

MAXIMISING MALTA'S COMPETITIVENESS POTENTIAL

**A NATIONAL CONFERENCE TO DISCUSS
A COMPETITIVENESS STRATEGY FOR MALTA**

**26 to 28 May, 2003
Radisson Hotel, St Julians, Malta**

Organised by the



**Economics Department and the Islands and Small States Institute
of the University of Malta**

in collaboration with



**the Ministry of Finance and Economic Affairs and
the Ministry of Foreign Affairs
of the Government of Malta**

and the



Commonwealth Secretariat

CONFERENCE PROGRAMME

MONDAY 26 MAY 2003: NGO STAKEHOLDER SEGMENT ROUNDTABLE

0830 - 0900	Registration and welcome coffee OPENING SESSION
0900 - 0915	Speech by the Hon Joe Borg, Minister of Foreign Affairs
0915 - 0930	Speech by Ms T. R. W. Bare, Director, Governance and Institutional Development Division, Commonwealth Secretariat
0930 - 1000	Presentation of Draft Working Document and Preliminary Discussion "Maximising Malta's Competitiveness Potential" STATEMENTS ON THE DRAFT WORKING DOCUMENT
1000 - 1010	Federation of Industry
1010 - 1020	Chamber of Commerce
1020 - 1030	Gozo Business Chamber
1030 - 1100	Coffee Break
1100 - 1110	General Retailers and Traders' Union
1110 - 1120	Malta Hotels and Restaurants Association
1120 - 1130	Association of Farmers
1130 - 1230	Plenary Discussion
1230 - 1430	Lunch STATEMENTS ON THE DRAFT WORKING DOCUMENT (continued)
1430 - 1440	General Workers' Union
1440 - 1450	Confederation of Malta Trade Unions
1450 - 1500	Union Haddiema Maghqudin
1500 - 1510	Malta Employers Association
1510 - 1530	Coffee Break
1530 - 1630	Plenary Discussion

TUESDAY 27 MAY 2003: GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS SEGMENT ROUNDTABLE

0830 - 0900	Registration and welcome coffee OPENING SESSION
0900 - 0915	Speech by the Hon. Anthony Abela, Parliamentary Secretary at the Ministry of Finance and Economic Affairs
0915 - 1000	Presentation of Draft Working Document and Preliminary Discussion "Maximising Malta's Competitiveness Potential" STATEMENTS ON THE DRAFT WORKING DOCUMENT
1000 - 1010	Ministry of Finance and Economic Affairs
1010 - 1020	Ministry of Tourism
1020 - 1030	Ministry of Education
1030 - 1100	Coffee Break
1100 - 1110	Ministry for Information Technology and Investment
1110 - 1120	Ministry of Transport and Communications
1120 - 1130	Ministry of Resources and Infrastructure
1130 - 1230	Plenary Discussion
1230 - 1430	Lunch STATEMENTS ON THE DRAFT WORKING DOCUMENT(continued)
1430 - 1440	Malta Council for Economic and Social Development
1440 - 1500	Malta Enterprise (MDC, METCO, IPSE)
1500 - 1510	Central Bank of Malta
1510 - 1520	Malta Financial Services Authority
1520 - 1530	Employment and Training Corporation
1530 - 1545	Coffee Break
1545 - 1555	Malta Standards Authority
1555 - 1605	Malta Maritime Authority
1605 - 1615	Malta Tourism Authority
1615 - 1625	Malta Council for Science and Technology
1625 - 1700	Plenary Discussion

WEDNESDAY 28 MAY 2003: KEYNOTE SPEECHES SEGMENT

0830 - 0900	Registration and welcome coffee OPENING SESSION
0900 - 0930	Summary of the Previous Two Days' Discussion on "Maximising Malta's Competitiveness Potential" INTERNATIONAL GUEST SPEAKERS' SESSION
0930 - 1030	Keynote speeches by resource persons. Speakers of international repute have been invited to address the meeting. The speeches will be followed by questions and comments from the floor.
1030 - 1100	Coffee break
1030 - 1230	Keynote speeches by resource persons
1230 - 1430	Lunch PLENARY DISCUSSION ON THE DRAFT WORKING DOCUMENT
1430 - 1530	Concluding plenary discussion on the Competitiveness Strategy for Malta CONCLUDING SESSION
1530 - 1600	Statement by the Hon. John Dalli, Minister of Finance and Economic Affairs
2000	Dinner

THE CONFERENCE

CONFERENCE OBJECTIVES

The objective of the conference "**Maximising Malta's Competitiveness Potential**" is to provide an open forum on a National Competitiveness Strategy for Malta, in consultation with Maltese decision-makers in the public and private sectors. Resource persons of international repute in the field of competitiveness will be invited as keynote speakers and as resource persons.

BACKGROUND

Competitiveness is a national-level issue as much as an enterprise concern. Enterprises, which are the main engines of income creation, are at the front-line in the international markets. However, the efficiency of resource allocation in a country and the availability of skills, knowledge and innovative practices necessary to sustain the competitiveness of enterprises are national-level considerations. In this regard the public sector plays a crucial role. The need for Malta to be competitive as a nation is conditioned by its smallness and lack of natural resources, which require the economy to be extraordinarily open to international competition. At this particular point in time, Malta's need to be competitive is further exacerbated by the globalisation process and regional integration.

CONFERENCE THEMES

The conference will focus on the following competitiveness issues:

- a stable and resilient macroeconomic structure
- an adequate and predictable legislative environment
- an adequate infrastructure
- investment in human capital through education
- innovation
- quality, speed, efficiency and transparency in public administration
- a suitable balance between wage levels, productivity and taxation
- preservation of the social fabric and fostering of social cohesion
- export market aggressiveness
- foreign direct investment attractiveness

The conference will revolve around a working document on a National Competitiveness Strategy, prepared beforehand by a team of experts. The document will be made available to prospective participants prior to the conference.

CONFERENCE AGENDA

The conference sessions will consist of statements relating to the draft competitiveness strategy document, followed by discussion sessions to promote wide public consultation. The first day of the conference will consider the views of NGOs, including constituted bodies representing the business community and employee unions. The second day will focus on public sector entities. The final segment will consist of keynote speeches by invited experts and a plenary discussion on Malta's Competitiveness Strategy.

WHO WILL PARTICIPATE

The conference will be attended by top officials from government ministries and relevant public sector institutions, and senior representatives of major NGOs involved in competitiveness issues. Other persons interested in the theme of the conference, including academics and members of the press may also attend. Those wishing to participate are required to apply on the prescribed form, by 22 May 2003.

CONFERENCE ORGANISATION

The conference is being funded by the Commonwealth Secretariat and the Government of Malta, and organised by the Economics Department and the Islands and Small States Institute of the University of Malta.