

## **Daily Stock Market Review – 20 March 2018**

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### **Robust trading activity across local equities**

The **MSE Equity Price Index** edged higher for the third consecutive day with a gain of a further 0.58% to a two-week high of 4,494.158 points. Trading activity was spread across sixteen equities and volumes remained high as €0.8 million worth of shares changed hands.

The bulk of today's trading activity took place in the equity of **Bank of Valletta plc** which maintained the €1.83 level across 149,800 shares. BOV's financial statements covering the fifteen-month period from 1 October 2016 to 31 December 2017 will be published next Friday 23 March 2018.

**Plaza Centres plc** also closed the day unchanged at the €1.02 level after opening at a high of €1.06. A total of 81,600 shares traded. Today, the company published the 2017 Annual Report and Financial Statements for. These showed a 19% increase in EBITDA to a record of €2.68 million. Nonetheless, the net profit figure for the year remained broadly unchanged at €1.27 million as the company incurred higher depreciation, net finance costs and tax charges, mostly in relation to the twelve-month inclusion of Tigne' Place as well as the twelve-month effect of the additional debt taken on by Plaza in 2016 for the purpose of acquiring Tigne' Place. The Directors are recommending an unchanged final net dividend of €0.0294 per share. Shareholders as at the close of trading on Thursday 26 April 2018 will be eligible to receive this dividend on Wednesday 6 June 2018, subject to shareholders' approval at the upcoming Annual General Meeting scheduled to be held on Wednesday 30 May 2018.

Within the same segment, **MIDI plc** retained the €0.346 level on five deals totalling 162,090 shares.

**FIMBank plc** also closed flat at the USD0.605 level after opening at a high of USD0.62. A total of 16,926 shares changed hands. Last Friday, the trade finance specialist announced that it submitted an application to the Listing Authority requesting the admissibility to listing of new ordinary shares in relation to a USD115 million rights issue. FIMBank shareholders as at close of trading today will be eligible to participate in the planned rights issue.

**Malta International Airport plc** (3,800 shares) and **Medserv plc** (1,470 shares) traded flat at €4.94 and €1.12 respectively. The equity of MIA is still trading with the entitlement to the recently declared final net dividend of €0.07 per share.

**PG plc** maintained the €1.38 level after recovering from an intra-day low of €1.35 (-2.2%) on a total of 45,603 shares.

Three deals totalling 10,554 shares left the equity of **MaltaPost plc** at the €1.90 level. On the other hand, MaltaPost's parent company – **Lombard Bank Malta plc** – surged 20% to regain the €2.40 level across 8,266 shares. Last Friday, Lombard announced that it had been informed that the National Development and Social Fund agreed to acquire 49.01% of the issued share capital of Lombard from Cyprus Popular Bank Public Co. Ltd. The transfer of shares is subject to a number of conditions, namely regulatory approvals as well as the procurement of the release of any encumbrance over the shares being transferred.

**RS2 Software plc** extended its recent positive trend with a gain of a further 2.9% to the €1.44 level across 36,875 shares.

Also among the large companies by market capitalisation, **GO plc** climbed 1.1% to the €3.60 level after opening 1.7% lower at the €3.50 level. A total of 13,226 shares traded.

Similarly, **Mapfre Middlesea plc** recovered from an intra-day low of €1.90 (-0.5%) to end the day at the €1.95 level (+2.1%) on three deals totalling 9,902 shares. The equity will continue to trade with the entitlement to the recently announced final net dividend of €0.1054 per share until next Friday 23 March 2018.

Meanwhile, four shares performed negatively today with the worst drop being registered by **Malta Properties Company plc** as the equity tumbled by 4% to the €0.48 level albeit on trivial volumes. Tomorrow, the company is scheduled to reveal its financial performance for 2017.

**HSBC Bank Malta plc** failed to hold on to a high of €1.87 (+0.5%) as the equity retreated back to the €1.85 level (-0.5%) across seven deals totalling 24,435 shares.

**Malita Investments plc** (62,500 shares) and **Tigne' Mall plc** (30,000 shares) ended 1.8% and 2% lower at €0.805 and €0.98 respectively.

The **RF MGS Index** trended higher for the fifth consecutive day with a gain of a further 0.02% to an over seven-week high of 1,118.164 points as downward pressure on euro zone sovereign yields persisted amid heightened volatility across financial markets over the implementation of trade barriers in the US. Meanwhile, reports emerged that the European Central Bank is now considering the pace at which it might raise interest rates when the ongoing asset-purchase programme matures in September 2018.

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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.*