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# NATIONAL EMPLOYEE SKILLS SURVEY

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The National Commission for Further and Higher Education, Jobsplus and Malta Enterprise have embarked on a research project aimed at identifying shortages in skills, whilst gaining insight on the supply and demand in different sectors of the labour market in Malta. This research forms part of the Erasmus+ project “Promoting the Bologna Process in Malta 2014-2016”.

The population for this study included all employers in Jobsplus’ database excluding self-employed (without employees). The sample size was weighted according to the company size and NACE sector. The data collection was carried out among a representative sample of employers during the first quarter of 2016.

# Main Findings

## 1

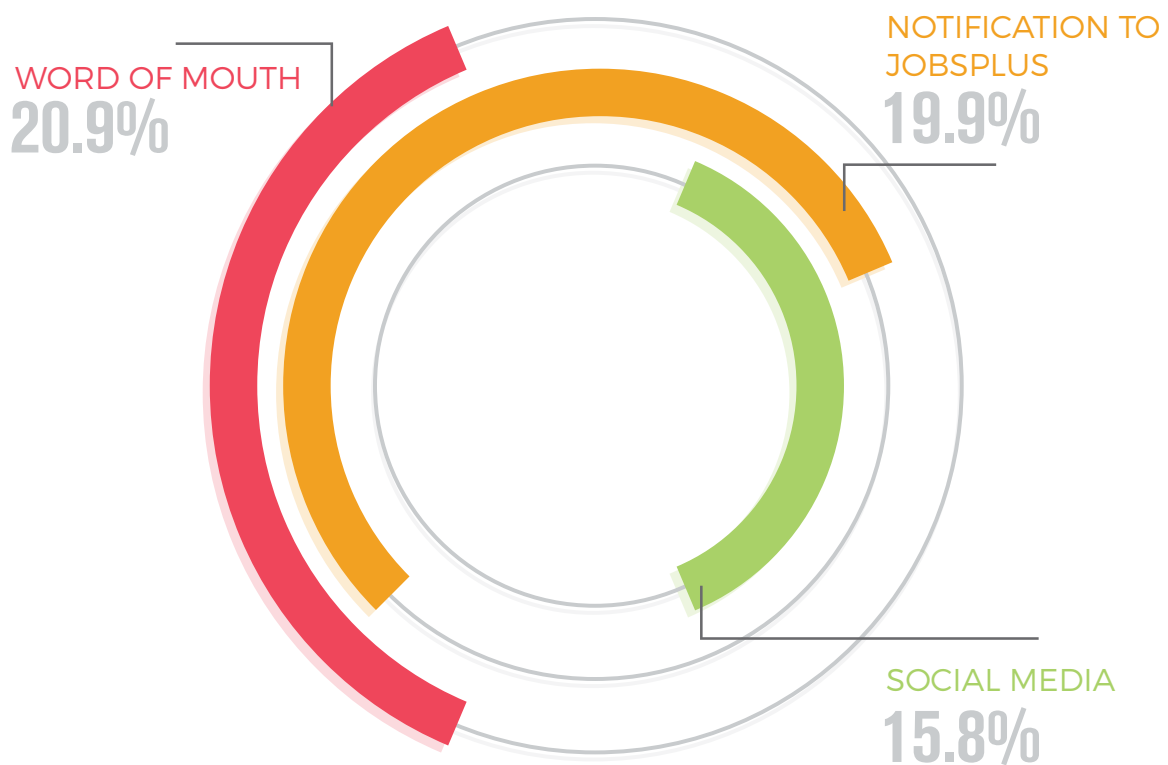
### DISTRIBUTION OF THE LABOUR FORCE:

- Most employees engaged with companies are professionals (16.0%); clerical support workers (14.5%) or technicians and associate professionals (14.2%).
- In the past three years 39.8% of respondents have recruited staff without work experience directly on completion of their studies. Most of these recruits, completed a University level (52.8%) or Further Education College or Institute such as MCAST or ITS (42.1%)
- Two thirds of respondents (65.8%) employ female workers on a full-time basis while 35.8% employ female workers on a part-time basis. 48.9% employ between 1 and 5 women on a full-time basis while 31.3% employ between 1 and 5 women on a part-time basis.
- 29.0% of respondents employ foreigners on a full-time basis; 9.4% employ foreigners on a part-time basis. 22.4% employ between 1 and 5 foreigners on a full-time basis, while 8.1% employ between 1 and 5 foreigners on a part-time basis.
- In the past three years 48.2% of respondents have recruited foreigners. Most often they have recruited foreigners holding a university level qualification (46.0%) or foreigners with compulsory education only (29.5%).
- Respondents were overall satisfied when recruiting both Maltese (7.0) and foreign workers (7.2), based on a scale from one to ten with ten being the most satisfied.

## 2. SOURCE OF FILLING VACANCIES:

Most used source for recruitment is word of mouth (20.9%) followed by notification to Jobsplus (19.9%) and social media (15.8%).

MOST USED SOURCE FOR RECRUITMENT



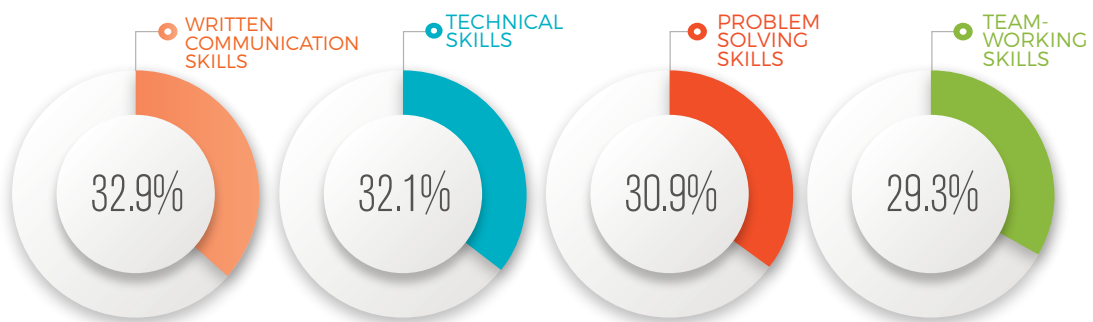
# 3 VACANCIES

- Most vacancies recorded were for clerical support workers (19.6% of all vacancies); and professionals (14.7%). The lowest number of vacancies was recorded for skilled agricultural, forestry and fishery workers (1.1%).
- Out of all vacancies that are hard to fill, clerical support workers (22.2% of all hard to fill vacancies) and service and sales workers (15.3%) recorded the highest absolute number of hard to fill vacancies.
- When analyzing hard to fill vacancies as a share of vacancies, positions for skilled agricultural, forestry and fishery workers rank at the top (80.0% of vacancies for these positions are hard to fill), followed by elementary occupations (62.0% of vacancies for these positions are hard to fill) and craft related trade workers(56.0% of vacancies for these positions are hard to fill)
- Vacancies for craft and related trade workers, professionals, technicians and service/sales workers take longest to fill with respondents claiming that a share of these posts take more than 8 weeks before they are filled.

# 4 RECRUITMENT DIFFICULTIES

- The main reason declared for hard to fill vacancies was the lack of applicants with the required skills (56.2%) or the required attitude and personality (43.7%). A low number of applicants was also mentioned by 37.7% of respondents.

- Skills lacking in applicants for vacancies that are hard to fill were:



- This generally matches the skills considered as important by employers, namely oral communication skills (78.7%); team working skills (78.6%); English language (74.4%) and customer handling skills (72.3%).

- The main consequence of hard to fill vacancies is an increased workload for other staff (61.5%) or outsourcing of work (27.7%). Additionally, 27.6% of respondents reported difficulties to meet customer service objectives and 27.3% lost business or orders to competitors as a result of hard to fill vacancies.

- In order to address these consequences most employers resort to:



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## INCREASE IN OCCUPATIONS (BY ISCO) IN THE NEXT 12 MONTHS

- Highest increase in recruitment in the next 12 months is expected to be of clerical support workers (22.0%), service and sales workers (21.0%) and professionals (18.0%).
- Lowest increase in recruitment in the next 12 months is expected to be in the elementary occupations (1.0%), skilled agricultural, forestry and fishery workers occupations (2.0%) and Plant and Machine Operators and Assemblers (7.0%).

## INCREASE IN OCCUPATIONS (BY ISCO) IN THE NEXT 3 YEARS

- The highest demand within the next 3 years will be for clerical support workers (24.0%) and service/sales workers (20.0%).
- Demand for professionals (16.0%) and trade workers (11.0%) comes 3rd and 4th respectively.
- The lowest expected increases are in elementary occupations (1.0%), plant and machine operators and assemblers, skilled agricultural, forestry and fishery workers and technicians and associate professionals (6.0%).

## EXPECTED QUALIFICATION LEVELS

- 39.4% of respondents stated that only basic level qualifications (between MQF levels 1-3) are required. Most of the occupations which require low MQF levels are Services and Sales, Craft and Related trade work, Clerical Support and Plant and Machinery Operators and Assemblers.
- 33.9% of respondents expect their recruits to have at least MQF level 4 and 5 qualifications, especially in occupations such as Clerical Support.
- 26.8% of the respondents stated that they expected their recruits to have at least a tertiary level qualification (MQF 6 – 19.6%, MQF 7 – 7%, MQF 8 – 0.2%). Most of the employers who expected high educational attainment from their recruits were in occupations of Managers and Professionals.

## EXPECTED YEARS OF EXPERIENCE

- Between 1 to 2 years working experience is the most commonly requested span of experience for all occupations except for the posts of managers where 3 to 4 years working experience is expected by most employers.
- 43.6% of all respondents required that their recruits have at least 1 to 2 years working experience.
- 77.5% of all respondents expected that their recruits have some degree of experience for their post (years of expected experience varying from 1-2 years to 9 years and over).

# 6

## APPRENTICESHIPS/ TRAINEESHIPS

- 56.9% of respondents viewed traineeships as useful, while 52.7% of respondents viewed apprenticeships as useful.
- Within the last 12 months, the demand to train trainees under a traineeship scheme (21.6%) was slightly higher than the demand to employ apprentices (18.6%).
- 24.1% of employers plan to recruit apprentices within the next 3 years as opposed to 33.9% of respondents who affirmed that they do not plan to employ any apprentices within the next 3 years.

# 7

## TERMINATIONS:

- Voluntary resignation is the most common reason for termination (48.6% of all cases). This was followed by termination during probation (13.6%) and end of contract (12.1%).
- Out of a total of 2873 terminations within the last 3 years only 1246 terminations have been replaced (44.3%).
- Employers forecast that there will be around 497 expected/ planned terminations within the next 12 months out of which 378 (76.1%) posts are expected to issue a replacement application call.
- In 2015, the posts that have experienced the highest replacements following terminations were within the following occupations: plant and machine operators and assemblers (18.3%), service and sales workers (17.6%), and clerical support workers (11.2%).



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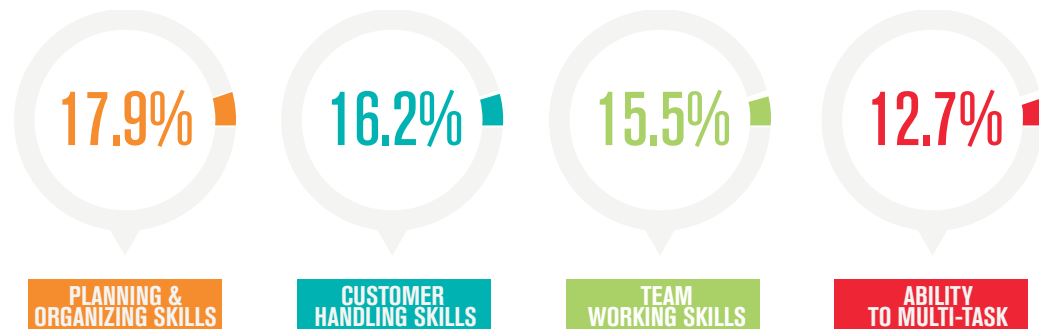
## SKILLS LEVELS AND SKILLS MISMATCHES:

- When asked about the highest level of education achieved by their staff, 34.0% of employers stated that more than half of their employees attained qualifications up to MQF level 4; in comparison 13.0% of companies held that more than half of their staff attained MQF level 5, while 16.0% of companies held that more than half of their staff attained MQF level 6.
- Respondents report that 6.0% of their employees are overqualified, while 8.0% are not fully proficient. Most overqualified staff are professionals (24.2% of all overqualified staff) and clerical support workers (16.5% of all overqualified staff), while most not fully proficient staff are technicians and associate professionals (25.6% of all employees not fully proficient) or in elementary occupations (14.9% of all employees not fully proficient).
- When comparing the level of proficiency of staff employed in different occupations, agricultural, forestry and fishery workers (33.0% of all staff in this occupation) and managers (12.0% of all staff in this occupation) have the highest shares of overqualified staff. In comparison, staff in elementary occupations (17.0% of all staff in this occupation) and technicians and associate professionals (15.0% of all staff in this occupation) have the highest share of not fully proficient staff.
- Not fully proficient staff mainly lack problem solving skills (43.0%); customer handling skills (37.7%); team-working skills (34.9%) and oral communication skills (31.8%). This matches the skills reported as generally important by employers.
- To address the lack in proficiency employers mainly resort to increasing their training activity (57.8%); increase staff supervision (39.8%) or reallocate work (25.0%).

# 9

## UP-SKILLING:

- The most commonly type of skills cited by employers that require up-skilling were:



- 38.8% of employers declared that they have provided on-the-job training in the past 12 months.
- On-the-job training is primarily undertaken by employers engaging between 2 to 9 persons.
- Employees within the wholesale/retail trade and public administration sectors are more likely to undergo on-the-job training.
- Only 3.9% of employers within the financial and information/communication sectors stated that they provide on-the-job training.
- 35.8% of respondents declared that they offer off-the-job training. Employers within the wholesale/retail trade and public administration sectors are more likely to offer off-the-job training.
- Only 4.0% of employers within the financial and information/communication sectors provide off-the-job training.
- Job specific training was the most common form of training offered (36.8%).
- Induction training and health and safety training were commonly offered as well with 16.5% and 16.4% respectively.
- 40.4% of training which was provided by employers was not accredited.
- Most employers stated that they did not allocate any annual training budget (75.7%).

# 10 COLLABORATION BETWEEN EDUCATION PROVIDERS AND EMPLOYERS

- The majority of employers (94.6%) stated that there should be more collaboration between education providers and employers.
- Only 19.3% of respondents stated that they participated in collaborative activities with educational institutions.
- Reasons for not collaborating varied, with most reasons being attributed to the fact that the structures needed for co-operation with education providers are not in place (21.0%) and that employers lack the necessary resources to undertake such cooperation (18.7%).
- 84.1% of employers declared that they are willing to participate in collaborative exercises with educational institutions.

