

## News Release

Date: 21<sup>st</sup> March 2013

### Malta celebrates Get Online Week 2013

The Malta Communications Authority ('MCA') and 19 Community Training and Learning Centres (CTLCS) across Malta and Gozo are this week celebrating the 'Get Online Week 2013' ('GOW').

The 'GOW' is a pan European initiative organised by Telecentre-Europe across 30 countries with the involvement of over 10,000 ICT learning centres (also known as telecentres) which is aimed at helping more people to go digital and start using ICTs as part of their everyday life.

European countries consider that widespread digital competencies are paramount for social and economic development as these bring about unprecedented opportunities for social cohesion, better quality of life, employment flexibility, efficiency gains and the development of new economic activity. It is estimated that one in every three Maltese individuals does not use the Internet and is likely to be excluded from leading a digital lifestyle and engaging in work related activities that require specific digital skills.

Various activities are being undertaken locally to coincide with this week. Over 600 individuals aged 55 and over have started their basic 'ICTforALL' training at one of the 19 CTLCS. For most of these individuals, the training will be their first encounter with a computer and the Internet, and will also serve as the doorstep to a future digital lifestyle.

Through the 'Digital Angels' initiative, children in the sixth year of primary school have paired up with a grandparent and have engaged in a computer-based activity of their choice. The activity has served to promote intergenerational learning activities whilst also encouraging first-time users.

Through 'BeSmartOnline!', a project funded by the Safer Internet Programme and that has the MCA, AGENZIJA APPOGG and the Office of the Commissioner for Children as partners, a new school roadshow on internet safety has been launched. The roadshow will be engaging all form 3 students in secondary schools in activities and discussions on how to build and protect one's digital identity.

Ian Agius, acting CEO of the 'MCA', said that 'past efforts to bring more people online have paid dividends as more Maltese are now digitally included in society and have become potentially more employable and effective at the workplace'. He added that 'despite past successes, we are still far from saying that everyone is part of this new digital society and economy, and indeed we must intensify our efforts to be able to reach out to those that need us most.'

The 'MCA' also announced that in the coming weeks it will be launching a new subsidy scheme for individuals who have never used ICT and would like to attend a free 'ICTforALL' basic introductory course at a CTLC.

Further information about the above initiatives can be accessed by visiting the MCA's website [www.mca.org.mt](http://www.mca.org.mt) or by sending an email at [info@mca.org.mt](mailto:info@mca.org.mt).

## Annex 1

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### List of Maltese CTLCs

	Centre	Locality
<b>1</b>	Access	Vittoriosa
<b>2</b>	Fondazzjoni Salvinu Spiteri (UHM)	Floriana
<b>3</b>	Inspire	Bulebel, Zejtun
<b>4</b>	Birkirkara Local Council	Birkirkara
<b>5</b>	The Physically Handicapped Rehabilitation Fund	Kordin
<b>6</b>	National Council of Women	Blata l-Bajda
<b>7</b>	Richmond Foundation	Sta Venera
<b>8</b>	Employment & Training Corporation	Xewkija GOZO
<b>9</b>	Kalkara Local Council	Kalkara
<b>10</b>	Isla Local Council	Isla
<b>11</b>	Local Council Association	Balzan
<b>12</b>	Santu Wistin IT Centre	Valletta
<b>13</b>	A.T.T.I.C. Parroċċa San Franġisk	Qawra
<b>14</b>	Assocjazzjoni tal-Bdiewa - ATB	Ta' Qali
<b>15</b>	Corradino Correctional Facilities	Corradino
<b>16</b>	Caritas San Blas	Siggiewi
<b>17</b>	SATU	Mtarfa
<b>18</b>	Mount Carmel Hospital	Attard
<b>19</b>	St. Vincent De Paul	Luqa

## Annex 2

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### Press Release: EUROPE-WIDE GET ONLINE WEEK WILL DIGITALLY EMPOWER THOUSANDS OF EUROPEANS

Brussels, BELGIUM | 18 MARCH 2013



**While the demand for employees with ICT skills is growing by around 3% a year<sup>[1]</sup>, nearly half of the European labour force (47%)<sup>[2]</sup> is not confident their computer and internet skills are sufficient in today's labour market. To highlight the essential role ICT skills play in today's society, the Europe-wide campaign "Get Online Week" ([www.getonlineweek.eu](http://www.getonlineweek.eu)), is taking place between 18 and 24 March 2013, with a focus on encouraging young people to take up a career in ICT.**

**Get Online Week 2013** (GOW2013) will take place in approximately 10.000 European ICT learning centres (also known as telecentres) at public libraries, schools & municipal organisations, located in both urban and rural areas. National ICT learning networks from almost 30 countries have joined efforts with ICT companies & public authorities to empower people to use technology to find a job or get more out of life. Together, they aim to reach thousands of Europeans.

The *Get Online Week* campaign is organized by **Telecentre-Europe**, an umbrella organisation that represents 37 local network organizations from 27 European countries, and is supported by the **Get Online Week Alliance** – formed by **Accenture**, **Liberty Global** and **Microsoft**.

**Mara Jakobson**, Chair of Telecentre-Europe explains: "Since its take-off in 2010, our **annual Get Online Week campaign** has reached more than half a million Europeans in more than 20.000 ICT learning centres across Europe. Initially, the campaign was focused on bringing new people online, but now the focus has moved to upskilling and reskilling people, through a large series of exciting events, training sessions and competitions, all over Europe."

Over 20% of Europeans are young, unemployed, and mostly unaware of the fact that by 2015, about 800.000<sup>[3]</sup> vacancies for ICT-related jobs will remain open if job seekers do not acquire the ICT skills demanded by the industry. That's why *Get Online Week 2013* aims to direct more young people into computing qualifications. Under the theme **"My eSkills Portfolio"**, national campaign partners will make use of innovative employability tools that will test young people's digital skills and inform them about ICT certification schemes.

**Gabriel Rissola**, Managing Director of Telecentre-Europe explains: "One of the tools Telecentre-Europe developed for the campaign is '**Skillage**', a self-assessment tool that tests young people's abilities for the labour market. Another tool is the '**Employment Toolkit**', which contains relevant tips for jobseekers. For young people aspiring to explore a job in ICT, GOW Alliance partner **Microsoft** has also donated free vouchers redeemable for the '**Microsoft Technology Associate**' certification exam, in addition to cash grant support as part of its '**YouthSpark**' program helping to connect youth to opportunities for employment, entrepreneurship and education. Another GOW Alliance partner, **Accenture**, is supporting Get Online Week 2013 with pro bono and cash giving through its '**Skills to Succeed**' global corporate citizenship initiative, and based on its conviction that IT skills development is key to finding employment or building a business."

Many striking activities are taking place during Get Online Week 2013. In **Spain**, a virtual exhibition will expose infographics on newly emerging professions. In **Latvia**, students aged 15-19 are being offered the opportunity to discover the secrets of ICT industry professions at a series of ICT career days. In **Italy**, a big event around robotics will bring together ICT companies, research centres, universities and schools, and visitors will be provided with didactic labs on educational robotics. In **Macedonia**, debates on the importance of IT in the employment process will be organized among youths from several towns in the country.

Under the theme "**My Digital Identity**" the campaign will also empower youth by building upon their knowledge to use technology to further develop their personal and professional lives, with activities that will boost the youngsters' abilities to build a strong digital identity, to stay safe online and to work, learn, entertain and communicate online.

A range of colourful activities will also happen around the 'identity' theme. In the **Czech Republic**, a big media campaign will be launched, reaching more than 500.000 people. In **Estonia** there will be an 'IT night for young people', with a video contest and online trainings. In **Croatia**, workshops & webinars will be held on video-making, photography & audio, followed by a studio debate, lectures and a round table.

**Laurentiu Bunescu**, Get Online Week Campaign Manager elaborates: "For young people to manage and be aware of the impact of their online reputations our GOW Alliance partner **Liberty Global** has created '**The Web We Want**', a new educational handbook for 13-16 year olds, which encourages young people to think about their digital identity and how it can determine their online reputation in the future."

In 2012, 23%<sup>[4]</sup> of European individuals aged 16-74 have never used the internet, still 8 percentage points above the EU target of 15 % non-users set for 2015 in the Digital Agenda for Europe. Especially in countries like Romania, Bulgaria and Greece, digital inclusion is still extremely important. That's why Get Online Week 2013 still aims at engaging new internet users online.

Under the theme "**My Online Journey**" exciting intergenerational learning activities will encourage first-time users and beginners to use technology and the internet with the confidence and skills that will allow them to benefit of the online world of opportunities. In **Poland**, young volunteers of the 'Lighthouse Keepers of Digital Poland', will address people aged over 50 with no previous experience with the internet. In **Malta**, 'Digital Angels' – school kids aged 10-11 – will pair up with their grandparents and engage in a computer-based activity. In **Russia**, the 'Teach Your Family' campaign will empower youngsters between 12-17 while they're providing digital literacy courses to their family & neighbors."

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**Laurentiu Bunescu**, concludes: *"For the activities organized under this theme, our national campaign partners will make use of '**Internet Buttons**', another tool created by our GOW Alliance partner and leading international cable company **Liberty Global**. The tool helps internet beginners and seniors to get online, by bringing generations together through the use of technology."*

The impact of *Get Online Week 2013* will be captured by a survey that will provide live online data on how Europeans are engaged through the campaign activities.