ENGLISH

## MALTA CHAMBER OF SMEs WELCOMES PLEDGE TO ADDRESS COMPLIANCE AND BANKING BOTTLENECKS FOR SMEs

The immense bureaucratic burden and impossible situations businesses have been facing in relation to access to banking services and compliance have only become more serious and counterproductive over the last years.

The Malta Chamber of SMEs has been highlighting its concern on the situation and how this was harming businesses and our economy. The SME Chamber was never against putting in place the required checks and balances. Over-regulation and burdening SMEs with the inability to work and waste of precious resources was never the answer, or a solution to any problem our country was facing.

Access to banking services and the issue of the repetition of compliance exercises were main budget proposals from the side of the Malta Chamber of SMEs and we are therefore pleased to see them being taken up. Apart from this, the SME Chamber also asked the government to intervene to protect corporate bank clients from the abuse of dominant position, from unfair treatment and the imposition of unjustified costs and charges. The SME Chamber still believes that while the cost of banking services is increasing exponentially, the quality of the service is not only not being elevated at par but continues going down in quality. Therefore, while paying much more for basic banking functions, SMEs are many times greatly unhappy with the level of service being given by the major banks. Regulatory surveillance and protection in this area is evidently missing.


ABOUT MALTA CHAMBER OF SMES

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The commitment made yesterday by the Prime Minister to give access to banking services to all businesses and centralise all compliance efforts across the country are greatly welcome. The Malta Chamber of SMEs also notes the positive remarks of the Leader of the Opposition in this regard. The Prime Minister's commitment initiates a principle and a very important step to address Malta's failures in the banking sector and give businesses guaranteed banking support. The Prime Minister is also confirming that the compliance burden on businesses will not be removed but will be alleviated, as it should be.

The Malta Chamber of SMEs believes that the implementation phase of these proposals is key in order to achieve the desired results. The SME Chamber will continue supporting the business community and those implementing these important steps throughout this phase and will also continue working to have a healthy banking sector in Malta.

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MALTI

**IL-KAMRA MALTIJA GĦAN-NEGOZJI ZAGĦAR U MEDJI TILQA' IL-PLEDGE BIEX JIĠU INDIRIZZATI PROBLEMI TA' KONFORMITA U DAWK BANKARJI.**

Il-piż burokratiku enormi u s-sitwazzjonijiet impossibbli li qed jiffaċċjaw in-negozji fir-rigward tal-aċċess għas-servizzi bankarji u l-konformità saru aktar serji u dejjem aktar diffiċli matul dawn l-aħħar snin.

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Il-Kamra Maltija għan-Negozji Żgħar u Medji dejjem enfasizzat it-tħassib tagħha dwar din is-sitwazzjoni u kif dan kien qed jagħmel ħsara lin-negozji u lill-ekonomija tagħna. Il-Kamra Maltija għan-Negozji Żgħar u Medji qatt ma kienet kontra t-tqegħid fis-seħħ tal-kontrolli u l-miżuri meħtieġa. Iżda ir-regolamentazzjoni żejda u t-tgħabbija tal-SMEs bl-inabbiltà li jaħdmu u l-ħela ta' riżorsi prezzjużi qatt ma kienet it-tweġiba, jew soluzzjoni għal kwalunkwe problema li pajjiżna kien qed jiffaċċja.

L-aċċess għas-servizzi bankarji u l-kwistjoni tar-ripetizzjoni tal-eżerċizzji ta' konformità kienu filfatt proposti ewlenin tal-baġit min-naħa tal-Kamra Maltija għan-Negozji Żgħar u Medji u għalhekk bi pjaċir narawhom jiġu adottati. Barra minn hekk, il-Kamra Maltija għan-Negozji Żgħar u Medji talbet ukoll lill-gvern biex jintervjeni biex jipproteġi lill-klijenti tal-banek kummerċjali mill-abbuż ta' pożizzjoni dominanti tagħhom, mit-trattament inġust u mill-impożizzjoni ta' spejjeż imposti li mhumiex ġustifikati. Il-Kamra Maltija għan-Negozji Żgħar u Medji għadha temmen li filwaqt li l-ispiża tas-servizzi bankarji qed tiżdied b'mod esponenzjali, il-kwalità tas-servizz mhux biss mhuwiex jiżdied bl-istess mod iżda qed tkompli tonqos fil-kwalità. Għalhekk, filwaqt li jħallsu ħafna aktar għall-funzjonijiet bankarji bażiċi, l-SMEs ħafna drabi mhumiex kuntenti ħafna bil-livell ta' servizz li qed jingħataw mill-banek ewlenin. Jidher ċar li s-sorveljanza u l-protezzjoni regolatorja f'dan il-qasam huma nieqsa.

L-impenn li ħa lbieraħ il-Prim Ministru biex jagħti aċċess għas-servizzi bankarji lin-negozji kollha u sabiex jiċċentralizza l-isforzi kollha ta' konformità madwar il-pajjiż huwa milqugħ tajjeb ħafna. Il-Kamra Maltija għan-Negozji Żgħar u Medji tinnota wkoll ir-rimarki pożittivi tal-Kap tal-Oppożizzjoni f'dan ir-rigward. L-impenn tal-Prim Ministru jagħti bidu għal prinċipju u pass importanti ħafna biex jiġu indirizzati l-fallimenti ta' Malta fis-settur bankarju u biex in-negozji jingħataw appoġġ bankarju garantit. Il-Prim Ministru qed

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jikkonferma wkoll li l-piż tal-konformità fuq in-negozji mhux se jitneħħa iżda se jittaffa, kif suppost.

Ill-Kamra Maltija għan-Negozji Żagħar u Medji temmen li l-fażi ta' implimentazzjoni ta' dawn il-proposti hija kruċjali sabiex jinkisbu r-riżultati mixtieqa. Il-Kamra Maltija għan-Negozji Żagħar u Medji se tkompli tappoġġja lill-komunità tan-negozju u lil dawk li jimplimentaw dawn il-passi importanti matul din il-fażi u se tkompli taħdem biex f'Malta ikollna settur bankarju b'saħħtu.


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