

EUROPA 1980 ISSUE

Date of Issue	29th April 1980.
Values	8c and 30c.
Stamp Size	43mm x 21.5mm.
Art Designer	Vincent Apap.
Printers	Printex Limited Malta.
Process	Lithography.
Perforation	13.3 x 13.8.
Watermark	Maltese Crosses pointing sideways.
Paper	Chalk Surfaced.
Gum	P.V.A.

Colour

The colour of these stamps was produced by using Dark Green and Brown for the 8c stamp and Dark Red and Brown for the 30c stamp.

Designs

The 1980 "Europa" stamp set, consists of two stamps, which in accordance with the subject chosen by the Conference of European Postal and Telecommunications Administrations, "Famous People", depicts two distinguished Maltese, Ruzar Briffa (8c stamp), and Mikiel Anton Vassalli (30c stamp). The profiles were modelled by the well known Maltese sculptor Vincent Apap who also designed the stamps. Ruzar Briffa (1906-1963), a poet, was by profession a physician. He specialised in dermatology, studying in London and India. He was one of the founders of the University Maltese Literature. In his verse, he expresses his love for his country, his affection for the family and his concern for suffering humanity.

Mikiel Anton Vasalli (1764-1829), was a scholar and a patriot. He was a great believer in the Maltese language and wanted the people of Malta to study their own language and use it as a means of education. He was one of the first Maltese to think of his country as a nation. Maltese historians in the past either omitted his name or made just a casual reference to him. Vassalli's full stature has now been acknowledged and he is considered as the man who unfurled the banner of Maltese freedom for the first time, paving the way to other patriots who followed in his footsteps.

This is the tenth Europa set issued by the G.P.O. and is again being printed in small Panes of ten stamps. Both values are of the horizontal format. Each Pane is divided into twelve spaces, four rows of three. The first space of the top row is used for the wording "Europa 1980", and the first space on the second row is used for the CEPT symbol plus an open book and pen in the 30c Pane and a scroll and branch in the 8c Pane. The value of a whole Pane of stamps is seen in the middle of the top margin and printed in the same colour as that of the top disc in the colour checks of each value.

Colour checks in the form of coloured discs, 3mm in diameter are seen in the right hand margin of each Pane, next to the last stamp of the top row. The colours from top to bottom correspond to the colours used for Pane numbers from left to right on all Panes of both values.

Each Printed Sheet, of each value, consisted of nine Panes of ten stamps, "A" to "I".

Plate/Pane Numbers

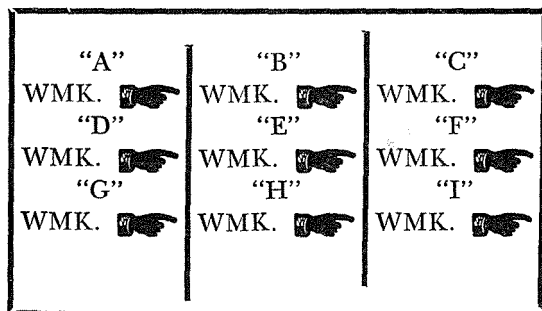
These are seen under the first stamp of the bottom row, in each Pane of both values.

8c = 1A x 3 up to and including 11 x 3.

30c = 1A x 3 up to and including 11 x 3.

Perforation of Margins

The top margin of Panes "A", "B" and "C" of both values are imperforate, whilst the top margin of Panes "D", "E", "F", "G", "H" and "I" are fully perforated. The left hand, right hand and bottom margins of all Panes from "A" to "I" in both values are also fully perforated.



The Printed Sheet of each value, before cutting into Panes, would have looked as shown on left. The perforator ran from top to bottom. Looking at the Printed Sheet as shown, stamps of both values would be seen the right way up, hence why watermark in individual stamps is sideways.

Imprint Blocks

The Imprint "PRINTEX LIMITED MALTA", is seen under the last stamp of the bottom row. Letters are 1mm high and again printed in the same colour as the top disc of the colour checks. An Imprint Block of four will not include the colour checks.

A special hand-postmark was used for cancellation on the first day of issue. It is inscribed "L-Ewwel Jum tal-~~H~~rug — Europa 1980 — Malta — 29.4.80" and the name of the respective locality. The CEPT symbol is also incorporated in the postmark.

This set will remain on sale up to Saturday, 27th December, 1980, unless stocks are previously exhausted.

This set established a new sales record. On the first day of issue, up to 12.45 p.m. sales amounted to £M372,007, which is the highest sale for one day of any stamp set. The previous record was held by the Europa set of 1978 when £M284,137 worth of stamps were sold on the first day of issue.