



Reducing Our Carbon Footprint – FES Human Resources Goes Paperless

Preparations for Skolasajf 2021 are at their peak at the moment, within all the department at the Foundation for Educational Services (FES). A major sector of this work is the recruitment and engagement process of approximately 1800 new employees with FES. This has motivated the HR department to embark upon a project aimed at reducing its collective carbon footprint, and protect its stakeholders in this COVID-19 pandemic.

Following meticulous consultations with the legal counsel, FES transformed its contract signing process from a physical one into a Digital Cloud-based system. This consists of digitally fillable contracts and forms, legalised by digital signatures of the respective parties mentioned in the contracts.

This project's environmental and health benefits include:

- The reduction in the use of hard-copies of the contracts (well over 30,000 sheets), thus helping to decrease the clearing of forests and of carbon-capturing trees
- Reducing the use of photocopiers (including toners) and filing material, all of which use precious metals, plastic, and energy
- Reducing the fuel used to transport materials and paper, as well as the fuel used by 1800 employees to commute to Head Office and back, for the sole purpose of signing their contract for employment
- Reducing the contagion factor in these days of significant pandemic concerns, as less people are attending the same public space at Head Office, thus contributing to Malta and Gozo's victory in the battle against COVID-19

Apart from the green benefits, going paperless has an encouraging list of benefits that impact the bottom line of the Foundation itself. Being a public entity, it is commendable that it seeks to reduce expenditure for better use of the public funds that have been entrusted to its use. Among these benefits one may list:

- Reducing the costs associated with the printing of contracts
- Less wear and tear on the printers thus minimising costly maintenance repairs
- Employees can focus on other tasks rather than having to physically prepare, schedule, assist and process the engagement process

- Increased efficiency through the digitization of paper-based documents, providing better ease of access to information

Another benefit resulting from this change in operation is related to better information security. Digital cloud-based storage replaces paper-based storage and filing systems, thus increasing the employee's data protection. There is also the added advantage of automated backups, which eliminate the risk of data loss.

Eliminating these costs and time-consuming tasks results in savings and planning time that FES can use in developing other projects aimed at furthering its carbon footprint reduction. Initiatives like these, help to make FES a sustainable entity that strives to protect the planet's finite resources, which we all need to be able to operate and thrive.