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Alternative Investments and Digital Assets Take Centre Stage at MFSA Conference

The Malta Financial Services Authority (MFSA) has hosted a conference titled “Current Developments in Asset Management – Challenges and Opportunities”, which brought together local and international experts to explore the evolving balance between innovation and regulatory oversight in the asset management sector.

With rapid advances in financial technology, changing market dynamics, and a shifting regulatory environment across the EU, the conference provided a timely platform to assess how the asset management industry can innovate responsibly while maintaining investor protection and market stability.

In his opening address, MFSA Chief Executive Officer Kenneth Farrugia reaffirmed the Authority’s commitment to a regulatory framework that supports sustainable innovation: *“As the industry continues to evolve, our role is to ensure that innovation is matched with appropriate oversight. Malta is committed to remaining agile and aligned with international standards, while encouraging growth through sound governance.”*

A keynote intervention by Professor Filippo Annunziata of Bocconi University explored the regulatory implications of digital assets, while speakers from key European institutions, including Clement Boidard (European Securities and Markets Authority), offered insights into the latest EU regulatory developments and the macroprudential supervision of investment funds. Discussing both the opportunities and potential systemic risks posed by evolving asset structures and cross-border market activity, Naïma Asmane-Boudali - Senior Policy Advisor at the European Commission said: *“This is a defining moment for EU regulation, as the Savings and Investment Union sets the course for a stronger, more integrated financing ecosystem in the EU, driven by simplification and burden reduction.”*

The programme also featured two panel discussions. The first, “Shaping the Future of Asset Management”, examined supervisory priorities, international coordination, and the future regulatory landscape. The second, “Dynamics and Potential of Alternative Investments”, explored the rise of private markets, new fund structures, and associated oversight challenges.

The conference also featured contributions from Mr Ian Meli, Dr Gerd Sapiano and Ms Claire Tanti concerning fund structures and the MFSA’s supervisory approach. Mr Ian Meli, MFSA’s Head of Investment Services Supervision, stated *“The MFSA is committed to organising such events and engaging high calibre industry experts, academics and policy experts to discuss the*

latest developments within the asset management sector. These discussions enable Fund Managers to gain the necessary knowledge and expertise to address future challenges and be in the know of developments driven by the EU regulatory framework.”

The MFSA will continue to foster engagement with its stakeholders, ensuring Malta remains a well-regulated, forward-looking jurisdiction at the heart of the global investment landscape.

About MFSA

The Malta Financial Services Authority (MFSA) is the single regulator of financial services in Malta, covering banks, insurance companies, investment services, trusts and pensions. In 2018, the MFSA became the first European regulator to develop a framework to regulate virtual financial assets. The MFSA's mission, as enshrined in its Strategic Statement, is to enhance its position as an independent, proactive and trustworthy supervisory authority with the main purpose of safeguarding the integrity of markets and maintaining stability within the financial sector, for the benefit and protection of consumers. The MFSA licenses over 2,000 entities to operate in the financial services sector.

