



**GOVERNMENT OF MALTA**  
MINISTRY FOR THE ECONOMY,  
EUROPEAN FUNDS AND LANDS



17 November 2022

*Ensuring the Skills*   
**for Future Competitiveness**

# *“Skills for Impact – within the Manufacturing, Technical & Ancillary Services ”*

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# The problem

- shortfall of skills
- serious risks to their business



# The Cause

- Covid brought about a change in work and new expect life balance.
- Malta's economy is widely diversified
- There is a disconnect between the Education Sector and Industry
- Trade schools which were closed have not been adequately replaced
- Apprenticeship schemes are also very rare
- Besides, technical skills, Maltese workers lack soft-skills, pride and proper attitude towards work



# The Cause



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- Public sector attracting and employing people from the private sector offering more flexible work arrangements.
- There are bottlenecks in the permitting processes for foreign workers.
- Many sectors lost up to 50 per cent of their workforce
- Negative perception of work experience in certain sectors such as hospitality, maritime, manufacturing, transport
- Malta is become less attractive as a place of work for all categories of workers across the board.

# The Mission Statement

- **RELEASE** idle resources in public sector to business.
- **PROMOTE** careers not Jobs
- **CONNECT** Academia to Industry
- **INVEST** in training and mentorship
- **BELIEVE** more in Work-based Learning
- **CAPITALISE** on Digital Skills,
- **STENGTHEN** the regulators' resources
- **ENCOURAGE** work beyond retirement
- **ENHANCE** career guidance structures
- **INSTIL** attitude and soft skills in our children.
- **IMPROVE** Malta's attractiveness as a place of work
- **PRIORITISE** risk assessment for future competitiveness
- **ENSURE** business stability through good governance



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# The Solution/s

# Short Term – ID Malta



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- ID Malta should hold regular communication with recruitment agencies
- Increase dialogue with stakeholders and temping agencies
- Student/Work visas should be issued for at least 6 months
- Establishing a database/register where employers can search for employees



# Short Term – Jobsplus



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- Jobsplus name should be changed to Career+ rather than jobs and therefore there was an agreement that we should start to **PROMOTE careers not Jobs**
- Matching of workers with vacancies issued by businesses should be improved
- Increase enforcement on individuals on Registry

# Short Term – Enforcement



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– Quality checks

# Short Term – Encouraging Foreigners to Settle in Malta



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- Improving Malta's image as a Place of Work (improving the environment, promoting diversity and multiculturalism, etc.)
- Offering flexible solutions and improving working conditions
- Developing a strategy on the number of people needed by industry
- Enhance relocation packages offered to foreign workers to match those available in Ireland and other MS
- Continuous training and support

# Short Term – Others



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- Changing the perception of the Maltese with regards to working in the hospitality, tourism and retail sectors.
- Government to offer more generous conditions to encourage people of pensionable age to remain in employment
- Introduce a scheme to encourage people employed unproductively in the Public Sector to shift to the private sector
- Creating a common ground to measuring the gap in the industry
- Keep the Specialised Training within Companies

# Long Term – Education

- Implementation of strategies and policies in education
- Increase discussion between academia and industry and this means that we definitely need to work harder to be able to **CONNECT Academia to Industry**,
- Awareness sessions for Guidance Teachers
- Including certain subjects as part of the curricula e.g., basics of economics, STEM, maritime issues
- Include training on soft-skills, interview-skills, decision-making, leadership and overall employability and therefore it's imperative to **INVEST in training and mentorship**

# Long Term – Education

- Placements & Internships
- Enhance MCAST's perception and profile
- We should **BELIEVE more in Work-based Learning**
- Partnership and Mentoring
- Company visits for primary and secondary students
- Awareness raising campaign e.g., STEM subjects for women, explaining what the jobs entail

# Long Term – Education

- Studying Future Trends
- What skills are needed in the future? Are courses being developed according to industry needs? E.g., Malta is pushing for hydrogen, but who is studying hydrogen?
- Accepting that locals do not want to do certain jobs – devising a strategy to attract foreign workers and keep them in the industry

# Other Observations – Digitalisation



- embrace technology and digitalisation as a means to (a) neutralise the effects of loss of productivity due to shortage of manpower, (b) enhance competitiveness and (c) optimise output from other resources including energy.
- There is a realisation that the country is facing the risk of a “new” skills gap in terms of digital skills and business re-engineering capabilities. We definitely need to **CAPITALISE on Digital Skills,**
- The country needs to distinguish between shortage of basic and specialised skills because the solutions to address both typologies of gaps are different. Special focus needs to be placed on digital skills because these are enabling talents relevant to all sectors as these undergo their necessary transformations.
- A Skills Census must be embarked upon to shed light on the current mobilisation of the sole national resource



# Other Observations – Strategy & Stakeholders



- Holistic economic blue-prints and industry strategies are required with ample nationwide visibility to guide students and stakeholders in their decisions and channelling of resources.
- We should **STRENGTHEN** the regulators' resources
- Stakeholders need to encompass forward looking industrial strategies
- It is widely felt that more consolidation amongst stakeholders is required. There is a general realisation that much research and effort is undertaken with the mobilisation of people and other resources but fragmentation of same hampers synergies, effectiveness and results.
- Some stakeholder representatives lamented the culture in this country whereby results are not pursued to the full.

# Other Observations – Strategy & Stakeholders



- Other representatives and selected MPs suggested a “doing more with less approach” with the support of digital tools, business re-engineering and better management. It was commented that economic expansion did not necessarily require additional people and that the current approach (of throwing people at solving capacity issues) was exacerbating the economic over-saturation problem.
- Future progress needs to be based on quality and increased value-added which can only be achieved by smart investment in technology
- Post-Covid, workers are giving much more weight to flexible work arrangements (often before salary considerations)
- People need to be better incentivised to work beyond pensionable age and therefore we need to **ENCOURAGE work beyond retirement**. The country needs to ensure that the knowledge, experience and skills of these people is appropriately transferred to new generations



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# Your views?