

ALUMNI talk

Life after University can lead you to Bahrain or other worlds

The law covers the globe

DR JEAN SCERRI talks to us about his journey from Malta to Bahrain

THE LAW IS AN ASS — as the cliché goes — and yet it is ubiquitous, since everything we decide to do or not do has legal implications. Thankfully, we do not bother to think about the legal consequences of everyday routine activities. For example, this magazine is covered by copyright law which in a nutshell means that no part of it can be copied without the author's permission. To yours truly, it has a more financial bearing — it gives me a job.

I currently work in Bahrain as a senior legal advisor in competition and telecoms to the Kingdom's Telecommunications Regulatory Authority. Why Bahrain I hear you ask? Bahrain is an island state with causeways linking it to Saudi Arabia and by plane it is only an hour away from Dubai. Bahrain is seen as the most liberal of the Gulf States and its communications regulatory framework is probably the most advanced. It benefits from the most competitive market within the Middle East, and has multiple mobile and fixed operators. My challenge is to transform the regulatory landscape into a more competitive system — an exciting challenge.

My family and I moved to Bahrain in late December and I have immediately been immersed in some very important projects. They include the post 3G auction for frequencies which enable superfast broadband



on mobile devices. In Bahrain, subscribers to communications services can already watch their favourite TV programmes (including live sports) on their tablets and mobile phones in nearly all parts of the country — the auction should take quality and coverage a step further.

My journey to Bahrain commenced in September 1991, when I entered the University of Malta to read law at the ripe old age of 17. At the time, the law course lasted six years and culminated in an LL.D. (Doctor of Law) degree. The course covered the more traditional subjects (civil law, criminal law, commercial law). European law had just been introduced and competition law was a mere subset of it. Telecommunications law

was, if I remember well, not covered at all. Prior to Malta joining the European Union the focus was understandably on these core subjects.

After completing my LL.D. degree, I decided to study European Law. Consequently, I enrolled into the *Mag. Jur.* (Master of Law) course at the University of Malta where I focused on competition and telecommunications law, partly since I was working at Maltacom plc (the predecessor to GO). When I moved to Melita Cable plc in 2001, I set up its legal department and eventually took on the role of Company Secretary. At Melita I took up further studies, this time at Queen Mary College, University of London and graduated with an LL.M. in Computer and Communications Law. At Melita, I was heavily involved in competition and regulatory issues at both national and European levels which exposed me to many invaluable experiences. After seven highly enjoyable and eventful years I was appointed as Head of Regulatory Affairs for Southern Europe and Ireland at Cable and Wireless plc, which is a FTSE100 company based in Bracknell, UK. Eventually I also took care of the company's regulatory issues for Africa and Middle East. Following a two year stint as Chief Officer (Legal, Risk & Compliance at MITA), my yearning for a new challenge has now taken me to the Middle East. ●