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Member of the European Commission

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Ares(2018)

*Dear Ms Gomes,*

Thank you for your letter of 8 March 2018.

According to the statistics on short stay visas that the Commission publishes every year, Malta did not process any visa applications in Libya in 2015 and 2016. Like other Member States, Malta had closed its visa sections in Libya. Visa statistics are based on place of application and not on the nationality of the applicant, therefore the Commission does not have information on the number of visas issued to applicants of any given nationality.

As regards the allegations that such visas may have been fraudulently issued or that they involve corruption or other criminal activities, it is for the competent national authorities to investigate such allegations. The Commission has no competence to intervene in individual investigations or to request information about their state of play from the Maltese authorities.

Nevertheless, all Member States are subject to ongoing assessment of their anti-corruption general policy landscape and anti-corruption efforts. This includes aspects related to effective investigation and prosecution of corruption. In 2018, the Commission has analysed the key challenges in the country reports for several Member States where there are particularly significant risks and gaps that act as obstacles for investment, efficient resource allocation, economic performance and growth. This includes Malta.

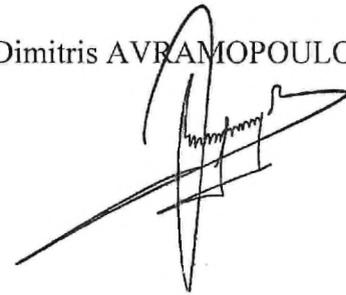
***Ms Ana Gomes, MEP***  
***Parlement européen***  
***Bât. Altiero Spinelli 14G201***  
***60, rue Wiertz / Wiertzstraat 60***  
***B-1047 Bruxelles/Brussel***

In the 2018 country report on Malta,<sup>1</sup> the Commission noted shortcomings in the judicial and anti-corruption framework. The report highlights that the Maltese justice system continues to face challenges concerning its efficiency. The fragmented landscape of anti-corruption institutions and the lack of formalised institutional coordination may hamper effective investigation and prosecution of corruption allegations.

The Commission will further assess any measures that Malta will set in place to address the challenges identified and may adopt targeted country specific recommendations, included in the area of the fight against corruption.

*Cordially,*

Dimitris AVRAMOPOULOS

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Dimitris Avramopoulos', written over a printed name. The signature is stylized with a large initial 'D' and a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://ec.europa.eu/info/sites/info/files/2018-european-semester-country-report-malta-en.pdf>