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Young eco winner
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130 police recruits graduate
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Many 'are struggling' to pay bills

Ivan Camilleri
Brussels

Perceived poverty in Malta is on the rise and many are finding it hard to pay their ordinary bills on time, according to an EU-wide survey published in Brussels.

Sixty-one per cent of the Maltese surveyed admitted struggling to make ends meet, particularly when it came to paying bills, such as for water and electricity consumption, and effecting mortgage payments on time, the Eurobarometer study conducted last month found.

The situation is most taxing for 31.8 per cent of those who said they

were "constantly struggling" and 29 per cent said they were "struggling". On the other hand, 28.5 per cent said they had no difficulty paying their bills promptly.

According to the survey, 7.2 per cent of Maltese said they had fallen back in paying some of their bills and 13 per cent of households admitted to having had some difficulties buying essential items such as food.

Although the situation in the other EU member states is not rosy either, since many are feeling the pinch of the economic crisis, only 48.7 per cent said they were struggling.

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Chief Justice for Human Rights Court

Chief Justice Vincent de Gaetano has been elected to serve as judge at the European Court of Human Rights, sealing a choice that has been four years in the making.

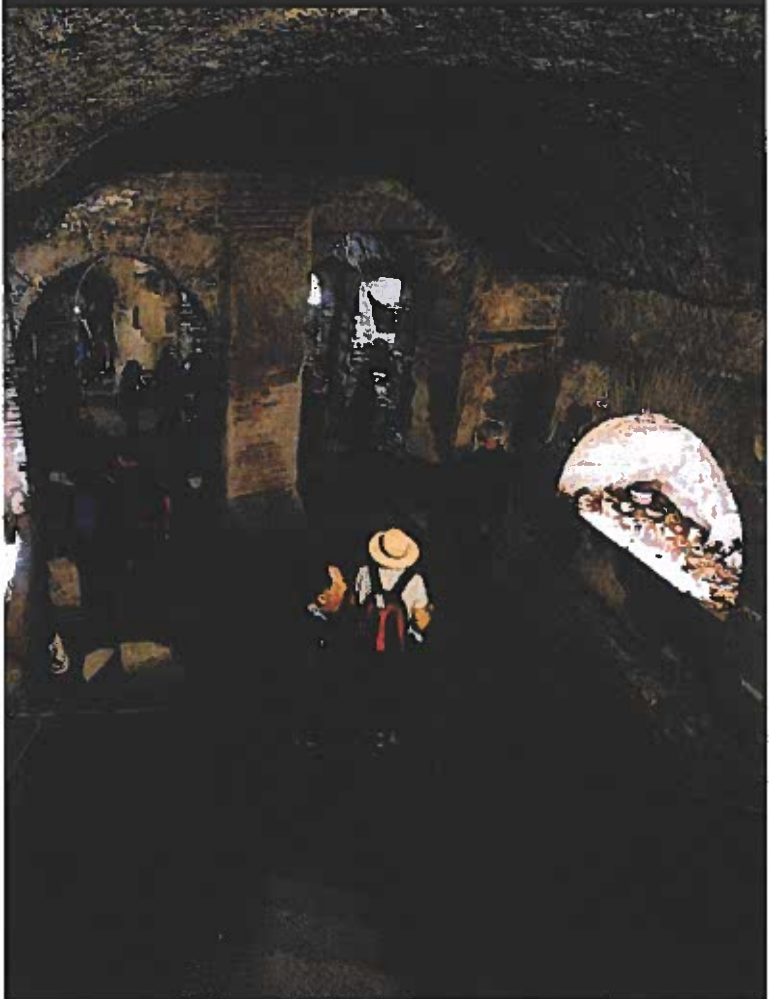
The Chief Justice was clearly the favourite, clinching 114 votes at the Parliamentary Assembly of the

Council of Europe with the other nominees, Madame Justice Abigail Lofaro and Mr Justice Joseph Filletti, getting 61 and 23 votes respectively.

A new Chief Justice will now have to be appointed.

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Icon



Visitors walking around the Cubicle of Apostles in the newly-restored part of the Roman catacombs of Santa Tecla, yesterday. Archaeologists discovered what they called "the most ancient known icon", a 4th-5th century icon of the Apostle Paul, during restoration work at the catacomb on Via Ostiense. Photo: Andreas Solaro/AFP



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