National Skills Council

National Skills Council

POLICY INSTRUMENT

Malta

Description

Country

Malta

Focus area

MAIN SKILLS ASSESSMENT/ANTICIPATION INITIATIVE

The National Skills Council (NSC) has the responsibility for identifying skills gaps in the economy and recommending remedial actions. The National Skills Council brings together representatives of the University of Malta (UoM), enterprises, public and private bodies, research centres, educational experts, and civil society. The NSC not only takes stock of existing skills needs, but also informs the education system on whether it is producing the skills the economy needs. It works with a wide range of stakeholders and conducts research.

Link

https://education.gov.mt/en/Pages/National-Skills-Council.aspx

Implementation level

NATIONAL

Legal base

Setup by means of Subsidiary Legislation 327.547 of the Laws of Malta.

Starting period

The NSC was launched at the end of 2016.

Perspective

It is actually a core skills assessment & anticipation initiative in Malta, designed to identify and respond to current and ongoing skill mismatches.

Policy area

EDUCATION

TRAINING

EMPLOYMENT

Funding

FUNDED BY NATIONAL GOVERNMENT

Skill mismatch

Skill mismatch target

OVERQUALIFICATION (INDIVIDUALS' QUALIFICATIONS/CREDENTIALS ARE ABOVE THEIR JOB'S NEEDS)

UNDERQUALIFICATION (INDIVIDUALS' QUALIFICATIONS/CREDENTIALS ARE BELOW THEIR JOB'S NEEDS)

SKILL UNDERUTILISATION (INDIVIDUALS' SKILLS ARE NOT WELL USED IN THEIR JOBS)

SKILL SHORTAGES (EMPLOYERS CANNOT FILL THEIR VACANCIES DUE TO A LACK OF SKILLS IN THE LABOUR MARKET)

SKILL GAPS (WORKER'S SKILLS ARE BELOW THE LEVEL OF PROFICIENCY REQUIRED BY THEIR EMPLOYERS AND JOBS)

SKILLS OBSOLESCENCE (SOME OR ALL OF AN INDIVIDUAL'S SKILLS ARE NO LONGER RELEVANT TO THE CURRENT EMPLOYER OR IN THE LABOUR MARKET GENERALLY)

Skills matching focus

OTHER

All of the above. The NSC's aim is to review the past and present available skills within the labour work force and evaluate the changes required to meet current and future needs. It therefore seeks to minimise the skill gaps that exist in some of the demanding and rewarding sectors such as the digital, technical and financial sectors where Malta has, and can maintain, excellence. It is the council’s task to recommend policy changes to the government that would reduce these gaps and prepare the labour force with the right skills, to meet the future challenges.

Skills delivered

BASIC LITERACY AND NUMERACY SKILLS

BASIC DIGITAL SKILLS

MORE ADVANCED DIGITAL SKILLS

GENERAL EMPLOYABILITY SKILLS (TEAM WORKING, COMMUNICATION, ETC.)

GREEN SKILLS

JOB SEARCH SKILLS

CAREER MANAGEMENT SKILLS

Methods

Methods

EXPERT PANELS

As the NSC brings together a wide range of stakeholders under one roof, it also pools expert knowledge emanating from different sectors of the economy.

Use of skills intelligence

OTHER

The NSC strives to increase the effectiveness of Malta's education and lifelong learning systems. It therefore seeks to use labour market informationa/skills intelligence to: Create systems which acknowledge other forms of learning, Expose students to the world of work, and Motivate the workforce towards a commitment of continuous education.

Stakeholders

Main responsible body

NATIONAL MINISTRY

Ministry for Education

Other involved organisations

NATIONAL AGENCY

Malta Enterprise

NATIONAL PES

Jobsplus

CHAMBERS OF COMMERCE

Malta Chamber of Commerce, Enterprise and Industry

TRAINING PROVIDERS

Malta College for Arts, Science and Technology; Institute for Tourism

Studies

RESEARCH CENTRES, UNIVERSITIES

University of Malta

OTHER

Civil Society; Lifelong Learning Specialists

Beneficiaries

OTHER

All of the above. It is clear that the present global dynamic economic situation emphasizes the need for a more responsive education and ongoing training. In the Maltese context, the size of the labour force and the challenges of industry to find the right skills is also magnified by its insularity. Currently Malta has a low unemployment rate, despite the current challenges faced as a result of COVID-19, and due to this, some employers are also facing difficulties in engaging workers with the right skills.

Sustainability

Success factors

In its first years of implementation, the NSC highlighted three priority areas (outlined below). This has enabled the Council to remain focused in its efforts to successfully reach its objectives: (1) Bringing together the worlds of education and industry through work-based learning; (2) digital skills; and (3) Research and development with the goal to create better conditions and incentives for lifelong learners.

Barriers

Having broad stakeholder representation can be an advantage and a disadvantage at the same time. There are no official statements on this front, but it is no news that the more stakeholders involved in an initiative, the more challenging it is to obtain consensus on matters at hand or issues in discussion.

Monitoring and evaluation

The scheme is constantly monitored, evaluated and audited in line with the procedures and guidelines provided by the European Social Fund. OPII Annual Implementation Reports shed light on running schemes - the most recent reports may be accessed from here: https://eufunds.gov.mt/en/Operational%20Programmes/Useful%20Links%20and....

Updates

The Council is still considered to be in an early stage of implementation, therefore no major evaluations on the Council have yet been conducted, or at least published.

NO

Effectiveness	The National Skills Council has definitely proved effective in bringing stakeholders together and incentivising them to work collectively, rather than individually. More needs to be done on communicating outcomes with the general public, yet this is understandable given that the Council stills seems to be finding its ground on a national level.
Sustainability	The ongoing demand exists for a multi-stakeholder Council to initiate research, discussions and actions on issues of (skills) importance. The turbulence brought about to the education and employment sector in 2020 and 2021 makes it quite probable for this level of demand to increase, leading to the prosperity of the NSC.

Other instruments in Malta

- Construction Industry Skill Card
  n/a
- Investing in Skills
  n/a
- Skills Development Scheme
  Skills Development Scheme
- Training Pays Scheme
  Training Pays Scheme
- Youth Guarantee 2.0
  Youth Guarantee 2.0