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NONE 

PRESS RELEASE BY THE GOVERNMENT OF MALTA

The Government of Malta refers to today's decision by the Court of Justice of the European Union in case C-181/23, concerning the proceedings initiated by the European Commission against Malta in relation to the legislative framework on citizenship-by-investment.

As always, the Government of Malta respects the decisions of the courts, while at this moment the legal implications of this judgment are being studied in detail, so that the regulatory framework on citizenship can then be brought in line with the principles outlined in the judgment.

Since October 2020, when the European Commission initiated the infringement proceedings that led to this case before the Court of Justice of the European Union, the Maltese Government has consistently expressed its firm intention to defend this framework. This position was adopted particularly because issues related to citizenship fall entirely within the national sphere of competence. This stance has remained consistent for the past four and a half years. It should be noted that this principle was confirmed by the opinion of Advocate General Anthony Michael Collins, published on 4 October 2024, who also concluded that there was no case against Malta.

The Maltese Government notes that although the Court confirmed the principle of national competence, it ignored the Advocate General's recommendation that there was no case against Malta and instead delved into other aspects. It is important to clarify that decisions taken under both the current and the previous legislative framework remain valid.

The Government of Malta takes pride in the wealth generated through this framework over recent years, which enabled the establishment of a national fund for investment and savings to address the needs of both present and future generations. The Government remains committed to continuing to attract the best investment, from which the Maltese and Gozitan people benefit.

The Government recalls that, since its inception in 2015, this legislative framework has directly generated over €1.4 billion in revenue for Malta. These funds have always been divided between the National Development and Social Fund (NDSF), through which several beneficial projects and investments were and continue to be carried out, and the Consolidated Fund. During the COVID-19 pandemic, the percentage of contributions allocated to the Consolidated Fund was increased.

Through the NDSF, significant investments were made in key sectors to improve the quality of life for the Maltese and Gozitan people. More than €60 million were allocated to social housing projects, providing hundreds of social housing apartments that have offered a more dignified life to thousands of individuals.



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Other socially focused projects included the guarantee scheme under New Hope, created for individuals who, due to illness or medical conditions, were unable to secure a home loan from banks; the investment in St Michael Hospice, a state-of-the-art palliative care project, where €8.5 million were allocated; and an additional €5 million invested in the Puttinu Cares apartments in London. Important projects operated by Caritas were also supported.

In the healthcare sector, a €10 million investment programme was launched to strengthen health centres across the country, while several million euros were invested in new equipment at St Vincent De Paul and in the cardiology department at Mater Dei Hospital.

Strategic investments were also made in the sports sector, both in athletes and infrastructure. Thanks to €5 million invested in athletes participating in the Games of the Small States of Europe, Malta won the games for the first time in history in 2023. Over €13 million were allocated to the construction of a car racing track, where works have commenced, and a €9 million agreement was reached with the Malta Football Association for a new technical centre, which is now nearly complete.

Investments were also made in greening projects and numerous restoration initiatives to safeguard the national heritage. This is only a portion of the wealth and the many beneficial projects generated by this programme.

Additionally, the framework generated €339 million from property purchases, €158 million from property rentals, and €236 million were invested in bond acquisitions. Applicants also contributed over €10 million in direct philanthropic donations to voluntary organisations across the country.

Malta was not the only Member State operating similar frameworks, The Government calls for national unity in the steps that must now follow this judgment and everyone should rise above partisanship in favour of the national interest including the Opposition, which did its utmost to cause maximum damage, particularly at the European level, and to undermine our country's framework even during the period in which the Maltese Government was defending the national interest in this case before the European Court over the past years.