



Press Release

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Maltese parliamentary delegation attends the ICM on the State of the Debate on the Future of Europe

A delegation of the Maltese Parliament participated in the Inter-Parliamentary Committee Meeting on the State of the Debate on the Future of Europe organised by the AFCO Committee of the European Parliament in Brussels on October 10. The delegation was composed of Robert Abela and Toni Bezzina. The main aim was to discuss possible institutional evolutions on the European level as a result of a number of complex challenges that lie ahead of the European Union.

The European Union is facing increasingly complex challenges, such as Brexit, the EU Budget, enlargement and irregular migration, to mention a few, with member states often divided on the solutions required. Furthermore, next year, in May 2019, the European electorate will be asked to vote in the European elections. There are concerns that rising populism and disinformation in some of the EU member states could drastically alter political representation within the European Parliament.

The debate provided national parliamentarians with a good opportunity to voice their constituents' concerns and opinions on European affairs and other important issues affecting their daily lives. A number of parliamentarians argued that the European institutions must bring the European Union closer to the citizens, who remain, for the most part, alienated as regards EU affairs. That way they can become more aware of how the EU contributes to their lives. The EU has yielded many positive results and it is indeed very beneficial across member states. The problem has been communicating its successes to the European citizen.

At each plenary session of the European Parliament in Strasbourg, a Head of State or Government participates in a debate with members of the European Parliament on the future of Europe. The heads of state/government of Latvia and Germany are next in line. Each European leader presents his/her own vision for the EU, followed by a debate with MEPs. This debate is part of a much broader one, spearheaded by the President of the European Commission Jean-Claude Juncker and concerns the type of European Union that the EU member states want to create and invest in, and what they can expect in return from it, in the decades to come.