

Meet the Speakers

Safeguarding Consumers' Confidence in Digital Communications



Mr Jesmond Bugeja

Chief Executive Officer, Malta Communications Authority

Jesmond Bugeja is the Chief Executive Officer of the Malta Communications Authority, Malta's regulator for telecommunications, postal services, and key aspects of the digital economy. Appointed CEO in 2019, he oversees the development and regulation of communications infrastructure, spectrum management, market competition, and consumer protection. He previously served as Acting Chairman of the MCA, providing strategic leadership across the Authority's operations and guiding key policy initiatives.

With over three decades of experience in telecommunications, ICT and public administration, Mr Bugeja's career spans technical, managerial and policy roles, including positions at Ericsson in Sweden, Group IT Manager at Gollcher Group and Head of Malta's Passport Office.

He represents Malta in prominent international forums, including the Body of European Regulators for Electronic Communications (BEREC), where he was appointed Vice-Chair in 2021, the European Regulators Group for Postal Services (ERGP), the European Board for Digital Services under the EU Digital Services Act, and, in 2024 he was appointed to the International Telecommunication Union Advisory Body on Submarine Cable Resilience, contributing to the resilience and security of global telecommunications infrastructure.

Mr Bugeja holds a Master's in Leadership and Management, a Postgraduate Diploma in Digital Marketing, and is a certified PRINCE2 practitioner and Microsoft Systems Engineer, further underscoring his commitment to excellence in leadership and technology-driven innovation.

Meet the Speakers

Safeguarding Consumers' Confidence in Digital Communications



Hon. Silvio Schembri

Minister for the Economy, Enterprise and Strategic Projects

Hon. Silvio Schembri is a Maltese politician and academic currently serving for the Ministry for the Economy, Enterprise and Strategic Projects.

Previously, Hon. Schembri was the Minister responsible for the Economy and Industry, and served as Parliamentary Secretary for Financial Services, Digital Economy and Innovation.

Hon. Schembri attained a master's degree in Economy right after graduating with a Bachelors of Honours in Economics from the University of Malta. Hon. Schembri started off his career by working in a private bank, and was later tasked with the role of Supervisor Economist within the Central Bank of Malta. Hon. Schembri had also served as the chairperson of the Responsible Gaming Foundation Malta on a voluntary basis, set up with the aim of helping, educating and preventing problems in relation to gambling.

As a Member of Parliament, Hon. Schembri also chaired the parliamentary committee for economic and financial affairs and worked as an advisor for the then Economy Affairs Ministry. Hon. Schembri was also founding member and general manager of the Gal Xlokk foundation.

During his tenure as Parliamentary Secretary for Financial Services, Digital Economy and Innovation, Hon. Schembri was behind Malta's first Artificial Intelligence Strategy as well as the launch of the AI Certification Programme. Hon. Schembri is also pushing to see that the Esports and Videogame Development sectors continue to grow. Hon. Schembri also played a vital role in seeing that Malta was the first jurisdiction to establish a legal regulatory framework for blockchain services.

During the pandemic, Hon. Schembri played a central role in the Covid-19 economic regeneration plan which comprised of several aid packages to support individuals and businesses.

Currently, Hon. Schembri is playing a key role in Malta Vision 2050, a bold and forward-looking initiative that sets the country's long-term strategic direction. With a holistic approach focused on improving quality of life, fostering innovation, and building resilience, the vision lays out key milestones to be achieved by 2035. Through this initiative, Hon. Schembri is working to ensure that Malta remains competitive, sustainable, and well-prepared to embrace future challenges and opportunities.

Meet the Speakers

Safeguarding Consumers' Confidence in Digital Communications



Dr Alex Agius Saliba

Member of the European Parliament (Malta)

Alex Agius Saliba is a Member of the European Parliament, Deputy Leader of the Labour Party in Malta, and Head of the Maltese Partit Laburista Delegation in the European Parliament.

He also serves as Vice-President of the Socialists and Democrats Group, responsible for Communication and Campaigns and the Digital Agenda.

Elected to the European Parliament in 2019, Agius Saliba has become one of the Parliament's prominent voices on digital policy, consumer rights, and fundamental freedoms. He is the Parliament's rapporteur on major EU files, including the Digital Services Act, the Common Charger, the Right to Disconnect, legislation to prevent child sexual abuse online (CSAM), and the Protection of Persons with Disabilities. Recently, he has been working on an update of the Package Travel Directive (PTD) that aims to increase protection of travellers and the Data Omnibus that aims to simplify European data rules.

He serves on the Committee on the Internal Market and Consumer Protection, the Committee on Petitions, the Committee on Employment and Social Affairs, and the Committee on Civil Liberties, Justice and Home Affairs. He is also co-chair of the Disability Intergroup, the Mental Health Intergroup, and the Biodiversity, Hunting and Countryside Intergroup.

Agius Saliba is the founder of the Democratic Tech Alliance, a cross-party initiative promoting a democratic and rights-based European tech ecosystem. His current work focuses on tackling addictive design and strengthening the protection of children online, advancing a safer digital environment across the EU.

Previously, he worked as a journalist, lawyer, and senior advisor to Maltese Ministers before entering the European Parliament.

Meet the Speakers

Safeguarding Consumers' Confidence in Digital Communications



Ms Yanika Bugeja

Regulatory Compliance Analyst
End-User Affairs, Malta Communications Authority

Having worked at the Malta Communications Authority for 14 years, Yanika has dedicated her professional life to the intersection of regulation and consumer rights.

Currently serving as a Regulatory Compliance Analyst within the End-User Affairs Unit, Yanika plays a vital role in both developing and implementing MCA policies.

Having spent years handling consumer disputes firsthand, Yanika possesses a unique, ground-level understanding of the challenges faced by consumers. She now leverages her frontline experience to shape proactive public awareness strategies. Yanika is passionate about providing the public with the tools and knowledge necessary to navigate the digital age confidently, ensuring a more informed and empowered community.



Mr Mark Stivala

Senior Manager
End-User Affairs, Malta Communications Authority

Mark Stivala leads the Malta Communications Authority's End-User Affairs work, dealing with issues affecting consumers in the telecommunications and postal sectors.

His work focuses on ensuring that regulatory frameworks respond effectively to users' needs and market developments.

In this role, Mark plays a key part in the development and implementation of regulatory policies aimed at strengthening end-user rights and promoting fair competition in the telecoms market. He has also been instrumental in building strong relationships with industry stakeholders and consumer advocacy groups, fostering collaboration that has led to more effective regulation and improved protection for Malta's telecoms users.

Meet the Speakers

Safeguarding Consumers' Confidence in Digital Communications



Ms Laurence Nivot

Manager, Cullen International

Laurence Nivot leads Cullen International's research on consumer protection in Europe, focusing on developments affecting end users of telecoms services.

She coordinates analytical reports and country-by-country comparisons on key policy and regulatory issues, supporting both regulatory authorities and stakeholders in navigating complex EU and national frameworks.

Laurence has more than 13 years of experience in the telecommunications sector and regularly contributes to discussions on consumer rights and telecoms policy.

She holds a master's degree in European law from Aix-Marseille University (France).



Mr Cláudio Teixeira

Head of Digital Policy

The European Consumer Organisation (BEUC)

Cláudio Teixeira is Head of Digital Policy of BEUC, the European Consumer Organisation. Since 2021, Cláudio led BEUC's work on Telecommunications, Artificial Intelligence, and Cybersecurity. Prior to joining BEUC, he served as Junior Legal Attaché at the Permanent Representation of Portugal to the EU during the 2021 Portuguese Council Presidency, contributing to legislative negotiations such as the Digital Markets Act and the Public Country-by-Country Reporting Directive.

Cláudio began his career in competition law at the Portuguese law firm VdA, following a traineeship at the European Parliament and extensive involvement in European youth NGOs. Holds a Bachelor and Master of Laws in EU Law from the University of Coimbra, and an LL.M. in European Law from the College of Europe in Bruges.

Meet the Speakers

Safeguarding Consumers' Confidence in Digital Communications



Mr Ian Agius

Chief of Operations, Malta Communications Authority

Ian Agius is the Chief of Operations at the Malta Communications Authority (MCA). He oversees various regulatory, strategic, and operational initiatives across the electronic communications and postal sectors. His work includes market operations, market modelling, and the development of related regulatory frameworks, as well as contributing to cross-authority programmes. He supports the MCA's strategic objectives in line with national legislation and EU obligations.

Ian's portfolio covers data-driven regulatory analysis, stakeholder engagement, and oversight of various projects aimed at strengthening sector performance and sustainable outcomes for service users. He has represented the MCA in European regulatory fora, participating in discussions on regulatory developments within the evolving digital landscape.



Ing. Deborah Pisani

Senior Manager

Market Operations, Malta Communications Authority

Ing. Deborah Pisani is Senior Manager, Market Operations within the Malta Communications Authority.

Before joining the MCA in 2016, she worked for 16 years within Malta's telecommunications industry, where she was involved in the implementation of major strategic technical projects.

At the MCA, her responsibilities include general authorisation, numbering and number portability, international roaming, universal services, and assessing the regulatory impact of emerging technologies. In recent years, she has led a range of regulatory, technical, and public-facing initiatives aimed at reducing harm from fraudulent communications, strengthening public awareness around scam prevention, and supporting measures that enhance trust in numbers.

Deborah represents the MCA in various international regulatory fora and has served as Vice Chair of the CEPT Electronic Communications Committee's Working Group Numbering and Networks since 2020. She holds a Bachelor of Engineering (Hons) from the University of Malta and a Master of Business Administration from Henley Management College.

Meet the Speakers

Safeguarding Consumers' Confidence in Digital Communications



Ms Catherine Smith

Senior Manager (Emotional Support)
Victim Support Agency

Catherine Smith is a Counsellor and Senior Manager of the Emotional Support Service at the Victim Support Agency, where she provides various forms of emotional support to victims of crime and their families. Her work focuses on supporting individuals as they cope with the multilayered impact of victimisation and the complex emotional and psychological experiences that often follow.

In her leadership role, she oversees the development and delivery of the Agency's emotional support services and participates in outreach programmes aimed at raising awareness and supporting prevention efforts. At the heart of her work is the belief that no one should face the impact of crime alone, and that seeking support is a vital step toward regaining a sense of safety, control, and voice for oneself, for loved ones, and for the wider community.



Mr Ryan Caruana

Group Chief Anti Financial Crime Officer
& Money Laundering Reporting Officer
Bank of Valletta

Ryan Caruana holds the position of Group Chief Anti-Financial Crime Officer and Money Laundering Reporting Officer, in which he drives strategic initiatives, enhances the organisation's resilience, and fosters partnerships for effective financial crime risk management. Mr Caruana is a seasoned professional with an extensive background in law enforcement, investigations, financial intelligence, and financial crime risk assessments.

He possesses a deep understanding of the financial crime landscapes and regulatory frameworks through his experiences and assignments both locally and on the international scene. For the past years, Ryan has been an MLRO and Head of Financial Crime Compliance, ensuring compliance with anti-money laundering and counter-terrorism financing measures. Ryan holds a Master Degree (MSc) in Forensic Accounting from Portsmouth University UK, a Master Degree in Business Administration from Chester University UK, a graduate from the International Compliance Association (ICA) and a Certified Anti-Financial Crime Professional (CAFCP).

Meet the Speakers

Safeguarding Consumers' Confidence in Digital Communications



Mr Alistair Farrugia

Regulatory Analyst, Malta Communications Authority

Alistair is a Senior Regulatory Analyst within the Malta Communications Authority's Market Operations Unit. Since 2019, he has been contributing to the MCA's role as the national policy setter for numbering management, the numbering plan, number portability and trust in numbers. He frequently represents the MCA at local and international levels to advance numbering policy, and to raise awareness on scam communications, particularly where numbering misuse is involved.

Alistair joined the MCA in 2015, initially serving as an Innovation Analyst where he worked to enhance Malta's attractiveness to digital businesses and tech startups. His professional background also includes seven years in management consultancy and project management within the Office of the Prime Minister. With an academic foundation in policy analysis, leadership, and civil service reform, Alistair also served as a visiting lecturer at the University of Malta, teaching units on governance, competitiveness, and innovation.



Mr Geoffrey Bezzina

Chairman Board of Management and Administration
Office of the Arbiter for Financial Services

Geoffrey Bezzina has been the chairman of the Board of Management and Administration at the Office of the Arbiter for Financial Services (OAFS) since April 2016. Geoffrey has built a career in financial services regulation spanning over two decades, holding a position within the Malta Financial Services Authority (MFSA, then known as the Malta Financial Services Centre) since September 1995.

From 2002 to March 2016, he served as the Director of the Consumer Complaints Unit at the MFSA and fulfilled the role of Consumer Complaints Manager. In this capacity, he was responsible for establishing and administering an informal financial consumer redress mechanism until the establishment of the OAFS in April 2016.

Additionally, Geoffrey played a pivotal role in editing and coordinating the Authority's publications and media initiatives to educate consumers on various aspects of financial services.

Meet the Speakers

Safeguarding Consumers' Confidence in Digital Communications



Dr Ian Gauci

Managing Partner, GTG

Dr Ian Gauci is the Managing Partner at GTG and a technology and commercial lawyer with over 25 years of experience in advising governments, authorities, and private clients in the evolving technology and cybersecurity landscape.

In addition to the legal practice, Dr Gauci actively contributes to the sector as an academic, director, author, lecturer, and international speaker. This allows him to bring both depth and perspective to the intersection of law, innovation, and digital transformation.

Dr Gauci is also contributing to the MFSAC Strategy for Financial Services, where he chairs the AI in Fintech working group.



Mr Freddie McBride

Manager, ComReg
and Chair of ECCWG Numbering and Networks

Freddie manages the Numbering Policy and Operations Team in ComReg, Ireland's Telecoms Regulator. His team led on implementing interventions in the Irish market over the last 15 months to help protect consumers from scam calls and texts. Freddie was recently appointed Chair of the Working Group Numbering and Networks within the CEPT Electronic Communications Committee.

Before rejoining ComReg in 2024, Freddie was Director of Policy and Regulation at the European Emergency Number Association in Brussels and served as Deputy Director and Expert in Numbering and Networks at the European Communications Office (ECO) in Copenhagen. He has a MSc. in Computing and Information Systems, a Postgraduate Diploma in Regulatory Governance and over 25 years' experience in the ICT and regulatory sectors.

Meet the Speakers

Safeguarding Consumers' Confidence in Digital Communications



Ms Suzanne Spiteri

Chief Commercial Officer, Epic Communications Limited

Suzanne Spiteri is Chief Commercial Officer at Epic Communications Limited, where she leads the company's commercial strategy across consumer and business markets, including sales, retail, product development and business solutions.

Suzanne has spent nearly a decade within the organisation, gaining extensive experience across product marketing, retail leadership and sales strategy.

She has led large-scale commercial initiatives and high-performing teams, playing a key role in strengthening Epic's position in Malta's competitive telecommunications market and expanding offerings for both consumers and businesses.

In her current role, Suzanne focuses on delivering innovative connectivity solutions and enhancing customer experience across Epic's digital and retail channels, supporting both individuals and businesses as Malta's digital economy continues to evolve.