

## Students take products to market



Some 250 sixth-form students taking part in the HSBC Junior Achievement Young Enterprise Malta are selling products they have created in Republic Street, Valletta. The initiative encourages young people to develop innovative ideas into concrete products that make business sense.

Some 250 sixth form students representing 10 companies from HSBC Junior Achievement Young Enterprise Malta are selling their products and services from Republic Street, Valletta, in the 20th annual Young Enterprise National Trade Fair.

The focus of this year's fair, which ends today, is on the environment and information technology.

The fair is organised as part of a Young Enterprise company programme that offers post-secondary students the opportunity to set up and run their own business while competing on both a national and an international level.

The competition pivots around product concept, company performance, corporate social responsibility, company image, future potential, final presentation, as well as the skills and learning demonstrated.

This is the fifth year that HSBC is supporting the company programme both financially and in terms of expertise and consultancy by the bank's staff. So far, some €175,000 (Lm75,127) have been committed by HSBC towards the programme to help

the young entrepreneurs develop their innovative ideas into concrete products that make business sense.

The fair was officially launched by Clyde Puli, Parliamentary Secretary for Youth and Sport, and Shaun Wallis, HSBC's chief executive officer, in the presence of Junior Achievement Young Enterprise Malta chairman Josef Camilleri and chief executive officer Karl Gouder.

The products and services on display - in a real marketplace - are the result of five months of solid work by the young entrepreneurs and will be presented for the final competition to be held later this year. Among the products proposed are a water-saving device, a T9 in Maltese for mobile phones and an electronic translator in the Maltese language.

"HSBC recognises that small enterprises are crucial, particularly to Malta's economy," Mr Wallis said. "And in the light of the recent innovation report published by the European Commission on Malta's levels of innovation, which is slowly but steadily catching up, HSBC is more than willing to support Young Enterprise in assisting young people take a business-minded direction and innovate the products and services they put on the market."

Mr Puli said: "The entrepreneurial spirit which such an experience instils in our young people is essential on both an individual level and for Malta. This becomes even more important in the context of the local economy's transformation, to make it more competitive, innovative and creative. Our young people are the motor behind the success Malta aims to achieve."