

**PRESS RELEASE**

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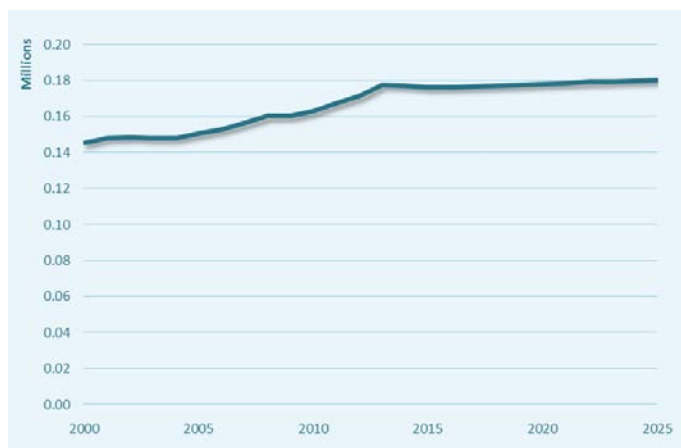
Qualifying for success

Malta's job growth is challenged by educational attainment

The outlook for Malta's labour market over the next decade is reasonably good, but skills need to improve to sustain it.

The forecasts produced by Cedefop - a European Union (EU) agency that analyses training and the labour market – show that between now and 2025, employment in Malta is expected to continue to be high (Figure 1). Job growth, like elsewhere in the EU will be driven by the business services and the distribution and transport sectors, with some small job losses predicted in manufacturing and construction.

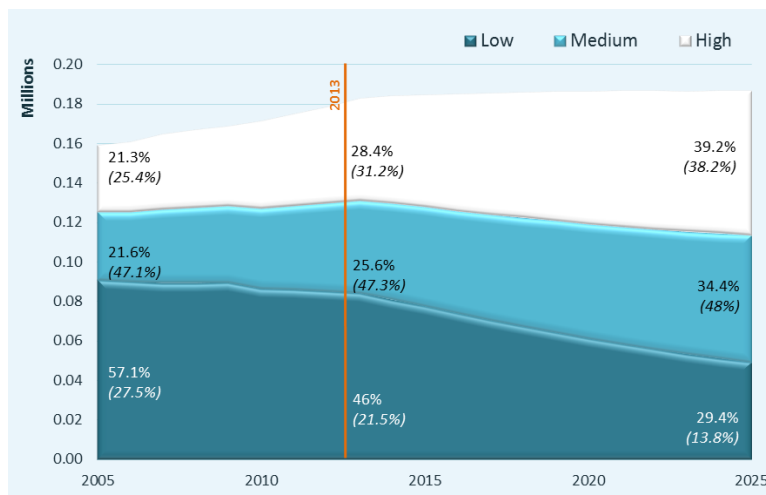
Figure 1 **Past and forecast employment, Malta (millions)**



Source: Cedefop skills forecasts (2015).

However, Cedefop data show that Malta lags behind the EU in educational attainment (Figure 2). While Malta should exceed the EU benchmark of 40% of 30 to 34 year olds having university-level qualifications by 2020, around 29% of Malta's labour force will still have low-level qualifications by 2025, more than twice the 14% forecast for the EU. At 34%, the proportion of people forecast to have medium-level qualifications in Malta is also well below the EU average of 48%.

Figure 2 Labour force trends by qualifications 2005-25, Malta (and EU) (%)



Source: Cedefop skills forecasts (2015).

Too many young people in Malta, around 20%, leave the education and training system with low-level qualifications compared to the EU average of 12%. Malta is one of several countries including Spain, Portugal and Romania that may not reach the EU benchmark of reducing early school leaving to below 10% by 2020. ,

These trends matter. Almost all new jobs created in Malta over the next decade are forecast to require high- or medium-level qualifications. Between now and 2025, most job opportunities, around 26%, will be for professional occupations in science, engineering healthcare, business and teaching, followed by 20% for service and sales workers.

Raising qualification levels in Malta provides an opportunity to align skills more closely to labour market needs, for example through apprenticeships. Cedefop is working with Malta, Greece, Italy Lithuania and Slovenia reviewing apprenticeships as part of their national VET reforms as part of the European Alliance for Apprenticeships.

While successful, there are not many apprenticeships in Malta and those that exist only cover medium-level qualifications. According to Cedefop director James Calleja, there are strong arguments for increasing apprenticeships across sectors and qualification levels.

‘Apprenticeships provide employment opportunities for young people,’ he says. ‘In Malta in 2012, of those who did not continue studying after completing their apprenticeship, 92% were in employment. Apprenticeships also have a very small dropout rate and can reduce early school leaving. Current apprenticeship reforms in Malta may link education and work more closely and so help young people, raise qualifications levels and contribute to keeping employment in Malta high.’

Notes to editors

- Cedefop skill supply and demand forecasts up to 2025 take account of global economic developments up to October 2014. Forecasts assume a modest economic recovery will slowly increase confidence in the EU, leading to higher investment, consumer spending and exports. Inflation stays in target range and interest rates low, while higher tax revenues help governments reduce debt. Assumptions reflect the latest Eurostat

population forecast (Europop 2013) and the European Commission's short-term macroeconomic forecast (November 2014).

- Cedefop's forecasts cover 28 EU Member States plus Iceland, Norway and Switzerland. Results, assumptions and methodology are regularly updated and reviewed by national experts. Forecasts use harmonised data and methodology to allow cross-country comparisons and do not substitute national forecasts. Employment data correspond to those reported in national accounts.
- **Forecasts for the EU and each Member State are available [here](#).**

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About Cedefop

The European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training (Cedefop), an agency of the European Union based in Thessaloniki, Greece, supports European policy-making in the field of vocational education and training. www.cedefop.europa.eu

