



THE MALTA CHAMBER

PRESS RELEASE

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Government Needs to Address Abuses, Enforce Laws, and Ensure Transparency – The Malta Chamber

Clear distinction between ethical and unethical businesses

The Malta Chamber of Commerce, Enterprise and Industry is acutely aware of the ongoing issues surrounding the employment of Third-Country Nationals (TCNs) in Malta. The Malta Chamber emphasizes the necessity of employing TCNs only where there is a demonstrable need within the labour market, and similarly, the employment in jobs directly or indirectly associated with the government should be justified by genuine need.

Critical Reliance on Migrant Workers Across Sectors

Many key sectors in Malta, including healthcare, elderly care, tourism, manufacturing, tech and financial services rely heavily on migrant workers due to a significant shortage in the local workforce. This reliance underscores the importance of a strategic workforce plan that addresses these shortages, ensuring a balance between human resource needs and the country's capacity to accommodate them sustainably.

Government needs to Address Abuses

The Malta Chamber condemns the unethical practices observed in certain businesses, which exploit TCN workers. Recent investigations have uncovered instances where companies have illegally employed TCNs, engaged in contract violations, and subjected workers to poor working conditions. Such practices not only violate the rights of the workers but also create unfair competition for businesses that adhere to legal and ethical standards.

There have been news reports of exploitation, such as workers being charged exorbitant fees by recruitment agencies or being subjected to underpayment and inadequate working conditions. For instance, a number of companies have been found to employ TCNs without proper contracts, leading to instances where workers were paid less than the minimum wage or were denied basic rights and protection.

Clear Distinction between Ethical and Unethical Businesses

The Malta Chamber calls for a clear distinction to be made between ethical businesses which comply with employment laws and standards, and those that exploit legal loopholes to the detriment of workers and fair competition. The role of entities like Jobsplus, Identita' and the Department of Industrial and Employment Relations (DIER) which are collectively responsible for the issue of work permits, regulation and monitoring of employment practices, is crucial in identifying and addressing

these abuses. We urge continued vigilance and robust action to ensure that all businesses operate on a level playing field, respecting both legal standards and the rights of workers.

Government needs to Enforce and be Transparent

In light of these issues, The Malta Chamber invites the government to enhance transparency by releasing the data from the recent skills survey, which identifies the specific needs of the country's labour market. Additionally, we advocate for stronger enforcement of labour laws and increased dialogue with stakeholders, including the Malta Council for Economic and Social Development (MCESD), to ensure that the implementation of policies is fair and effective. This collaborative approach is essential to create a sustainable and equitable environment for all sectors of the economy.

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