



**RESPONSIBLE
GAMING
FOUNDATION**

**Annual Report
January-December 2021**



“

The aim of the Foundation is to promote awareness, create alternatives, strengthen research and provide support in regards to excessive gaming and gambling

”

Mr. KAYNE SAID

(Communications Manager at the Responsible Gaming Foundation)



**Report for Period
January-December 2021**

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Message from the Minister for the Economy, EU Funds & Lands

Hon. SILVIO SCHEMBRI

We successfully caught up and adapted to new 'normalities', one of which is the COVID-19 pandemic which took the world and the local scene by storm. Keeping such a new normality in mind, one industry that remained on a sustained growth path is the local gaming and gambling industry. Such growth is evidenced by a significant increase in both value-added and employment activity. This lively performance is attributed to the practical and timely strategies adopted and implemented by operators in the industry, backed

by a regulatory framework that ensures a safe and fair offer for consumers.

According to the Annual Performance Report for the period between January to December 2021 published by the Malta Gaming Authority (MGA), the gaming industry in Malta continued to sustain its contribution to the growth of the Maltese economy, also demonstrating its overall pandemic resilience. The gaming industry generated a Total Gross Value Added (GVA) of €1,019 million during the year 2021, representing around 7.7% of the economy's GVA and 9.9% growth in economic value-added. By the end of December 2021, online and land-based companies licensed by the MGA stood at 351 with 10,685 fulltime employees, out of which 9,919 engaged in the online sector.

These positive economic numbers continue to carry a substantial moral responsibility on the government. Player protection is one of the primary regulatory objectives of the Malta Gaming Authority. It ensures that licensees offer a fair and secure gaming environment and have the necessary safeguards in place for players to gamble safely and responsibly while providing the necessary protection to minors and vulnerable persons. In its efforts to protect players and encourage responsible gambling, the Authority received 5,894 requests for assistance. It also conducted 79 gambling website checks fraudulently claiming to be licensed by the Authority.

But what about the actual problem gamblers and their loved ones? What about the support being offered at the local level? Are we doing enough? Our commitment will always be to provide the necessary research, adequate support, healthy alternatives and preventive awareness to the approx. 1%-2% of the gambling population who, in the first quarter of 2018, reported some form of adverse effect on their lifestyle after acquiring gaming services against payment. This is where the Responsible Gaming Foundation comes in to provide a balance to the repercussions of the positive numbers mentioned above.

During these past years, the Foundation embarked on an exciting TAKE ACTION project part-financed by the European Social Fund. The year 2021 marks the wrapping up of the well-attended and successful training offered to all professionals involved in the gambling support scene and the commencement of the tendering process of the upcoming Awareness Campaign, which falls under the same project and is also another means of addressing this social problem in the Maltese context. Through this campaign, the Foundation aims to enhance awareness at the local level of both its tar-

gets and its support services offered by professionally trained staff.

I want to praise the Foundation for their hard work, dedication, and resilience and, at the same time, welcome on board the Foundation's new General Manager, Mr Kevin O'Neill. The Foundation needs to move on a forward course, and I am more than sure that Mr O'Neill will prove a valuable asset to the aims and targets of the Foundation. The first few months of his tenure proved to be very encouraging and are just a snippet of what is to come.

“
The Government will ensure
that the Foundation is
continuously understood and
strengthened to reach its aims
and targets in the days to come
”

To this very day, the Foundation has relentlessly advocated for a healthy balance between the gaming industry's drive for growth and its Corporate Social Responsibility toward providing healthy alternatives to problem gambling. To this end, the Foundation kickstarted its CSR Programme with success for Voluntary Organisations and individuals to keep our young ones away from vices and addictions.

The Ministry for the Economy, EU Funds and Lands will always support the Foundation to foster greater community empathy for problem gamblers and help to reduce the stigma associated with the addiction. At the same time, provide all the necessary support needed in the face of excessiveness. The Foundation's role is to increase awareness through educational means amongst the communities to prevent problem gaming and gambling by enhancing their knowledge of addressing known risks and proactively protecting factors. Research needs to strengthen, alternatives need to be provided, and support given to all those that need it.

I augur the Responsible Gaming Foundation's excellent work to continue providing awareness on a national scale and more individual support. The government will ensure that the Foundation is continuously understood and strengthened to reach its aims and targets in the days to come.

Foreword by the Non-Executive Chairman

Mr. NEVILLE MANGION



position left by Mr Zammit. I am more than sure that with Kevin's fresh ideas and experience in the gaming and gambling sector, he will lead the Foundation to a bright future. His first couple of months already bear witness to what is to come.

2021 was again a challenging year indeed! The COVID-19 pandemic still kept tight in its grip, affecting our CSRP and Education Campaigns. I am proud to say that we all embraced this period and still ensured that the working processes and services offered to the general public were the least impacted.

In the meantime, the Foundation continued with its €1.1 million TAKE ACTION project part-financed by the European Social Fund, with the 24-month research part completed in 2020 and the training tender completed in May 2021. Due to this pandemic, training was provided online and abruptly implemented such changes.

As the Non-Executive Chairman of the Responsible Gaming Foundation, I am pleased to present this Annual Report based on the working period from January till December of 2021.

The Foundation's main aim has always been to seek and manage funding from the gaming sectors, government and other channels to fund its awareness and support projects. Such projects include research/development of preventative measures in education and providing support and technologies that enhance and improve responsible gaming and gambling.

During the past year, the Foundation thanked outgoing General Manager Mr Shawn Zammit for all his efforts and welcomed Mr Kevin O'Neill to fill the vacant

This training was a success, with 531 participants managing to complete it after attending a total number of 169 sessions. It was given to stakeholders that face (directly or indirectly) problem gamblers in their line of work. The next step in this project was to initiate tendering for the Awareness Campaign. This was another significant move forward for the Foundation. More awareness will be provided on problem gambling, and importance will be given to our support services.

Under Mr O'Neill's leadership, the Foundation strengthened its image with several projects. From signage installed on its property to a more enhanced TV and online mediatic presence. TV banner campaigns and social media campaigns aimed to increase preventive measures

to specific target audiences, including children, parents, guardians, individuals and families. The Foundation kickstarted the CSR Programme again with several grants, donations and sponsorships handed out till December 2021. All staff were introduced to a Health Scheme, as the internal premises were also given a much-needed makeover, amongst others.

“Mr O'Neill's first couple of months already bear witness of what is to come”

During the past years, the Foundation started to reap the benefits of the Business Intelligent System (Call Centre Dashboard), implemented as part of the TAKE ACTION Project. The National Gambling Helpline 1777 strengthened its support services to problem gamblers through a two-day course offered internally to all Call Centre Agents. Under the Malta Gaming Authority's watchful eye, addicts could still self-exclude themselves for six months, 12 months, an indefinite period, and an auto-renew option.

This annual report gives prominence to what has materialised and what is to come, but I can't end this Foreword without giving thanks to all the RGF Team for standing firm against all odds. As part of this team, I also look forward to working hand in hand with the Minister for the Economy, EU Funds and Lands Hon. Silvio Schembri and the present Chief Executive Officer of the Malta Gaming Authority, Dr Carl Brincat. I thank them for their continuous support and aid to the social cause.

Introduction from the General Manager

Mr. KEVIN O'NEILL



with the Foundation, my focus points were mostly inward-looking owing to a firm conviction that an organisation has to be in the best of health if it is to offer anything of significant value to society.

Of course, my background in Organisational Behaviour compelled me to ensure this. With a great collective effort, we raised the Foundation's profile several notches, improved our organisational culture, and modernised internal systems and processes to allow us to be more responsive and nimble.

These achievements have placed us in a solid position to execute the Foundation's objectives more effectively and innovatively. I have great aspirations for the Foundation. With a great team behind me, I am more than confident that these aspirations will come to fruition.

I love the well-known philosopher Seneca's take on new beginnings; "Every new beginning comes from another beginning's end". Having spent close to seven years at the Malta Gaming Authority, I witnessed the inception of the Responsible Gaming Foundation back in 2014.

At that point, it had never crossed my mind that I would be in a position to lead this organisation one day. My previous work with the Regulator, where I headed the Player Support Unit, exposed me to the harsh realities of problem gambling through the day-to-day interactions with players from all over the globe. It was here that I developed an acute sensitivity to the plight of the problem gambler.

During these first months of my tenure

The negative perception of gambling accrued over the years is perhaps deserved, and the harm caused by this activity is undeniable. Yet, gambling does offer legitimate and worthwhile endeavours when practised responsibly. It is an appropriate form of recreation for many and another opportunity to interact socially. Yet, like any other recreational activity, we must enjoy gambling responsibly.

For most, this takes the shape of setting limits, both monetary and temporal. Yet, for a small percentage of individuals, gambling is seen as a quick way to riches, only for them to find that it leads to ruin. Therefore, the Responsible Gaming Foundation's mission is now unequivocal: "To provide unparalleled support to individuals suffering from gambling-related harm and raise awareness within our soci-

ety concerning potential harm that excessive gaming and gambling may cause and become a respected organisation in the field of responsible and safer gambling."

“With a great collective effort, we raised our profile several notches, improved our organisational culture, and modernised internal systems and processes to allow us to be more responsive and nimble”

I want to thank those who came forward in the past months and were willing to collaborate on various projects and initiatives. Honestly, the Responsible Gambling space is filled with compassionate and driven individuals who are ready and willing to make gambling safer for everyone.

It is also very encouraging to see gaming operators taking the subject more seriously and understanding that being more vigilant and offering a safer experience to players does not harm their bottom line. Recent studies quite show the opposite.

In closing, I wish to thank all the Foundation's employees for their commitment, the Foundation's Chairperson and Deputy-Chairperson and Board members for their unyielding direction and the Hon. Silvio Schembri for his trust and constant support.



Board members as to December 2021

MR. NEVILLE MANGION

Non-Executive Chairman

MR. PAUL BUGEJA

Deputy Non-Executive Chairman

MR. KEVIN O'NEILL

General Manager / Board Administrator

MS. DORIANNE ATTARD

Call Centre Manager / Board Secretary

MS. ANDREANA FRIGGIERI

Board Member

MS. SILVANA MIFSUD

Board Member

MS. KELLY-ANN PELOW

Board Member

The PURPOSE of the Foundation

To continuously seek funding for the Foundation's causes;

To administer and manage those funds in a responsible and transparent manner;

To promote responsible gambling and gaming;

To encourage the creation of systems that combat excessiveness;

To encourage responsible consumption of gaming and gambling; and

To undergo further research into the gambling and gaming sectors.

What do we stand for?

“ The mission we pursue through the organisation is:

To **create a wider awareness** of the extent, possible causes and consequences of problem gaming and gambling in Malta and Gozo with a view **to preventing it** and **to provide the necessary support** and advice to problem gamblers and their dependants in their recovery efforts.

”



How do we do this?

WE CREATE AWARENESS by embarking on a national advertising campaign which includes all media platforms: Different types of social media, TV and Radio. The advertising campaign focuses on making the general public aware of the possibility of a gambling and gaming problem and the risks associated with excessiveness. We also support this through our educational campaign which targets youths and makes them aware of the different dangers that may be found in excessive gaming.

WE PREVENT IT by supporting different organisations that have the aim to promote activities which are alternatives to excessive gambling and gaming. Between 2018 and 2020 the Foundation also embarked on a €1.1 million project part financed by the European Social Fund entitled “Take Action: Against Problem Gambling in Malta”. With the help of this project, the Foundation conducted research which covered the period 2018 and 2019 on problem gambling and gaming in Malta. The Foundation also conducted training to all those entities and stakeholders that on an everyday basis face problem gamblers through their professional line of work. All this for a better preventive program that will later lead to an awareness campaign.

WE PROVIDE THE NECESSARY SUPPORT by having established the Responsible Gaming Foundation anonymous Supportline 1777 which is the first national supportline that is dedicated exclusively to gambling. The Supportline is the bridge between the problem gambler’s silence and help. The Responsible Gaming Foundation is in collaboration with different support entities which contribute to the treatment of the problem gamblers that come to us for help. In addition to the Supportline, we also have an anonymous chatline which runs on the same hours as the Supportline through our website www.rgf.org.mt. Also problem gamblers can come to the Foundation’s offices and self-exclude themselves for a period of 6 months, 1 year, for an indefinite period or auto-renew option from casinos, gaming parlours and bingo halls all licensed with the Malta Gaming Authority.



The Responsible Gaming Foundation’s signage installed mid 2021 on the facade of the office premises in Psaila Street, Birkirkara

Promotional Awareness

FEATURES RESPONSIBLE GAMING



Safe and Secure

Keyne Said of the Responsible Gaming Foundation (RGF) opens up to Ezra Amacher on the organisation's response to Covid-19, what its doing to slow problem gambling among youth and more

What are some of the most significant changes in how the RGF operates today compared to when it opened in 2017? The Responsible Gaming Foundation was founded on the 12th February 2017, by the Malta Gaming Authority in conjunction with the Malta Gaming Industry's Competitiveness and Economic Growth Committee and the Malta Gaming Industry's Social Responsibility Committee. The RGF's primary focus was to provide a platform for the industry to discuss and address the social and economic issues surrounding gaming. Over the years, the RGF has evolved to become a more proactive and strategic organisation, focusing on prevention and early intervention. This has involved a significant increase in the number of staff, the implementation of a new governance structure, and the adoption of a more data-driven approach to its work. The RGF has also expanded its reach, engaging with a wider range of stakeholders, including the public, academia, and other industry bodies. These changes have enabled the RGF to better understand the needs of the industry and the public, and to develop more effective strategies to address the challenges of problem gambling.



IL-FONDAZZJONI TNIEDI R-RAPPORT ANNWALI 2018-2020

Tiehu l-oportunita' biex tiringrazzja lil-tim kollu u lil-partijiet interessati għall-idmha kostanti u għas-sappozz b'zonnju tagħhom



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between the ages of 19 and 24. This is a significant finding, as it highlights the need for targeted interventions to address the specific needs of this age group. The RGF has been working to develop and implement such interventions, with a focus on providing support and resources to young people who are at risk of developing a gambling problem. This has involved a range of activities, including the development of educational materials, the provision of counselling services, and the implementation of self-exclusion schemes. The RGF has also been working to raise awareness of the risks of gambling among young people, through a variety of media channels and community events. These efforts have helped to reduce the stigma associated with gambling problems, and to encourage young people to seek help when they need it.

How has funding for the RGF been impacted by the Covid-19 pandemic? What do you share about the financial outlook of the organisation looking ahead to the rest of 2021?

The Covid-19 pandemic has had a significant impact on the RGF's funding. The organisation has experienced a significant reduction in income from its primary funding sources, which has forced it to reassess its budget and to seek alternative sources of funding. Despite these challenges, the RGF has managed to maintain its core services, and has been able to secure additional funding from a range of sources, including the government, the industry, and the public. The RGF's financial outlook for the rest of 2021 is cautious, but it remains optimistic that it will be able to continue its work and to make a positive impact on the lives of those affected by problem gambling.

Has the pandemic altered how RGF advertises itself to problem gamblers?

The pandemic has led to a significant increase in the number of people seeking help from the RGF. This has been due to a variety of factors, including the increased isolation and stress caused by the pandemic, and the impact of the pandemic on the gaming industry. The RGF has responded to this increase in demand by expanding its services, and by implementing a range of measures to ensure that it is able to provide support to as many people as possible. This has included the implementation of a new self-exclusion scheme, the provision of online counselling services, and the implementation of a new referral system. The RGF has also been working to raise awareness of its services, through a variety of media channels and community events. These efforts have helped to ensure that the RGF is able to provide support to those who need it most.

What strategies does RGF use to target underage and young problem gamblers?

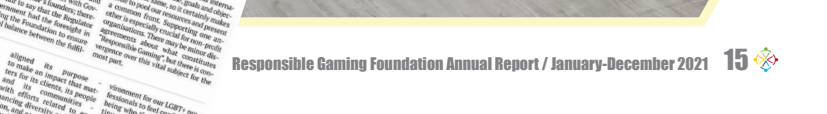
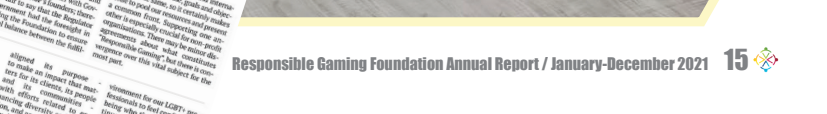
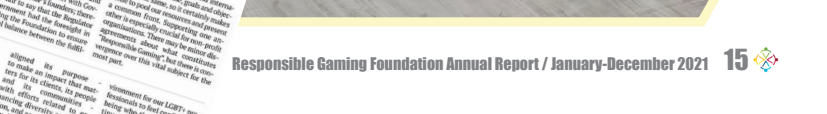
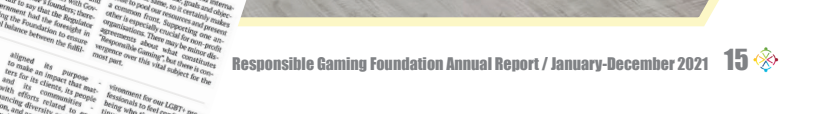
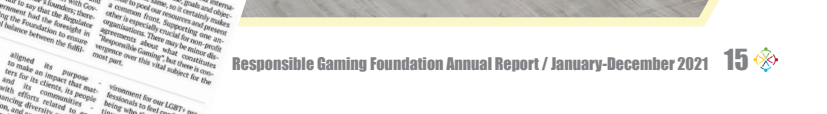
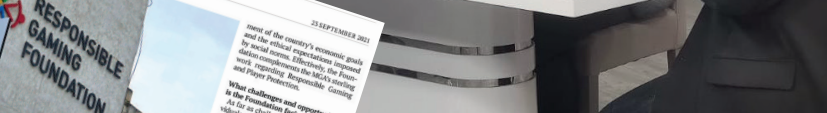
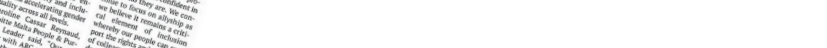
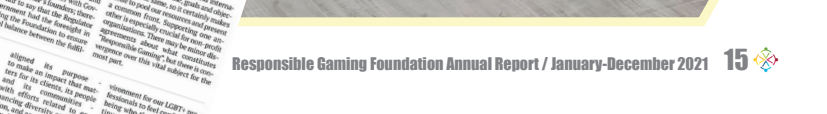
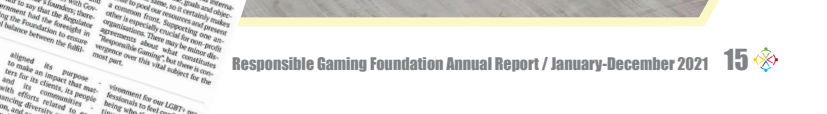
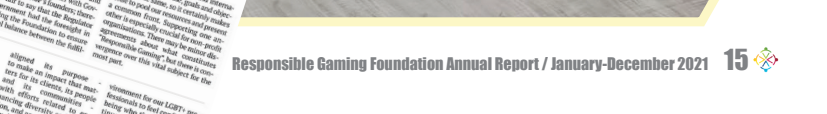
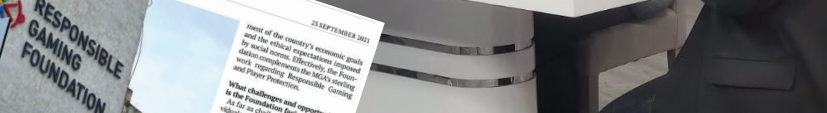
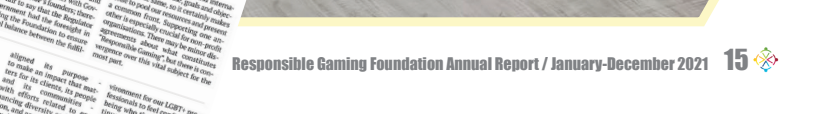
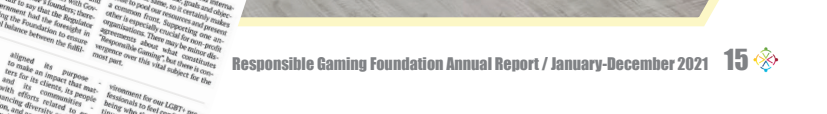
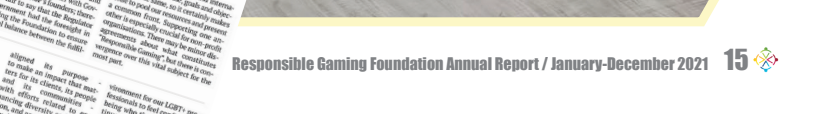
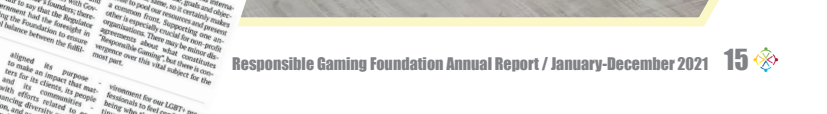
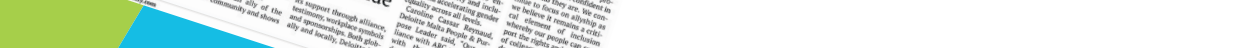
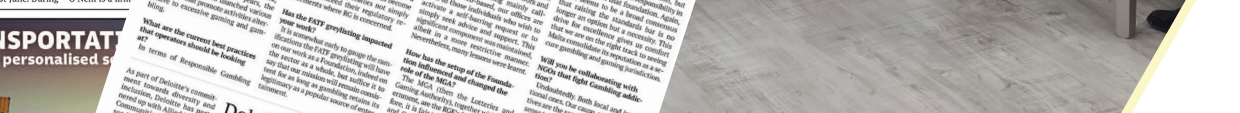
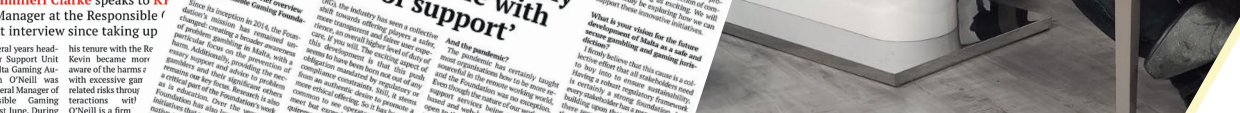
The RGF uses a range of strategies to target underage and young problem gamblers. These include the implementation of a new self-exclusion scheme, the provision of online counselling services, and the implementation of a new referral system. The RGF has also been working to raise awareness of its services, through a variety of media channels and community events. These efforts have helped to ensure that the RGF is able to provide support to those who need it most.

What are some accomplishments you're most proud of over the last year?

Over the last year, the RGF has achieved a number of significant accomplishments. These include the implementation of a new self-exclusion scheme, the provision of online counselling services, and the implementation of a new referral system. The RGF has also been working to raise awareness of its services, through a variety of media channels and community events. These efforts have helped to ensure that the RGF is able to provide support to those who need it most.



Keyne Said



Outreach Advertising: Website, TV Spots and Social Media

In 2021, the Foundation saw to it that its website www.rgf.org.mt was kept user-friendly and alluring to the eye. A constant update, vis-à-vis news material, content and documentation was provided and the website kept its FITA approval as regards to accessibility.

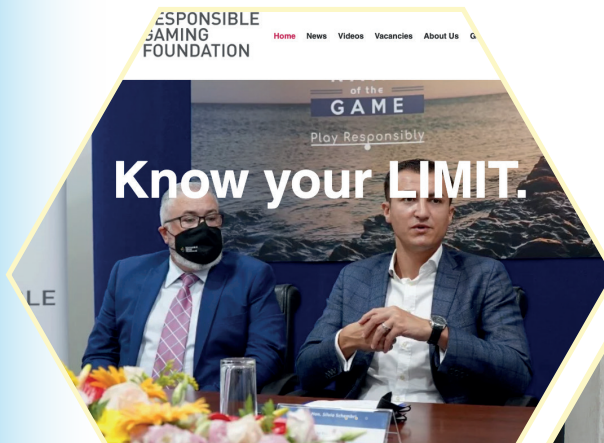
According to MGA's New Gaming Act, our website continued to be listed on igaming websites and also on gambling TV/Radio spots as a reference to local responsible gambling support. Leaflets were distributed to gambling licensed localities and stickers were affixed to gambling machines in casinos and gaming parlours in respect to the same Gaming Act.

RGF's TV Spots were aired, together with live interviews on PBS. Separate agreements were also reached with ONE, F Living and NET TV. Pop-up banners and TV Spots were also aired on Melita's & GO's TSN Sports channels. Animated banners were also published on Gwida.mt. Impressions, reach and engagement was a good one! News features were aired on ONE News and interviews and articles were published on The Malta Business Weekly and on It-Torċa newspaper.

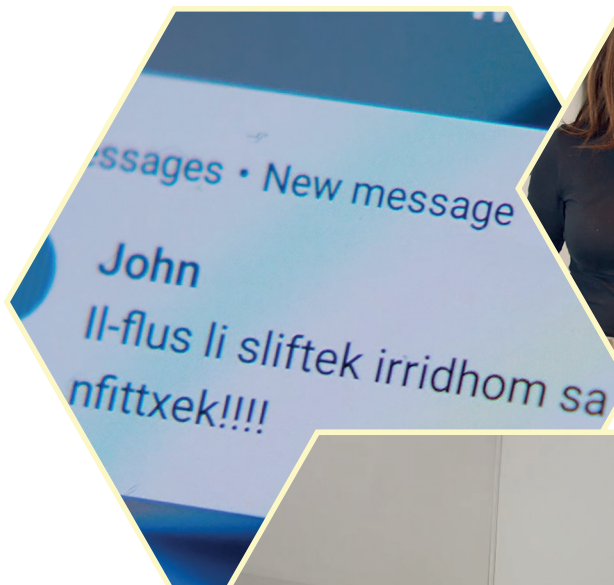
The RGF also presented its Projects Reports to the Ministry for the Economy and Industry for consultation, together with other organisations as regarding the Budget Financial Estimates Speech which usually takes place during the month of October.

Between August and October 2021, the Foundation affixed signage both to the inside and to the outside of its premises to make it easier for our clients to find us. In addition, our Google Business Profile and Apple Maps Profile were updated.

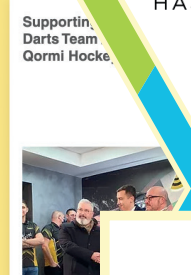
Finally, the Foundation's Facebook and Twitter profiles, together with its YouTube Channel were strengthened and new profiles were created for Instagram and LinkedIn. Social media campaigns on our profiles are ongoing.



OUR WORK



NEWS



RESPONSIBLE GAMING FOUNDATION

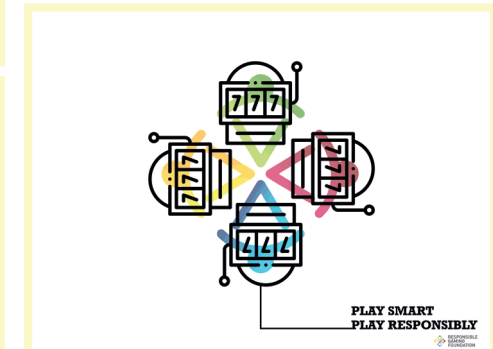
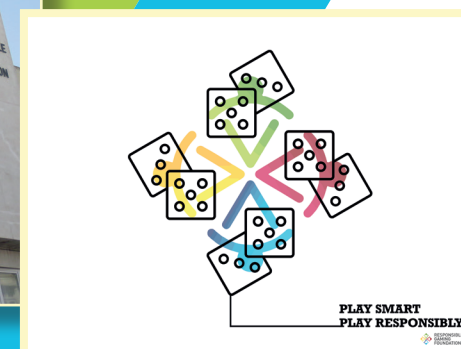
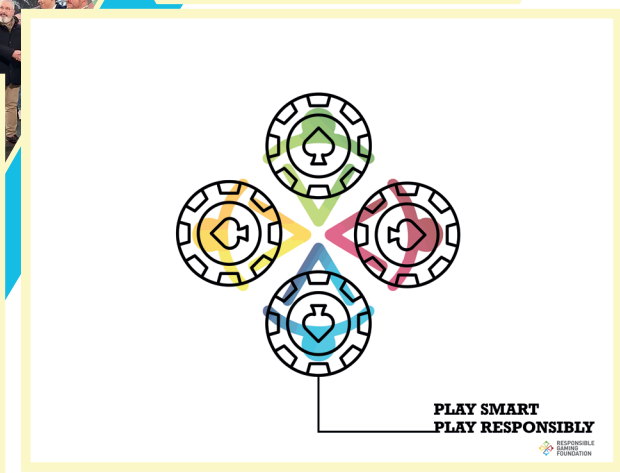
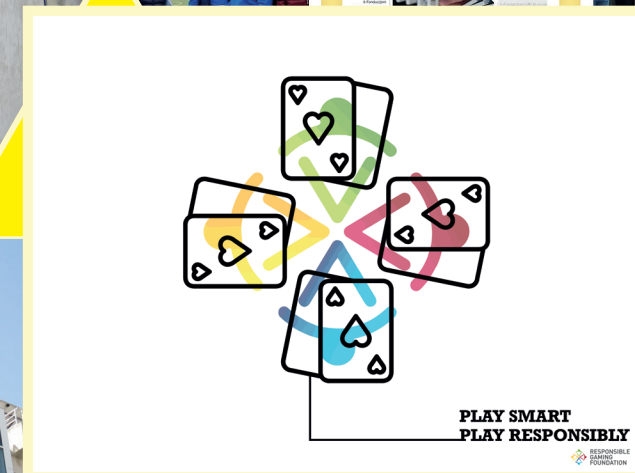
WWW.RGF.ORG.MT



HAS GAMBLING BECOME A PROBLEM?

CALL 1777

ALL INFORMATION WILL BE TREATED CONFIDENTIALLY



Donations & Meetings

Maltco Lotteries supports the RGF by donating another contribution of €50,000



Photo Caption (from left to right): Mr. Kevin O'Neill (General Manager Responsible Gaming Foundation), Hon. Silvio Schembri (Minister for the Economy and Industry) & Mr. Vasileios Kasiotakis (CEO Maltco Lotteries Ltd.)

Maltco Lotteries continued to reaffirm the company's commitment towards responsible gaming by announcing a further contribution to the Responsible Gaming Foun-

ation in Malta whilst launching its campaign "Balance is the Name of the Game - Play Responsibly".

Wednesday 21st July 2021 - Maltco Lotteries, IN-TRALOT's subsidiary in Malta and the operator of the Maltese National Lottery, has once again contributed another €50,000 to the Responsible Gaming Foundation to go towards initiatives to sustain responsible gaming in Malta. This announcement has been made as part of the company's annual CSR programme whilst unveiling the Responsible Gaming Campaign for 2021, "Balance is the Name

of the Game - Play Responsibly".

During a press conference held at Maltco's Head Office in Iklin, the National Lottery operator announced its contribution to the Responsible Gaming Foundation which was conferred earlier that month. This contribution has been announced in the presence of Minister for the Economy and Industry Hon. Silvio Schembri who was present on behalf of the government. Despite the challenging times caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, Maltco Lotteries has remained committed to contribute towards actively promoting, designing and putting into practice responsible gaming principles, whilst protecting the players' well-being.

During the presentation, in his keynote speech, Minister for the Economy and Industry Hon. Silvio Schembri highlighted that the pandemic has had a negative impact, exacerbating the trigger of addiction issues primarily due to emotional turmoil, stress, and a feeling of uncertainty precipitated by this unprecedented event in a number of individuals.

"Thankfully, the Responsible Gaming Foundation seeks to provide professional help for those who fall victims of this devastating affliction. In fact, in order to obtain a better perspective on the situation, the Foundation has carried out thorough research, and now has better detailed information in hand, which together with other stakeholders, will make it

possible to implement a holistic plan. A plan which shall improve care and social services in the field of gambling problems and addictions, as well as raise awareness on responsible gambling. Thus, having these solid foundations in place, the Responsible Gaming Foundation can now move forward with the continuous strengthening and consolidation of their services.

Beyond highlighting the tremendous work done by the Foundation, this demonstrates that industrial players such as Maltco are essential stakeholders in creating an optimum and healthy balance towards responsible gambling.

"Thank you Maltco for never failing to miss a deadline and in being a worthy contributor to the sterling work executed by the Foundation and beyond in the quest towards a safer and more responsible gambling environment", said Minister Schembri.

Mr. Kevin O'Neill, General Manager of the Responsible Gaming Foundation, expressed the Foundation's will to continue strengthening ties with Maltco as a significant partner in the pursuit of promoting responsible gaming. Mr. O'Neill stated that the Foundation will seek to perpetuate the message that enjoying this activity is a possibility with the commitment and goodwill of all stakeholders.

"I know that Maltco's heart is in the right place when it comes to displaying its responsible gaming ethos as evidenced by their participation in RGF's recent training as part of the TAKE ACTION Project to ensure a safe, fair and enjoyable customer experience", said Mr. O'Neill.

Vasileios Kasiotakis, Maltco Lotteries CEO stated that it is the company's mission to ensure that their players are entertaining themselves in a responsible manner. "Our commitment is to provide players with responsible entertainment which encompasses the provision of numerous entertaining and cutting-edge games specifically designed on responsible gaming principles. Furthermore, our agents are receiving ongoing training to devote any required effort, daily, in a continuous endeavour to protect the players from any problem gambling issue and direct them as appropriate to a secure and entertaining gaming experience", concluded the company's CEO whilst also expressing his deep profound gratitude towards the Agents and stakeholders for their sterling work and contribution.

On a yearly basis, in addition to the annual Responsible Gaming contribution, Maltco Lotteries donates a large sum of money to the Good Causes Fund. In 2020 the company donated a total of €573,920, from unclaimed prizes. These contributions are used to aid and support various entities within the Maltese Society.

Also present at the Press Conference were Maltco Lotteries & Responsible Gaming Foundation's representatives and the important stakeholders within the gaming industry.

The Foundation meets up with Hon. Minister Silvio Schembri



During 2020 and 2021, the Foundation did not bow its head in the presence of the COVID-19 pandemic, but further strengthened its social work in favour of those people suffering from the gambling addiction. Although there are no guidelines and far fewer statistics on its impact on gambling over the past two years, the Foundation has still welcomed this challenging time with more commitment and determination.

Against the backdrop of the visit in the first quarter of 2021 by the Minister for the Economy and Industry Hon. Silvio Schembri to the offices of the same entity, the Foundation stressed that it is continuing to strengthen its social function through the Project "Take Action Against Gambling addiction in Malta" under the guidance of the former General Manager and Project Leader Shawn Zammit. A €1.1 million project, partly financed by the European Social Fund. Apart from focusing more on the reality of the gambling addiction in our country, covering 2018 and 2019, the Foundation made it its mission to provide training to different sectors of people who in one way or another make contact with people suffering from the gambling addiction. Thus, part of the second phase of the project, the online educational training programme, specialised for key partners helping individuals suffering from silent addiction, which does not show physical symptoms like other drug and alcohol addictions, continued to be put in place.

Apart from presenting its project plan in front of the Minister, the Foundation stressed that it believes that more awareness is needed through educational campaigns, strengthen further research, offer alternatives to gambling and keep supporting all those who suffer from the gambling addiction in our country.

The Foundation's internal training

Towards the end of 2021, the Foundation conducted its internal training aimed towards the strengthening of its Call Centre Support Services. This training endeavour was divided into two days, where one day was dedicated to talks by social workers Shamik Sheth and Tiziana Camilleri from the Addictions Community Team at Sedqa, by Louis Bellizzi from the Usury Services at Caritas, by Outreach and Therapy Engagement Therapist Christopher Mercieca from the Oasi Foundation and by Head of Counselling and Social Work Bernadette Briffa together with Social Worker Nicholas Triganza from Caritas. The second day was totally dedicated to testimonials presented by problem gamblers and their recovery efforts.

These training sessions provided great insight into the work of other national local entities as regarding problem gambling and also opened a window on experiences suffered by problematic gamblers together with all the repercussions faced along their turbulent circumstances.



Helpline 1777, Chatline, Self-exclusion & Statistics

On the 28th September 2015 the national helpline was introduced. The Helpline 1777 is the first national helpline that is dedicated to dealing and providing support to problematic gamblers and their relatives or close ones. The call-centre is an integral part of our operations because it is the bridge between silence and help for all of the problematic gamblers in Malta as well as their relatives. During these past years, the resources of the call-centre were strengthened with regular training and exercises in order to maintain and improve their standard of professionalism when it comes to dealing with the sensitive calls that the Helpline 1777 receives. A person can also make use of the chatting service on www.rgf.org.mt

SELF-BARRING STATISTICS

2019
Self-barring forms were processed by the Foundation and by the MGA

1,789
registered requests with the RGF
6 months: 841
12 months: 766
Indefinite: 2
Auto-Renew: 180

2020
Self-barring forms were processed by the MGA

1,479
registered requests with the RGF
6 months: 760
12 months: 611
Indefinite: 1
Auto-Renew: 107

2021
Self-barring forms were processed by the MGA

1,389
registered requests with the RGF
6 months: 634
12 months: 566
Indefinite: 0
Auto-Renew: 189

A self-barring form gives the opportunity to exclude oneself from all land based gaming parlours for a period of 6 months, 12 months or for an indefinite period. The auto-renew option automates the barring process so that players do not need to request another barring once the barring period has lapsed. This can however be interrupted at any point and once the effective barring period lapses, the barring is lifted accordingly.

ARE YOU IN CONTROL?
HAS GAMBLING BECOME A PROBLEM?

HELPLINE 1777. WE CAN HELP!



RESPONSIBLE
GAMING
FOUNDATION

www.rgf.org.mt

All information will be treated confidentially

CALL-CENTRE STATISTICS

- From **January 2019 till December 2019:**
- 46% of the callers were relatives or friends of gamblers;
 - 39% of the callers were gamblers;
 - 4% of the callers wanted to get information;
 - 11% wanted to complain about something;
 - 57% were females;
 - 42% were males.
 - 1% wanted to remain anonymous.

- From **January 2020 till December 2020:**
- 40% of the callers were relatives or friends of gamblers;
 - 50% of the callers were gamblers;
 - 7% of the callers wanted to get information;
 - 3% wanted to complain about something;
 - 43% were females;
 - 57% were males.
 - 0% wanted to remain anonymous.

- From **January 2021 till December 2021:**
- 14% of the callers were relatives or friends of gamblers;
 - 36% of the callers were gamblers;
 - 49% of the callers wanted to get information;
 - 1% wanted to complain about something;
 - 66% were females;
 - 29% were males.
 - 5% wanted to remain anonymous.

Have you ever thought whether you have a gambling problem or not?

- Have you ever gambled with the hope of regaining your losses?
- Have you ever missed an important appointment or failed to attend work because you indulged in a gambling activity instead?
- Have you ever been nervous, irritable, or violent when others draw your attention to your involvement in excessive gambling activities?
- Have you ever tried to stop gambling but found it difficult/overwhelming to do so alone?
- Have you ever lied about how much money you actually spend on gambling?
- Has gambling ever led you to borrow money to further finance your gambling activities?
- Have you ever engaged in gambling activities to distance yourself from other problems in your life?
- Have you ever experienced difficulty sleeping due to gambling urges?

If you answered "Yes" to most of the above questions, seek help and phone 1777 (Freephone) or access the chatting facility via www.rgf.org.mt

Not only gambling money, but playing with life and the lives of your significant others

**PHONE
1777
FOR FURTHER
ASSISTANCE**



RESPONSIBLE
GAMING
FOUNDATION



Photo by Michał Parzuchowski on Unsplash



Photo by Kelli McClintock on Unsplash



Photo by Brent Jordan on Unsplash



Photo by Esther Arriaga on Unsplash

The CSR Programme: Events for the year 2021

The Foundation continued to support voluntary organisations that work in the sporting, cultural, musical and educational sectors in their bid to provide alternatives to problematic excessive gaming/gambling and in the same time keep our young ones away from addictions. The Foundation also supported individuals in their professional roles, passed philanthropic donations and also sponsored events.

**Grants
Donations
Sponsorships**

Mtarfa Youth Football Nursery



Qormi Football Club & Nursery



Rabat Ajax Football Nursery



Żebbuġ Baden Powell Scouts Group



The CSR Programme: Amounts (2018-2021)

**Grants
Donations
Sponsorships**

No	Application No	Organisation	Project	Amount
32	BCSRP/2018/032	Sigġiewi Football Youth Nursery	Family Sports Day	€3,530
33	BCSRP/2018/033	Kummissjoni Żgħażaġħ Rabtin Pawlini	Aquatic Games I “Logħob għal Kulhadd”	€3,500
34	CCSRP/2019/034	Kummissjoni Żgħażaġħ Rabtin Pawlini	Aquatic Games I “Logħob għal Kulhadd”	€3,500
35	CCSRP/2019/035	FKNK (MOU)	Pigeon Tracking System	€14,000
36	CCSRP/2019/036	MCCFF (DONATION)	L-Istrina 2019 Donation	€70
37	CCSRP/2019/037	Ivan Grech (SPONSORSHIP)	Sponsorship of Concert	€2,360
Total:				€26,960

2020/2021 COVID-19 REALITY

38	DCSRP/2020/038	Fondazzjoni Patrimonju Kulturali tal-Arċidjoċesi Maltija	Manikata Parish Hall Refurbishment	€4,938
39	DCSRP/2020/039	Naxxar Lions Football Club	Mobile Aluminium Goal Posts	€5,782
40	DCSRP/2020/040	FKNK - Mellieħa	Clay Pigeon Shooting	€5,000
41	ECSRП/2021/041	Mtarfa Youth Football Nursery	Technical Equipment + Coaching Kits	€3,500
42	ECSRП/2021/042	Rabat Ajax Football Nursery	Technical Equipment	€5,000
43	ECSRП/2021/043	Hal Qormi Football Club + Nursery	Infrastructural Works + Football Kits	€5,000
44	ECSRП/2021/044	Żebbuġ Baden Powell Scouts Group	Kayaks	€1,200
45	ECSRП/2021/045	Sigġiewi Football Youth Nursery	Family Sports Day + Technical Equipment	€5,000
46	ECSRП/2021/046	Mtarfa Baden Powell Scouts Group	Infrastructural Works	€1,206
47	ECSRП/2021/047	MCCFF (DONATION)	L-Istrina 2021 Donation	€1,500
Total:				€38,126

TAKE ACTION: Against Problem Gambling in Malta

The Responsible Gaming Foundation continued to strengthen its social function by means of the project entitled "TAKE ACTION: Against Problem Gambling in Malta". A €1.1 million project part-financed by the European Social Fund, managed by the former Project Leader and General Manager of the Foundation Mr. Shawn Zammit.

CONCLUDING THE TRAINING

With the help of this project, the Foundation made it its mission to provide training to different sectors that make contact (directly or indirectly) with problematic gamblers. In fact a training program has been provided which is specialised to those stakeholders that help problem gamblers as part of their profession.

Specialised training was provided to Foundation for Social Welfare Services employees, Responsible Gaming Foundation employees, land-based and remote iGaming companies, front-liners, customer care agents and senior executives including managers to obtaining better knowledge and understanding of social responsibility and to raise awareness of problem gambling and support available.

Training was also offered to professionals such as psychologists, counsellors, social workers, youth workers, and/or care workers, as well as NGO staff members who deal with social matters. The RGF also partnered with the Department for Curriculum Management and started offering training to educators that included guidance teachers and/or psychotherapists who encounter primary and secondary school students on a regular basis, that is at least once a week.



Out of 547 bookings, 531 participants managed to complete the training totalling 39 groups. All 169 training sessions, were completed till the month of May 2021.

78 training sessions were provided online because of the COVID-19 pandemic

The project aims to implement a holistic plan on improving care and social services in the field of gambling problems and addictions, as well as raise awareness on responsible gambling



The Foundation has embarked on a €1.1 million TAKE ACTION Project part-financed by the European Structural and Investment Funds

... it has also successfully concluded the research phase covering problem gamblers, leisure gamblers, non-gamblers and youth leisure gamers



TAKE ACTION RESEARCH

As part of the TAKE ACTION Project, the Foundation also embarked on training for all those professionals who face (directly or indirectly) problematic gambling in their line of work...

- In 2018/2019 youths were the predominant group playing free games for an hour per week or less;
- The National Lottery was still the most popular game in the Maltese islands;
- The majority of youths and nationwide population started gambling between the ages of 19 and 24;
- The most popular games for problematic gamblers were casino games

The full detailed TAKE ACTION Research Report can be downloaded from www.rgf.org.mt

WHAT HAPPENED?

In 2020 the Foundation conducted educational talks to PSCD teachers and published several newspaper articles on responsible gaming ... it also managed to share a number of features on social media about gaming and gambling

WHAT'S NEXT?

In 2021 the Foundation will build on the published research results to strengthen awareness and keep enhancing its day to day services

#playresponsibly
#call1777



THIS TRAINING FORMS PART OF A PROJECT PART-FINANCED BY THE EUROPEAN UNION

A SUCCESSFUL CONCLUSION TO THE TAKE ACTION TRAINING

WE MADE IT OUR MISSION TO PROVIDE SPECIALISED TRAINING TO DIFFERENT KEY STAKEHOLDERS THAT MAKE CONTACT WITH PROBLEMATIC GAMBLERS AS PART OF THEIR PROFESSION:

THE MAJORITY OF SESSIONS WERE PROVIDED ONLINE BECAUSE OF THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC.



Mr. Shawn Zammit
Project Leader and GM of the foundation

THE NATIONAL RESEARCH AND TRAINING WILL NOW LEAD TO AN AWARENESS CAMPAIGN, SO THAT WE CONTINUE TO STRENGTHEN OUR SUPPORT SERVICES AND MAKE THE PUBLIC MORE CONSCIOUS OF RESPONSIBLE GAMBLING AND ASSISTANCE.



AWARENESS

The national research and training will now lead to an Awareness Campaign for which tendering began in 2021, so that we continue to strengthen our services to those that need our support in terms of their excessive gaming and gambling. This will be held in the interest of the general public to become more conscious of responsible gaming and gambling practices.

Future Plans

Revamping the Education Campaign

The Foundation shall revamp its Education Campaign to further reach out more Primary and Secondary students, together with their parents and to make them more aware of gambling/gaming addictions and prevention.

Increasing its Support Structure

The Foundation needs to have a more holistic support structure for those problem gamblers/gamers and their loved ones. Hence a detailed study needs to be put forth as regarding the implementation of inhouse support services, etc...

Strengthening the Call Centre

The Foundation shall better the Call Centre 1777 through the strengthening of its resources through further training to be of better service to those problem gamblers and gamers in need of support.

Entering into more agreements

The Foundation cannot perform in isolation in society. Hence, a coordinated effort between all social entities vis-à-vis problem gambling needs to be put in place through more handshakes and agreements

Starting and concluding the TAKE ACTION Awareness Campaign

The RGF shall start & conclude the TAKE ACTION Awareness Campaign and embark on the past-campaign impact survey as stated in the Project. Hence, we evaluate the mediatic impact of the Campaign and continue to strengthen our services to those in need of support in terms of their gambling and gaming addictions.

Continuing with the promotion of the Foundation in the local sphere

The Foundation will continue make its voice heard and hence further promote its services together with more awareness on responsible gaming and gambling measures to the local sphere with better social media pages and a strengthened online profile, amongst others.

Photo by Joanna Kosinska
on Unsplash

Financial Statements

January - December 2021

Responsible Gaming Foundation
Report and financial statements
Year ended 31 December 2021

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Report of the members of the board

The administrators of the Responsible Gaming Foundation (the "Foundation") present their report and the audited financial statements for the year ended 31 December 2021.

Principal activities

The Foundation administers funds collected for the support of individuals who are affected by excessive gaming or gambling-related problems.

Results

The deficit for the year amounted to € 221,038 (2020: surplus €1,916). During the year, the Foundation's income decreased whereas certain expenses in promotion of the Foundation's purpose have increased, which resulted into the Foundation registering a deficit. The activities of the Foundation are to remain consistent in the foreseeable future.

Foundation administrators

The following have served as administrators of the Foundation:

Mr Neville Mangion - Chairperson
Mr Paul Bugeja - Deputy Chairperson
Ms Kelly-Ann Poplow
Ms Andriana Friggieri
Ms Silvana Mifsud



Grant Thornton

Responsible Gaming Foundation
Report and financial statements
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Report of the members of the board (continued)

The members of the board are responsible for the preparation and fair presentation of financial statements for each financial period in accordance with International Financial Reporting Standards. In preparing these financial statements the members of the board are required to:

- Select suitable accounting policies and apply them consistently;
- Make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- Account for assets and liabilities using the accrual basis of accounting;
- Value separately the components of asset and liability items on a prudent basis; and
- Report comparative figures corresponding to those of the preceding accounting year.

The members of the board are responsible for keeping proper accounting records which disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the Foundation. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the Foundation and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

The members of the board are responsible to ensure that the Foundation establishes and maintains internal control to provide reasonable assurance with regard to reliability of financial reporting, effectiveness and efficiency of operations and compliance with applicable laws and regulations.

Disclosure of information to the auditor

At the date of making this report, the members of the board confirm the following:

- As far as each member is aware, there is no relevant information needed by the independent auditor in connection with preparing the auditor's report of which the independent auditor is unaware, and
- Each member has taken all steps that she/he ought to have taken as a board member in order to make herself/himself aware of any relevant information needed by the independent auditor in connection with preparing the auditor's report and to establish that the independent auditor is aware of that information.

Auditor

The auditor Grant Thornton has intimated its willingness to continue in office.

By order of the board

Mr Neville Mangion
Chairperson

Mr Paul Bugeja
Deputy Chairperson

Registered address
90/91, Second Floor
Psaila Street
Birkirkara BKR 9073

Malta

28 October 2022

Responsible Gaming Foundation
Report and financial statements
Year ended 31 December 2021

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Independent auditor's report

To the board members of Responsible Gaming Foundation

Report on the audit of the financial statements

Opinion

We have audited the financial statements of Foundation for Responsible Gaming Foundation set out on pages 4 to 18 which comprise the statement of financial position as at 31 December 2021, and the income statement, statement of changes in equity and statement of cash flows for the year then ended, and notes to the financial statements, including a summary of significant accounting policies.

In our opinion, the accompanying financial statements give a true and fair view of the financial position of the Foundation as at 31 December 2021, and of its financial performance and its cash flows for the year then ended in accordance with International Financial Reporting Standards (IFRSs) as adopted by the European Union (EU).

Basis for opinion

We conducted our audit in accordance with International Standards on Auditing (ISAs). Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Statements section of our report. We are independent of the Foundation in accordance with the International Ethics Standards Board for Accountants' Code of Ethics for Professional Accountants (IESBA Code) together with the ethical requirements of the Accountancy Profession (Code of Ethics for Warrant Holders) Directive issued in terms of the Accountancy Profession Act, Cap. 281 that are relevant to our audit of the financial statements in Malta. We have fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with these requirements. We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion.

Other information

The administrators of the Foundation are responsible for the other information. The other information comprises the Foundation Administrators' Report shown on pages 2 and 3 which we obtained prior to the date of this auditor's report, but does not include the financial statements and our auditor's report thereon.

Our opinion on the financial statements does not cover the other information.

In connection with our audit of the financial statements, our responsibility is to read the other information and, in doing so, consider whether the other information is materially inconsistent with the financial statements or our knowledge obtained in the audit or otherwise appears to be materially misstated.

Responsible Gaming Foundation
Report and financial statements
Year ended 31 December 2021

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Detailed statement of profit or loss and other comprehensive income

	2021 €	2020 €
Income		
Fixed contribution from MGA	300,000	300,000
Contribution from MGA based on the Gaming Devices Regulations	110,201	132,598
Contribution from Maltco Lotteries Limited	50,000	50,000
EU project fund	-	32,362
	460,201	514,960
Administrative expenses	(690,475)	(521,294)
Finance costs		
Bank charges	(595)	(182)
Lease interest	(3,589)	(4,571)
	(4,184)	(4,753)
Finance income		
Bank interest in relation to EU project fund	-	1
Other operating income		
Donation	-	10,000
Salaries outsourced	13,420	3,002
	13,420	13,002
(Deficit)/Surplus on ordinary activities before taxation	(221,038)	1,916

Responsible Gaming Foundation
Report and financial statements
Year ended 31 December 2021

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Based on the work we have performed, in our opinion, the information given in the report of the administrators of the Foundation for the financial year for which the financial statements are prepared is consistent with the financial statements.

In addition, in light of the knowledge and understanding of the Foundation and its environment obtained in the course of the audit, we are required to report if we have identified material misstatements in the report of the administrators of the Foundation and other information that we obtained prior to the date of this auditor's report. We have nothing to report in this regard.

Responsibilities of those charged with governance for the financial statements

The administrators of the Foundation are responsible for the preparation of financial statements that give a true and fair view in accordance with IFRS as adopted by the EU and for such internal control as the administrators of the Foundation determine is necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

In preparing the financial statements, the administrators of the Foundation are responsible for assessing the Foundation's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters relating to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless the administrators of the Foundation or the Government of Malta either intend to liquidate the Foundation or to cease operations, or have no realistic alternative but to do so.

The administrators of the Foundation are responsible for overseeing the Foundation's financial reporting process.

Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements

Our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements as a whole are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes our opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with ISAs will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of these financial statements.

As part of an audit in accordance with the ISAs, we exercise professional judgement and maintain professional scepticism throughout the audit. We also:

- Identify and assess the risks of material misstatement of the financial statements, whether due to fraud or error, design and perform audit procedures responsive to those risks, and obtain audit evidence that is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion. The risk of not detecting a material misstatement resulting from fraud is higher than for one resulting from error, as fraud may involve collusion, forgery, intentional omissions, misrepresentations, or the override of internal control.
- Obtain an understanding of internal control relevant to the audit in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the Foundation's internal control.
- Evaluate the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of accounting estimates and related disclosures made by management.
- Conclude on the appropriateness of management's use of the going concern basis of accounting and, based on the audit evidence obtained, whether a material uncertainty exists related to events or conditions that may cast significant doubt on the Foundation's ability to continue as a going concern. If we conclude that a material uncertainty exists, we are required to draw attention in our auditor's report to the related disclosures in the financial statements or, if such disclosures are inadequate, to modify our opinion. Our conclusions are based on the audit evidence obtained up to the date of our auditor's report. However, future events or conditions may cause the Foundation to cease to continue as a going concern.
- Evaluate the overall presentation, structure and content of the financial statements, including the disclosures, and whether the financial statements represent the underlying transactions and events in a manner that achieves fair presentation.

Responsible Gaming Foundation
Report and financial statements
Year ended 31 December 2021

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We communicate with those charged with governance regarding, among other matters, the planned scope and timing of the audit and significant audit findings, including any significant deficiencies in internal control that we identify during our audit.

The engagement partner on the audit resulting in this independent auditor's report is Mark Bugeja.

Mark Bugeja (Partner) for and on behalf of

GRANT THORNTON
Certified Public Accountants

Fort Business Centre, Level 2
Triq L-Intornjatur, Zone 1
Central Business District
Birkirkara CBD 1050
Malta

28 October 2022

* These are extracts from
the full financial statements



“

iGaming shall be conducted in a fair and transparent manner, minors and those vulnerable are protected and the practice is kept free from crime and corruption

”

MAIN PRINCIPLE
OF IGAMING
REGULATION IN
MALTA



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