

Forum : Citizens' Forum on labour

2026

Subject: Empowering the youth to drive / thrive / embrace and match the requirements of the future labour market

Name of the Citizen: Giorgio Merli

Family status • Married ○ Celibate ○ With children, if yes how many: _____	Level of education ○ Primary ○ Secondary • University
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1. In what way are you concerned by the topic?

My name is Giorgio Merli, I am 51, and I am assistant managing director at EISP. 8200, a non-profit startup accelerator based in the heart of Tel-Aviv, Israel.

The mission of [EISP. 8200](#) is to enhance the development and expansion of newly founded start-up companies. The organisation offers programs of personalised mentorship for CEOs and CTOs, as well as workshops by professionals in the sector of management and business. Centrepieces of our offer are networking opportunities between companies and experts, mainly through the club of enterprise founders of EISP. 8200 and the 8200 Alumni Network. The latter is a global-reach network that connects tens of thousands of graduates from the intelligence Unit 8200 of the Israel Defence Forces, including highly successful entrepreneurs in the Silicon Valley. As a manager of a strongly solution-oriented organisation assisting start-ups, innovation and employment optimisation have been my utmost priorities for a significant part of my career.

Nowadays more than ever, groundbreaking technologies such as Artificial Intelligence are changing the labour realm at a speed and to an extent impossible to neglect. In Israel, the private sector is leading the transformation. Private investment for AI in Israel, between 2013 and 2024, was the highest in the world in relation to the size of the economy, averaging 3.5% of the GDP, well above the United States at 2% and China at less than 1% (Stanford AI Index, 2025, and IMF). Israel's economic prosperity proves that embracing and fostering innovation and technology, within frameworks that incentivise the lead of the private sector, can remarkably bolster the economy while leveraging the full potential of the available workforce. Israel's GDP per capita (around 60,000 US\$, Worldbank.org, 2025) and its low unemployment rate (around 2.9% as of June 2026, Tradingeconomics.com) testify this success.

Technological advancement and economic prosperity must be pursued by employers while being aligned with the needs and tendencies of the generation that is now entering the workforce, namely the "Gen Z", consisting of people born between 1997 and 2012 and which forms around 24% of the population of Israel (UN, 2026). It is however impossible, in my view, to define with accuracy the

specific needs of a generation as a whole, since these vary significantly between people, companies, regions and working sectors. Once again, I support a privately-led process which empowers individual companies to develop their own, customised working set-ups and policies, while preserving the competitiveness they need to operate in the global market.

The start-ups empowered by EISP. 8200 rely solely on registered, contracted workers, whether they are full-time, part-time, or freelance workers, which are valuable for programming tasks. Provisions to protect freelance workers must not hinder the flexibility of neither employers nor workers, to the benefit of both parties.

2. What do you propose on your level?

In Israel, the private sector introduced the technological breakthroughs and economic opportunities that allowed for a flourishing economy and made the Country resilient to external threats. On an international scale, conditions must be established to enhance fair competition and bolster the private sector, because thriving competition drives innovation. In the sector of AI, in particular, EISP. 8200 has empowered more than 30 start-up companies. Given the scale of the revolution that the AI entails, however, regulamentation to protect consumers and workers is likely to be required. Nevertheless, legislation must not obstruct the ability of private companies to develop their digital products. For this reason, state policies to oversee the use and application of AI must never interfere with the development phases of this technology. AI carries remarkable potential for economic growth and a better way of life for all humans on earth, especially when applied to the fields of medicine, agriculture and management of resources. Research on such technologies should be incentivised, for example, through significant fiscal benefits. On the other hand, necessary measures to ensure the safety and sustainability of the AI revolution must be agreed upon on a global rather than national scale, to avoid different regions of the world being affected by uneven legislation, detrimental to fair competition. Education systems must develop a highly adaptive workforce to cope with a fast-paced revolution: thanks to the assistance of AI tutors, future workers will be able to quickly learn the new skills required by their employers in a continuously evolving labour market. Lifelong learning is imperative in today's market. Along with the introduction of AI-assisted learning, however, efforts must be undertaken against cognitive offloading of students.

Generation Z is likely to re-shape traditional labour models more than any of the previous ones. The specific preferences of different workers vary to such an extent, however, that redefining labour schemes on a national or international level would be largely inaccurate. The private sector, especially in more economically developed countries, should be incentivised to explore working arrangements, such as the 4 days working week, that suit more their employees, to maximise their well-being and productivity. It is in the interest of every business, including ventures at EISP. 8200, to create a stimulating and flexible working environment that attracts the most qualified and talented workers. State-issued regulation, on the other hand, would fail to adapt to each individual business and worker, hence risking to disrupt the competitiveness of the private sector and thwart the small-size enterprises which have less financial margins to rely on. The transformation that the labour realm is going through, combined with the tendencies and expectations of new generations, may also result in increased demand for flexible working arrangements, as well as freelance workers, which must not be obstructed.