

Comments on the upcoming Council Recommendation on Digital Education – Enabling factors for success

The Malta Business Bureau welcomes the outlined proposal for a Council Recommendation on “Digital Education – Enabling factors for success”. At this point in time, all EU member states are on a path of recovery and rebuilding their economies with the aim of attaining future resilience. Access to digital education which is provided on equal footing between regions and member states thus comes at a time when digitalisation is already at the forefront of the European agenda. Creating means and ways for successful digital education is the necessary means to an end.

In achieving “accessible, high-quality and inclusive digital education”, it is important to have the input of the key players, such as social partners, from the initial stages of planning on how to introduce digitalisation programmes, to the implementation stages of the programmes, as well as their evaluation. Educators, trainers, service providers as well as business representative organisations need to be consulted at every step of the way. A harmonious approach among all affected players is crucial in addressing gaps in the education system and to ensure that momentum is not lost once teaching plans are set and that educators have the right tools and training in successfully executing their curricula.

A focus on digital education as highlighted in the Commission’s Call for Evidence document is the way forward in driving economic growth, job creation and competitiveness’. To make sure that these efforts are working towards such goals, it is important that those shaping the programmes for digital education are well aware of the needs of businesses. Having such awareness will help focus training and resources that avoid gaps between education and the industry’s current and future needs. Public policy makers and private stakeholders also need to take into consideration the motivating factors for learners and educators to engage in such educational programmes. Efforts for digital education can be more effective if there are tangible opportunities that learners can access once they join or advance in the workforce.

Educators need to be motivated and supported in adapting their teaching methods towards digital education. Financial and technical support must be sought from the start as well guidance by experts for education providers. The programmes need to cater for teaching that fosters a hands on and problem–solving approach, rather than a book-heavy one, thereby making sure that skills learned can be retained, enhanced and applied in a real labour market context.

We are already living in a digital age. It is therefore important to match this reality with even more opportunities for learners to have digital education available on equal footing with the needs of employers and the different economic sectors. Assessing the needs and gaps in the

education system, coupled with the right learning approach and having the right tools to achieve this, is key for the way forward.

For more information the MBB also invites the European Commission to view '[Education for the Future](#)', a comprehensive document by the Malta Chamber which addresses basic prerequisites in this area which are very important for business.

The Malta Business Bureau is the EU advisory organisation for the Malta Chamber of Commerce, Enterprise and Industry, which represents three economic groups (manufacturing, importers – Distributors – Retailers and Service providers), and the Malta Hotels and Restaurants Association, which represents the hospitality sector. The MBB is also a partner of the Enterprise Europe Network.

