



KSU Budget Reaction

December 9, 2012

KSU is pleased to note that the budget presented on Wednesday, November 28, 2012, continues to grant importance to education.

As a prime believer in education, KSU is pleased that the general budget for education has been increased by €12 million. KSU positively welcomes further development in the University of Malta, most notably in the new IT faculty and hopes that such investment will be extended to other areas. KSU is also satisfied with the investment in other campuses such as ITS and MCAST, which although unrelated to university, continue to strengthen tertiary education in our country.

However KSU is concerned about the fact that more direct investment in the University of Malta is needed. With the ever-growing population of students, and the continuous need of more space, millions are required to continue providing top quality education to University students. Thus KSU urges the Government to continue providing the University of Malta all the necessary tools to work with and continue to develop into the center of excellence it truly deserves to be.

KSU welcomes the initiatives with regards to stipends. As already mentioned in the pre-budget reaction, KSU is all for the maintaining and strengthening of the stipends system. KSU also welcomes positively the initiative of granting stipends for NGO work for those during a gap year up till 25 years of age, as this promotes different aspects of education i.e. non-formal. However KSU warns of the danger of losing the real aim and purpose behind voluntary



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work. Nevertheless, as an NGO itself, KSU highly acclaims the extension of the scheme for citizens with different needs with 50 jobs with NGOs and other Government entities, and this should be as much as possible extended, as it is a positive initiative for the inclusion of disabled persons in our workforce, and which will help NGOs in their day to day running.

With regards to scholarships and research incentives, KSU is concerned with the lack of mention to grant schemes at postgraduate levels, mainly to replace the STEPS scheme that is now in its final year. Such grants have become synonymous with students aiming at continuing their post-graduate studies, and are thus an important asset in the fora of research and innovation for our country.

Gozitan students have also been directly included in this year's budget and KSU is in favour of any measures that continue to create employment opportunities for Gozitan students, and is therefore very pleased with the proposed development of a business centre for financial services and ICT companies in Gozo, which is surely a step in the right direction.

KSU also notes with satisfaction that this budget has been warmly welcomed by the European Union. Together with the removal of the Maltese Islands from excessive deficit procedure proceedings, which is also an excellent indicator of the current state of the Maltese economy. It is also important to note that EU finance ministers agreed that since 2009, Malta had taken appropriate measures to put its finances in order and declared that "Malta's excessive deficit has been corrected". KSU also welcomes the news that the deficit is scheduled to decrease to 1.7% by the end of next year.

Thus on the whole, KSU highly welcomes this budget while at the same time





draws attention to the points highlighted above, in order to continue providing our students the best possible level of Higher Education. KSU hopes that the latter will be given consideration, while wishing that all positive measures will be maintained and enforced by the Maltese Parliament.

