

**WRITTEN QUESTION TO THE CHIEF MINISTER
BY DEPUTY M.R. HIGGINS OF ST. HELIER
ANSWER TO BE TABLED ON TUESDAY 2nd FEBRUARY 2016**

Question

Will the Chief Minister advise members what research, if any, has been carried out in the Island into the likely effects of a fourth industrial revolution on the Island's economy and, in particular, employment in white collar and administrative jobs, and, if none, why?

Answer

The fourth industrial revolution describes the business and societal changes that are affecting global economies. This digital revolution is creating new products, new services and new opportunities; it will dramatically change the way we lead our lives, including how we invest, the way companies raise money and the life-choices we make. However, it may erode existing jobs, as well as create new ones.

It is up to Government to create the best environment in which industry can flourish and be protected. Facilitating innovation, encouraging competition and promoting digital businesses are key strategic priorities for this Government. At the start of this term of office I established a new role for Assistant Chief Minister Senator Ozouf, and he has been focusing on these important issues to maximise our economic potential.

My Department is currently researching and producing a Digital Policy Framework for Jersey, setting out our intentions and providing specific commitments from Government. It is our ambition to significantly and measurably improve the extent to which digital technology contributes to the number and variety of jobs in Jersey, and to ensure that it is of tangible benefit to the community as a whole, including in the provision of public services.

We are also working to ensure that Jersey can sustain its core industries in this evolving world. The effective relationships we have between Government, Industry and our independent regulators, are vital ones that help safeguard jobs, encourage growth and allow us to adapt to a changing world. In 2015 my Department worked closely with the Jersey Financial Services Commission to deliver more than 15 legislative developments in areas like Investment Funds, Financial Crime, Companies Law, with many more being progressed in 2016. Our excellent relationship with Jersey Finance ensures industry is represented and that Jersey is promoted as a favourable, modern and robust environment for financial services.

Furthermore, a recent Innovation Review has recommended several ways to improve our existing practices. Several of these recommendations focus on ensuring Jersey fosters a digitally-literate and skilled workforce, in which all citizens can access and benefit from the latest technology, and which provides a skilled pool of employees for high-value jobs. The action plan for this work is available on gov.je and includes a focus on skills development and entrepreneurship training. I am also pleased to support Digital Jersey, who are promoting clusters of tech-excellence and acting as an accelerator for this digital economy.

We will actively encourage innovative practices in our schools and ensure that all young people in Jersey have access to high-quality digital learning opportunities. Last week we announced that Jersey students can apply to GCHQ's Cyber Insiders Summer School and that the States will help with flight costs for students to attend interviews.

By embracing innovation, harnessing digital opportunities and building our digital skills, Jersey will continue to signpost itself as a location for innovative business, and will ensure that Jersey maintains a place in the global economy for years to come.