**Daily News Summary - 16.6.2020**

**BUDGET**

**Two important years in budget negotiations on Malta’s financial package lost**

An article in Nazzjon today speaks to EU diplomat Peter Agius who lambasts the government for recent changes in the recent changes in Malta’s EU representation and says that this has led to Malta’s losing two important years in EU budget negotiations. Agius says that Malta’s former ambassador to the EU, Daniel Azzopardi, lacked diplomatic experience whilst experts in European politics have also claimed that Malta is failing in its European politics.  
  
  
[*In-Nazzjon:*](https://netnews.com.mt) *"Inhlew sentejn importanti fin-negozjati dwar il-pakkett finanzjarju ghall-Malta mill-Ewropa..." page: 5 info: by Joe Mikallef date: Monday, June 15, 2020*

**CUSTOMS**

**Fake goods cost Maltese firms about €20 million a year**

Times of Malta reported last Saturday that according to a report by the European Intellectual Property Office (EUIPO), Maltese businesses are losing an estimated €20 million a year in revenue to fake goods. The cosmetics and personal care industry in Malta is the hardest hit losing €11 million a year to counterfeit products. Other losses are €5 million in the pharmaceutical industry, €2 million in toys and games and a further €2 million in fake wines and spirits. It is estimated that EU governments are losing an estimated €15 billion due to counterfeit goods on the market, mostly related to direct and indirect taxation that is owed, as well as unpaid social security contributions due to illegal manufacturing.  
  
  
[*Malta-Times:*](https://www.timesofmalta.com) *Fake goods cost Maltese firms about €20m a year / Fake goods cost Maltese firms about €20m a year page: 6 info: by Jessica Arena date: Saturday, June 13, 2020*

**HEALTH**

**Three new COVID-19 cases, two recoveries**

It was widely reported by the media that the health authorities yesterday said that three new novel coronavirus cases were registered between Saturday and Sunday and that another two patients had recovered. The new cases were all part of a previous cluster. This brings the total active cases to 37. Since the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic, 649 cases of infection have been registered in Malta and 82,263 swabs have been carried out. Nine people have died of the novel coronavirus.  
  
  
[*In-Nazzjon:*](https://netnews.com.mt) *"COVID-19: Rappurtati tliet kazi godda u tnejn imfejqa..." page: 2 date: Monday, June 15, 2020*   
  
[*Malta-Independent:*](https://www.independent.com.mt) *"Three new cases, two patients recover / Three new cases, ..." page: 3 date: Monday, June 15, 2020*   
  
[*Malta-Times:*](https://www.timesofmalta.com) *Three new COVID-19 cases, two recoveries / Three new COVID-19 cases, two recoveries page: 3 date: Monday, June 15, 2020*

**State of public health emergency could be lifted along with travel ban – Charmaine Gauci**

In an interview published yesterday in The Malta Independent on Sunday Public Health Superintendent Charmaine Gauci said that Malta’s state of public health emergency due to the COVID-19 pandemic could be lifted along with the travel ban. However, she said that this did not mean that all mitigation measures should be removed as the virus as still circulating. Prof. Gauci was also questioned on Malta’s re-opening, immunity testing and her reaction to being nominated for Ġieħ ir-Repubblika.  
  
  
[*Malta-Independent:*](https://www.independent.com.mt) *"State of public health emergency could be lifted along with ..." page: 1,4,5 info: by Albert Galea date: Sunday, June 14, 2020*

**HOME AFFAIRS / SECURITY UNION**

**No flight restrictions from 15 July, public health emergency to be lifted**

Local media widely reported today that Prime Minister Robert Abela yesterday announced the lifting of the public health emergency declared at the height of the virus pandemic. During a televised interview, Dr Abela also announced that restrictions on all flight destinations will be lifted on 15 July and a further six countries, Italy, France, Poland, Spain, Croatia and Greece, have been added to the list of safe destinations for when the airport officially reopens on 1 July. The prime minister confirmed restrictions on gatherings of over 75 people will also be lifted. The use of face masks was to remain based on public health guidelines. Abela said that there were only 36 active cases at the moment and the mortality rate had been low.  
  
  
[*L-Orizzont:*](https://www.inewsmalta.com) *"Titnehha l-emergenza tas-sahha pubblika / Titnehha l-emergenza tas-sahha pubblika..." page: 1,3 date: Monday, June 15, 2020*   
  
[*Malta-Independent:*](https://www.independent.com.mt) *"Public health emergency being lifted – Prime Minister / Public ..." page: 1,2 info: by Kevin Schembri Orland date: Monday, June 15, 2020*   
  
[*Malta-Independent:*](https://www.independent.com.mt) *"Malta will open its airport to all destinations on 15 ..." page: 3 date: Monday, June 15, 2020*   
  
[*Malta-Times:*](https://www.timesofmalta.com) *Abela: Public health emergency to be lifted / Abela: Public health emergency to be lifted page: 1,2 info: by Jacob Borg date: Monday, June 15, 2020*  
  
[*timesofmalta.com:*](https://www.timesofmalta.com) *No flight restrictions from July 15, public health emergency to be lifted / No flight restrictions from July 15, public health emergency to be lifted info: by Jacob Borg date: Sunday, June 14, 2020*  
  
[*TVM-Malta:*](https://www.tvm.com.mt) *"Number of countries the Maltese can visit from July goes ..." info: L-ahbarijiet, 2020-06-11 06:44:00, 00:02:30, by Liam Carter date: Thursday, June 11, 2020 6:44:00 AM CEST*

**INDUSTRY**

**Industrial production drop much lower than EU average**

Last Saturday Times of Malta reported that Eurostat figures showed that Malta’s industrial production dropped by 3.1% in April when compared to the same month in 2019. This was one of the lowest in Europe with the EU average drop at 27.2%. According to Eurostat, COVID-19 containment measures continued to have a significant impact on industrial production in April. The seasonally adjusted industrial production across the EU fell by 17.1% in the euro area. Comparing April 2020 to April 2019, industrial production decreased by 28% in the euro area and by 27.2% in the EU.  
  
  
[*Malta-Times:*](https://www.timesofmalta.com) *Industrial production drop much lower than EU average / Industrial production drop much lower than EU average page: 7 date: Saturday, June 13, 2020*

**MIGRATION**

**Another EU Member State offers to take migrants from Malta**

It was reported in The Malta Independent on Sunday that the European Commission for Migration and Home Affairs announced that four EU Member States will be helping Malta with relocating migrants who have recently disembarked. France, Luxembourg, Portugal and Germany have all agreed to burden sharing after 425 migrants were allowed to disembark in Malta last week after spending over six weeks at sea on four tourist boats that the government had charted in order to save them without letting them in, due to ports being closed. Last Friday, at the Justice and Home Affairs Council, Commissioner Johansson encouraged other Member States to equally show their support as more cooperation and solidarity was needed and called for a more sustainable, reliable and permanent approach to migration to be addressed in the New Pact on Migration and Asylum.  
  
  
[*Malta-Independent:*](https://www.independent.com.mt) *"Another EU Member State offers to take migrants from Malta ..." page: 1,8 info: by Karl Azzopardi date: Sunday, June 14, 2020*

**From overcrowded facilities to floating prisons, Malta’s current struggle with migration**

The Malta Independent on Sunday yesterday focused on Malta’s struggle with the migration crisis due to its strategic position on the EU border with Africa. Because of its size, however, Malta is struggling to find space to house these individuals, and the lack of contribution from other EU Member States on this issue has done nothing but added to this pressure. This year, things got even more complicated with the COVID-19 pandemic, which led many countries, including Malta, to shut their ports. Malta is also struggling to house and accommodate these migrations and facilities have reached full capacity. Last February Prime Minister Robert Abela pressed on Malta’s struggle and lack of EU solidarity during a meeting with the European Commissioner of Migration and Home Affairs Ylva Johansson.  
  
  
[*Malta-Independent:*](https://www.independent.com.mt) *"From overcrowded facilities to floating prisons, Malta’s current struggle with ..." page: 8,9 info: by Karl Azzopardi date: Sunday, June 14, 2020*

**‘There was weak governance and no transparency’**

In an interview published today in Times of Malta, the director of the Malta-based European Asylum Support Office (EASO), Nina Gregori, spoke about the challenges the Office has faced in recent years due to weak governance, no transparency and internal controls. In recent years, the agency, which has been operating since 2011, had its accounts repeatedly rejected by the European Parliament while the European Court of Auditors had also expressed alarm at shortcomings at the agency.  According to Gregori, the Parliament has now, for the first time in several years, acknowledged the “positive developments” at the agency, something the director believes to be crucial as future plans continue to be laid out.  
  
  
[*Malta-Times:*](https://www.timesofmalta.com) *‘There was weak governance and no transparency’ / ‘There was weak governance and no transparency’ page: 6 info: by Claire Caruana date: Monday, June 15, 2020*

**REGIONAL POLICY**

**EU investment supports innovation in planning for environmental protection and social wellbeing**

The Malta Independent today reported on an EU project which is partially financed by the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF). SIntegraM is led by the Planning Authority and is creating a three-dimensional map capable of being explored through virtual reality, augmented reality, and mixed reality. Minister for the Environment, Climate Change and Planning Aaron Farrugia recently visited one of the more immersive elements of this project, the SIntegram CAVE, (Computer Automated Virtual Environment) and said that this project benefits society as it can take a snapshot of our environment, allow us to travel within it, review the changes that would occur, understand the rise of sea levels and a myriad other possibilities. The project has received an investment of €7 million in European funds.  
  
  
[*Malta-Independent:*](https://www.independent.com.mt) *"EU investment supports innovation in planning for environmental protection and ..." page: 5 date: Monday, June 15, 2020*

**RULE OF LAW AND CHARTER OF FUNDAMENTAL RIGHTS**

**Venice flags role of State Advocate**

Malta Today yesterday reported that the Venice Commission has reacted to Malta’s proposals on plans for institutional changes related to the rule of law. The Commission praised several of the proposals in its report sent to Justice Minister Edward Zammit Lewis. These included the appointment of the police chief. However, it also said that it had reservations on the position of the State Advocate in the Judicial Appointments Committee and the Commission for the Administration of Justice. According to the proposals sent to the Commission, the State Advocate will replace the public prosecutor as a member on the Judicial Appointments Committee (JAC). The Venice Commission disagreed with the position the State Advocate, as the former Attorney General is now known, would have within the Judicial Appointments Committee and has also taken issue with the role the State Advocate would play in the Commission for the Administration of Justice.  
  
  
[*Malta-Today:*](https://www.maltatoday.com.mt) *Venice flags role of State Advocate / Venice flags role of State Advocate page: 2 info: by Massimo Costa date: Sunday, June 14, 2020*

**SOCIAL AFFAIRS, SKILLS AND LABOUR MOBILITY**

**MCAST in European water-related VET project**

The Sunday Times of Malta yesterday reported on an online webinar of the Platform of Vocational Education (PoVE) Water project. Representatives from the Malta College of Arts, Science and Technology (MCAST) and four other European countries discussed the future of skilled vocational practitioners in the field of water technology during the webinar. This European project, which started last January in Brussels, draws on existing and emerging vocational competences and skills needs in the water sector with the aim of translating them into a vocational excellence approach. The webinar revealed that Several European countries are struggling with a shortage of young people interested in water-related education and that there are still significant differences between the various European regions in this regard.  
  
  
[*Malta-Times:*](https://www.timesofmalta.com) *MCAST in European water-related VET project / MCAST in European water-related VET project page: 46 date: Sunday, June 14, 2020*

**TRANSPORT**

**Malta loses out on EU trucking rules**

Malta Today reported that MEPs in the European Parliament’s transport committee last Monday endorsed a deal reached with EU ministers on a major reform of the road transport sector, in spite of Malta’s attempts to veto it. Maltese industrialists fear that these rules will raise their costs of cabotage and logistics by at least 10%. The rules will set mandatory conditions for drivers’ rest times and their place of rest, and Maltese companies say the new rules will punish island economies like Malta the most. Malta’s six MEPs tabled a host of amendments to the proposed rules during the last transport committee meeting but none of the amendments were passed.  
  
  
[*Malta-Today:*](https://www.maltatoday.com.mt) *Malta loses out on EU trucking rules / Malta loses out on EU trucking rules page: 6 info: by Matthew Vella date: Sunday, June 14, 2020*