



THE MALTA CHAMBER

PRESS RELEASE

16th October 2020

It is time for clear mandatory regulation and enforcement for all to ensure accountability and respect for each other.

In view of the alarming increase in the number of COVID 19 contagions in recent days, The Malta Chamber of Commerce, Enterprise and Industry is compelled to appeal for stricter and clearer guidelines for all, as the situation needs management through leadership.

The time for recommendations is over. It is now time for mandatory regulation and enforcement for all.

The Malta Chamber, like all well-meaning citizens, is highly concerned by the sharp increase in numbers in the past days. With over a thousand live cases registered, and a contagion rate that does not seem to show any signs of slowing down, the country is risking a break-down in the public health sector as well as other essential services.

As the Chamber had recommended already in the past weeks, the use of masks must become mandatory in all public places, today before tomorrow.

Places of gathering must be controlled and managed better as in the past weeks we have seen a decline in discipline. The public must be reminded at all times that the pandemic is still very much alive and with us, and is expected to form part of our lives for many months. We cannot let our guard down at any time.

With the imminent reopening of post-secondary institutions, these points must be underlined even further as we mustn't allow our higher education institutions to become super-spreader hotspots.

The Malta Chamber appeals to individuals and businesses alike, to follow all public health protocols rigorously and responsibly. The country cannot afford another situation where the restriction of education and business activity is the only option. This is detrimental to everyone.

Finally, it is also understood that with the increase in numbers, the contact-tracing procedure has been overwhelmed in the past days, with positive cases taking days to be contacted for further instruction. The Malta Chamber recommends the secondment of human resources from sectors which have resources to spare, to this operation, in order to make sure that the contact-tracing function is operating optimally once again.

According to the ECDC (European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control), "the rapid identification, testing, and quarantine of high-risk contacts remains one of the most effective measures to reduce transmission." The first few days are so critical that the "14-day quarantine period can be shortened to 10



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days after exposure, if testing at day 10 is negative.” Rigorous implementation of containment measures will enable us to fight the virus and keep the country afloat.

END