE to ensure electrical waste from all sectors is diverted from landfill, theft and scavenging into the authorised channels and undergoes responsible environmental management. WEEE Malta’s ongoing WEEE Trolley Campaign gained more pace in 2018 and we managed to divert 35 tons of small electronic waste collected from our strong 125 collection points around Malta and Gozo.

More information can be found on www.weemalta.org.

GRTU Members winners at the Servizz bi Tbissima Awards

The general objective of the **Servizz bi Tbissima Award** is that of encouraging good relationships between consumers and traders. This Award recognises those retailers and/or service providers who invest in good customer care and after sales service. Furthermore, it promotes trading practices that give additional benefits to consumers than those provided by the law.

The Award's winners are voted for by consumers as they are the ones who should decide who is providing them with the best products and services. The ones with the most votes are then vetted through the jury, which will adjudicate them according to the Award's Code of Conduct:

1. Promoting a customer friendly relationship.
2. Conforming to all applicable regulations.
3. Ensuring that premises are accessible and safe.
4. Advertising and providing information including prices in a way that does not mislead potential customers.
5. Understanding customer requirements and giving advice accordingly.
6. Indicating/quoting prices that are all-inclusive and issuing relative receipts
7. Ensuring that all complaints are dealt with in a timely manner.
8. Avoiding, if possible, that disputes are referred to the Consumer Claims Tribunal by opting for resolution through mediation
9. Providing an adequate after-sales customer service.
10. If a commercial guarantee is issued, this must not have conditions which are less advantageous than those of a legal guarantee.

GRTU would like to encourage its members to send in their application in the years to come, and to encourage their clients to vote. This year, three GRTU Members had the privilege of winning one of these awards.



GRTU CEO Ms Abigail Mamo, handing out the award to SMART Supermarkets Director Mr Matthew Grech.



GRTU Council Member Ms Marthese Micallef Director at SparkleImage, winning the award for best online service.



GRTU Members Scan Malta that won in the category Electronic Products and Household Goods

Skills Kits; An Innovative Opportunity for Businesses

MCAST Foundation College is currently engaged in an ESF 02.058 funded project ***Adding Value: Nurturing Learning Journeys at the MCAST Foundation College.***

A project designed to expose students to a specific line of work. These short training programmes, called Skills Kits are accredited at Level 1 (1 ECVET each) and are of 20 hours duration each.

Businesses can benefit from identifying the areas where they could use a boost in their resources. In that way, this project may benefit them by giving students a practical background on the work they could be performing later on—and therefore, be given an advantage.

VOCATIONAL AREAS

Creativity and Services

Blow Drying Hair	Colour Theory and Makeup	Mobile App Development
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DIY Engineering Projects

Auto 2 – Pre-VRT inspection	Auto 1 - Automotive Engineering 1 – Pre-Delivery Inspection (PDI)	Measuring and Marking Out	Maintenance – Domestic
Stone Restoration	Electronics Manufacturing Techniques	Mechanical Engineering - Sheet Metal Fabrication	Mechanical Engineering – Joining Methods

Personal Skills

Setting up a lifestyle	Taking on challenges	Mastering self-control
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Functional Skills

Il-Malti Komunikkattiv – 1	Il-Malti Applikat-2	Il-Malti Vokazzjonali – 3
Il-Malti bħala Lingwa Barranija (L-Ewwel Parti)	Il-Malti bħala Lingwa Barranija (It-Tieni Parti)	Il-Malti bħala Lingwa Barranija (It-Tielet Parti)
EFL: Developing Basic English Reading and Writing skills	English Conversation for EFL learners	English for Absolute Beginners
Developing English Comprehension: Reading and Listening skills	Maintaining Routine English Conversation	Basic Correspondence in English
Angles, Shapes, Areas and Volumes	Time, Timetables and Estimation of Cost of an Item	Estimating the Total Cost for a Service/Product

Employability Skills

Building my Integrity	Stress tolerance	Confidence & personal impact
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GRTU is at the forefront in implementing The Falsified Medicines



GRTU, along with two other organisations, has set up the Malta Medicines Verification Organization, or MAMVO as it is known. It was established in 2018 as a non-profit legal entity.

MaMVO is authorised to establish, administer and operate the Malta Medicines Verification System (MaMVS), to support all the entities that have the obligation to implement the Falsified Medicines Directive in accordance with the requirements of EU legislation.

The MaMVS is intended to identify falsified medicines being dispensed in Malta.

MaMVO's remit extends beyond the project implementation since as an organisation it is also obliged to continuously monitor its successful operation.

Falsified medicines are medicines that pass themselves off as real, authorised medicines. The term 'falsified' refers to all forms of falsification, while the term 'counterfeit' specifically refers to an infringement of intellectual property rights.

Falsified medicines may contain ingredients, including active ingredients, which are of poor quality or in the wrong dose; they may contain too much or too little of the active ingredient. This happens since they have not been properly evaluated to check their quality, safety and efficacy as required and directed by strict EU authorisation procedures. Thus, they could be detrimental to the health of people who take them. As falsifications become more sophisticated, the risk that falsified medicines reach patients in the EU increases every year.

Although falsified medicines have not been found to be common in Malta, there have been reports of fake medicines coming through legitimate supply channels in other

countries, and so the risk cannot be ignored.

How does the Falsified Medicines Directive tackle this threat?

The EU passed legislation in 2011 – known as the Falsified Medicines Directive (Directive 2011/62/EU) – to prevent falsified medicines infiltrating the legal supply chain and ultimately from reaching European patients. Measures to tackle the threat include:

- A requirement for medicine packs to carry special safety features in the form of an anti-tamper device (e.g. foil seal, breakable cap) and a barcode containing 'unique identifiers' (including a serial number) to enable the authenticity of the pack to be checked prior to dispensing.

A common, EU-wide logo to identify legal online medicines suppliers, making it easier to distinguish them from illegal operators.

GRTU has held a number of meetings with Pharmacy owners, Wholesalers and Manufacturers in order to explain and implement this directive, which comes in force on the 9th February 2019. The meetings were extremely well attended and many attendees have taken up the various offers for software that GRTU, along with the Chamber of Pharmacists, have negotiated with software developers.

However, there are still a small number of wholesalers and pharmacies who are not aware of the implications of the directive and the considerable fines that will be levied for non compliance.

GRTU is there to help.

Please contact either Ms Liz Said on 79049409 or Mr Mario Debono on 99494405.

GRTU Calendar of Events

EVENT	DATE	TIME	LOCATION	REGISTRATION
FSS /VAT return online submission	22nd January	15:00	GRTU Offices	https://goo.gl/65nZP5
Business Enhance Scheme	23rd January	15:00	Business First	http://www.business1st.grtu.eu/
eBiznify	24th January	15:00	Business First	http://www.business1st.grtu.eu/



Contact GRTU Malta Chamber of SMEs on **21232881 / 3** or e-mail **admin@grtu.eu**



Operational Programme II – Cohesion Policy 2007 – 2013
Empowering People for More Jobs and a Better Quality of Life
Project may be part-financed by the European Union
European Social Fund (ESF),
Co-financing rate: 85% EU Funds; 15% National Funds



Investing in your future