



KSU BUDGET REACTION

After reviewing the proposals in the Budget 2012, KSU welcomes the Government's efforts in investing in the educational institutions, most notably in the University of Malta and the G.F. Abela Junior College. Despite the fact that the Budget was more related to long-term investment rather than to the student's personal financial gain, the injection of €58.2 million will surely be useful in enhancing life on campus through the planned capital investments. Whilst trusting that the implementation of such projects will be carried out, we believe that a more detailed overview should be published with regards to the allocation of these funds.

KSU embraces the Government's commitment towards further construction work on the ICT faculty and the Health Biotechnology Facilities. Moreover, the increase in the MCAST's fund allocation and the new MCAST Campus in Kordin are projects which KSU believes are of fundamental importance in the development of the vocational sphere in Malta, as well as in the decrease in student drop-outs in our educational system.

The importance of scholarships is evidently acknowledged by the €900,000 investment for their increment. Such scholarships, funded by the Government, aid in supporting the equality of opportunities amongst students who wish to embark on these essential ventures. The latter are certainly fundamental for scholars in persisting in their studies and development, both locally and abroad. Thus, KSU hopes that these initiatives are employed in the most efficient manner so that they provide a higher level for our University.

The sports sector is a focal point in this Budget and KSU embraces the initiatives which were taken up by the Government, such as the sponsorships and tourism schemes. KSU is pleased with the plans for the setting up of the secondary school specializing in Sports as this will surely increase the competitive level of Maltese athletes and will serve as an incentive for students to excel in this field. The work on the BioMalta Campus with an investment of €30 million, together with the establishment of the BioMalta Foundation, will encourage foreign investors to use Malta as an outlet for their development.

The plan for the extension of maternity leave by four weeks is a measure which will undoubtedly attract more female cohorts to the employment sphere. KSU praises



such incentive as well as hopes for the introduction of more schemes to increase female labour participation.

Finally, KSU praises the Government's increase of €700,000 in allowances for Gozitan students, studying in Malta - granted regardless of which institution the students choose. €320,000 have been allocated to help develop and improve Gozitan schools, and improve health services at the local hospital, whilst €500,000 have been specifically invested in marketing Gozo as a separate tourist destination. All these initiatives will help bridge the gap between Malta and Gozo while trying to lessen Gozo's double insularity.

Whilst feeling that the strategies presented are extremely encouraging; considering today's huge student protest in Ireland due to budget cuts in education, KSU hopes that such measures are put into operation as soon as possible in order for students to start reaping the benefits intended by the policies that this Budget presents.