

Daily Stock Market Review – 6 April 2018

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MSE Equity Price Index drops to just above the 4,400 level

The **MSE Equity Price Index** trended lower for the third consecutive trading session with a decline of a further 0.33% to a fresh four-month low of 4,403.083 points. Activity was broad as sixteen equities traded. During the past week, the MSE Equity Price Index shed 1.59% – the sharpest weekly decline in several months – mostly reflecting the significant drops in the share prices of HSBC (-7.5%) and FIMBank (-11.6%).

Downward pressure on the equity of **HSBC Bank Malta plc** persisted as the share price eased by a further 3.4% to an eighteen-month low of €1.72 across 9,444 shares. Yesterday, the bank issued an announcement making reference to reports in the local media which referred to an article published yesterday by an international news agency speculating on the HSBC Group's future global strategy. In this respect, HSBC Malta stated that it has no information that requires a further company announcement and that its media policy is not to comment on speculative stories.

Within the same sector, **Lombard Bank Malta plc** and **FIMBank plc** also performed negatively today albeit on trivial volumes. Lombard moved back to the €2.36 level (-1.7%) whilst FIMBank eased by 0.9% to an over two-year low of USD0.535. Eligible shareholders of FIMBank are entitled to subscribe to two new shares for every three existing shares at a rights issue offer price of USD0.55 per share.

Malta International Airport plc slipped by 0.8% to the €4.90 level across 15,270 shares after opening at a low of €4.84 (-2%). MIA shares are now trading ex-dividend. Early this afternoon, the airport operator published the March traffic results revealing a 22.5% growth in passenger movements. Overall, during the winter period between November 2017 and March 2018, MIA hosted a total of 1.8 million passengers, representing an increase of 17% over the previous winter period.

Simonds Farsons Cisk plc dropped by 0.7% to the €6.90 level after partially recovering from a fresh sixteen month low of €6.85. A total of 4,305 shares traded.

A single deal of 5,000 shares forced the equity of **Trident Estates plc** back to the €1.90 level (-0.5%).

Low trading activity also took place in the equities of **Malta Properties Company plc**, **Plaza Centres plc** and **Loqus Holdings plc**. MPC and Plaza retracted by 5.7% and 3.8% to €0.462 and €1.02 respectively, whilst Loqus tumbled almost 26% to the €0.10 level.

The other negative performing equity today was **PG plc** with a drop of 3.7% to a nine-month low of €1.31 across 20,000 shares.

Bank of Valletta plc continued to recover some further ground as the equity added another 2% to the €1.795 level on robust volumes totalling 105,932 shares. Next Monday, the equity starts trading without the entitlement to the recently declared net final dividend of €0.052 per share.

Also among the large caps, **International Hotel Investments plc** recaptured the €0.62 level (+1.6%) after recovering strongly from a low of €0.58 (-4.9%). A total of 151,973 shares changed hands.

Grand Harbour Marina plc advanced by 2.7% back to the €0.75 level on a deal of 53,000 shares.

Meanwhile, **GO plc** and **Malita Investments plc** maintained the €3.60 and €0.84 levels respectively on light volumes.

Mapfre Middlesea plc held on to its eleven-month high of €2.10 across 5,861 shares.

The **RF MGS Index** shed 0.13% from its ten-week high of 1,119.448 points to 1,117.985 points. Despite today's drop, the index still closed the week 0.02% higher as heightened uncertainty over the introduction of trade barriers between the US and China, as well as disappointing economic data across the single currency area, kept euro bond yields under pressure.

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Stock markets are volatile and subject to fluctuations which cannot be reasonably foreseen. Past performance is not necessarily indicative of future results.