



Founded 1964

Il-Mara

Newsletter of the National Council of Women - Malta



Dr. Paula Mifsud Bonnici, Dr. Julian Vassallo, Ms. Grace Attard, Dr. Lydia Abela and US Ambassador H.E. Douglas W. Kmiec



A section of the guests together with H.E. Dr. George Abela at the launch of NCW All Female Art Exhibition



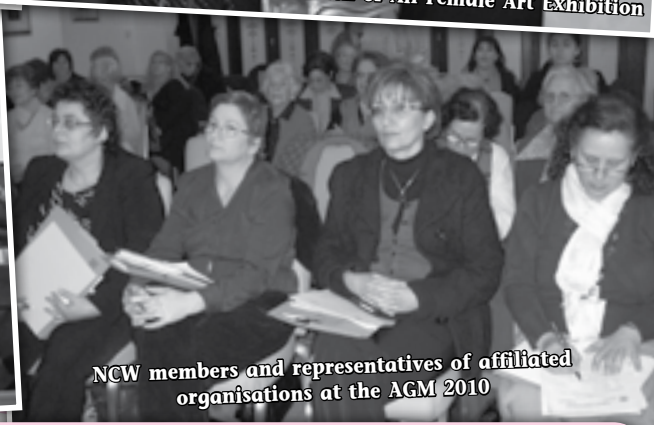
Participants during the NCW EP Public Dialogue Women in Public Life



Mrs. Margaret Abela spouse of the President of Malta and NCW President Grace Attard at the launch of All Female Art Exhibition



International Women's Day Mass



NCW members and representatives of affiliated organisations at the AGM 2010

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Members of



International Council of Women

Founded 1888

Motto: "Do unto others as ye would that they should do unto you."



European Centre of the International Council of Women

Founded 1961

In Special Consultative Status with the Economic & Social Council of the UN.

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Monday to Friday: 9.00 - 13.30

Membership Subscription Rates

New individual membership	€14.50
Annual renewal	€12.00
Affiliated Organisations	€20.00
Associated Organisations	€20.00
Life membership	€95.00

Members and affiliated organisations are requested to keep their subscription fees up to date.



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NCW-Mara

NEWSLETTER OF THE NATIONAL COUNCIL OF WOMEN - MALTA

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Editorial

Dear Readers,

The Academy Awards came and went. I looked at the pretty dresses and made a list of what films I would like to watch. However the Academy Awards of 2010 will be mostly remembered for the Best Picture Oscar. It was the first time that this Oscar was awarded to a woman, Kathryn Bigelow. Moreover, the film was not a genre which is considered women-friendly, it was a war film, The Hurt Locker. Women are under represented when it comes to directing films, which is strange, because directing films is not a career which is defined by gender. Sometimes I wonder whether women lack that ruthlessness which can take people to the top. However it is a pity if ruthlessness and not talent and determination is the factor which leads people to the golden statuette and to other awards.

On the subject of films, I recently watched Kick-ass. the film can be criticised for its foul language and for its violence however it definitely deserves high praise for the female hero - a young 11 year old girl who has grown men cowering in fear when faced with her as an opponent. it is very important that young girls are exposed to strong female heroes from tender years. The situation is fortunately improving. little girls no longer read books about a princess who must be rescued by a prince, but they can also read books about princesses who do a fair amount of rescuing themselves.

Today, the world is even more full of opportunities for girls. Girls are no longer pigeonholed into certain professions, but they pick and choose to be whatever they want. The National Council of Women is very important for young women because it plays an active role in empowering women and encouraging them to reach for the stars, whether the stars are those of Hollywood or being able to work flexible hours while raising a family.

I wish all mothers a Happy Mother's day,

Maria Giuliana Fenech

Note from the Editor: I urge all of NCW's affiliates to send me short write ups about the role of your organisation. It would be an excellent way for our readers to learn about your good work. Please email me on: mariagiulianafenech@gmail.com

Foundation Day 2010

The first major function of 2010 is the **Foundation Dinner**. This year it was held at Radisson Blu Hotel, St Julians. This function heralds NCW's New Year, and it is at this celebration that the Honorary Life Membership is bestowed. Dr Joanna Drake as Honorary received this honour for her outstanding contribution to Maltese society, through her efforts in promoting Malta's entry into the European Union and her continued valuable work in European Union representation and administration.



Top table and guests at the Foundation Day Dinner

President's Message



I hope you all have had a peaceful Easter. March and indeed April have been very intensive months during which several activities were organised, and I must say, carried out successfully to mark International Women's Day. The Public Dialogue on Women in Public Life - a Changing Scenario, the All Women's Art Exhibition at San Anton Palace and the Musico -Literary Evening at Sala Isouard, Manoel Theatre attracted large audiences. The EP NCW Public Dialogue on **Women in Public Life in a Changing Scenario at Ewropa House** was an event that brought together different stakeholders and which indeed served to raise gender equality issues that need to be urgently addressed (*see Public Dialogue*)

NCW officials were invited to participate in a number of conferences and seminars by political parties, organisations and radio and TV programmes where we had the opportunity to create more awareness of the Council's policies regarding gender equality in a number of areas.

The global challenges that we are facing as a result of the economic recession weigh heavily on women in many ways as they are often in vulnerable situations due to precarious jobs. Women have an important role to play in the economy and therefore we have to make sure that barriers to women's participation in the labour market are reduced so that Maltese women's rate of employment will no longer be at the bottom of the EU member states list.

However we will not be discouraged. As member of the European Economic and Social Committee, I have submitted NCW proposals and recommendations on the EU 2020 Strategy from a gender perspective to the EU Commission and to MEUSAC members as part of the consultation process.

In my work in the EESC, I have been studying the Health and Safety Directive on Maternity leave together with my colleagues from other EU member States. This

Directive, as you may be aware, will once again before the EU Parliament in May after it has failed to be adopted twice already in December and March. All stakeholders are studying this directive to reach consensus on ensuring a balance between costs and benefits, so that Malta will be in a better position to reach the economic growth and employment targets that our government has set.

The Commission Roadmap for Equality 2006-2010 and the Follow-up Strategy for the next five years, which will also be integrated in the EU 2020 Strategy, has also been under discussion in the EESC; where once again I participated in its preparation with my recommendations as member of the study group; in fact it was approved at the March Plenary. We are also working with the International Labour Organisation (ILO) on the global effects of the recession on Women, a subject that we discussed in the Geneva Headquarters very recently.

As you can see in this issue of our newsletter we are also very present in the local media, through press releases on current issues. (*See NCW website*). Women need to be informed of developments that are taking place so that they can be in a better position to take action whatever their age and status. As we look ahead, we call on NCW members and friends, indeed on all women to be actively involved to ensure that as Malta emerges from the recession women will be able to contribute to and to benefit from a positive outcome of economic growth.

Grace Attard, NCW President

Respecting the dignity of women and men in the media

NCW strongly deplores the publication of sexist stereotyping in the media that portray women in a degrading and offensive manner under the pretext of 'fiction' or 'literary' work. NCW reiterates its stand that sexist texts, whether directly or indirectly discriminatory, or that contain sexist insults or degrading images of women and men, are simply reinforcing the unfortunately ingrained culture that women - rather than being free, independent thinkers on equal footing with men - are nothing more than sex objects.

As for texts or readings selected within an educational context at any level, whoever is responsible for the choice of text books and the teachers/lecturers who study and discuss with their students works that include sex as a theme, are professional in shaping their attitudes and behaviour, and that their approach is based on respect for the individual, be it male or female.

NCW calls on Government, media outlets and relevant authorities responsible for media publications including print and audiovisual media to ensure by appropriate means that respect for human dignity and the integrity of the person, in particular women are guaranteed and that are neither directly nor indirectly discriminatory nor contain any sexist insults or degrading images of women and men that publications do not contain material which, judged in its context, sanctions, promotes or glamorises all forms of violence, including sexist violence against women that the necessary rules or codes of ethic are put in place where these are missing and to provide sanctions for lack of compliance with the said rules that efforts to combat gender stereotypes in all forms of media should be accompanied by education strategies and measures to cultivate awareness from an early age and to develop critical faculties from adolescence onwards.

Grace Attard, NCW President

Kunsill Nazzjonali tan-Nisa - Messaġġ għal Jum il-Mara L-OMMIJET LI JAHD MU M'GHANDHOMX IKUNU PENALIZZATI

Il-Kunsill Nazzjonali tan-Nisa jsejjah lill-membri parlamentari ewropej kollha biex jivvutaw favor l-estensjoni tal-leave tal-maternita' u tal-leave għall-genituri li se tkun ipprezentata fil-Parlament Ewropew fl-24 u l-25 ta' Marzu wara li fl-ahhar ta' Dicembru il-vot ma ittehidx konsegwenza ta' kontroversja bejn il-gruppi politici.

Fl-ahhar ta' Frar, il-Kumitat għad-drittijiet tan-Nisa u l-Ugwaljanza hadu vot fejn giet approvata l-estensjoni tal-leave minn 14-il gimgha għal 20 gimgha bi hlas b'mhux inqas minn gimghatejn leave għall-missirijiet, li jekk ma jittehidx jintilef. Ir-rapport imhejji mill-membri parlamentari Edite Estrela jimmira li jgħaqqad flimkien il-leave tal-maternita' u leave għall-genituri biex isahhah l-importanza tar-responsabilitajiet fil-familja li għandha tingasam bejn iz-zewg genituri. Fil-fatt hafna f'pajjiżi Ewropej dan diga qiegħed fis-sehh.

Iz-zieda fil-leave tal-maternita' għall-ommijiet li għadhom kif iweldu tisser li se jkollhom akter granet biex jibqgħu mat-trabi kif ukoll biex iredduhom f'ambjent aktar addatat u san. Dan jaqbel mar-rakkomandazzjonijiet tal-WHO, EWL kif ukoll ma' dawk tas-Social Platform, li jirrakomandaw li mhux inqas minn 6 xhur hu ta' benefiċju importanti sew għas-sahha tal-omm kif ukoll tat-tarbija.

Is-socjeta' m'ghandix thares lejn il-maternita' bhala piz, izda bhala servizz li jinghata biex nassiguraw li t-trabi tagħna jikbru

f'sahhitom fizikament u emozzjonalment; għalhekk m'ghandniex nippenalizzaw lill-ommijiet li jahdmu u jgibu t-tfal fid-dinja; għandna nuru ir- rikonoxximent tagħna fil-prattika permezz ta' mizuri biex l-ommijiet li jahdmu jkunu jistgħu joqgħodu aktar fit-tul mat-trabi fi zmien hekk kritiku. Dan għandu jservi tq' inkoraqggiment għall-genituri li jixtiequ li jkollhom aktar tfal. Dan ifisser li qed nindirizzaw il-problema demografika fejn in -numru ta' tfal fil-familja nizez għal 1.5, fejn hemm riskju li fil-futur mhux se nkunu f'pozizzjoni li jkollna pensjonijiet sostenibbli għax ikun hawn izjed nies anzjani milli jahdmu.

Hemm bzonn li l-gvern u l-partitijiet soċjali jaslu għal ftehim dwar il-hlas tal-leave tal-maternita' u tal-genituri permezz fost oħrajn tal-kontribuzzjonijiet nazzjonali, incentivi finanzjarji għall-kumpaniji kif ukoll billi naddottaw mizuri li jezistu fi stati membri oħra (ara ir-rapport tal-European Gender Equality Law 2009)

Fil-messaġġ għall-Jum Internazzjonali tan-Nisa, Il-Kunsill tan-Nisa jshaq li n-nisa mghandhomx ibatu l-impatt negattiv tar-ricessjoni li diga' qed iħalli l-effett tiegħu fuq in-nisa li jahdmu part time jew li qegħdin f'xogħol prekarju. L-avvanzi li saru s'issa fil-qasam ta' l-ugwaljanza m'ghandhomx jitnaqqru la issa u l-anqas meta nohorgu mir-ricessjoni. Din hija sfida kbira meta nafu li sew

nisa kif ukoll irgiel jistgħu ikunu f'pozizzjoni dgħajfa b'riskju akbar ta' faqar

Il-Kunsill jshaq ukoll fuq il-bzonn li nindirizzaw kull tip ta' vjolenza fid-dar. Għalkemm ta' min ifahhar ix-xogħol li qed isir fid-djor li jilqgħu lill-ommijiet u t-tfal, hemm bzonn ta' pjan ta' azzjoni nazzjonali interministerjali bil-fondi necessarji biex il-vjolenza tkun identifikata kmieni kemm jista jkun u b'hekk tigi evitata hafna tbatija u biex nifhmu ahjar x'qed iwassal għall-vjolenza b'mod partikolari fuq il-mara

Minn barra li qegħdin infakkru il-hidma kontra il-faqar u l-eskluzzjoni, is-sena 2010 hija important għaliex qed issir revizzjoni ta' l-istrategija ta' l-ugwaljanza bejn in -nisa u l-irgiel għas-snin 2011 sa 2015. Dan hu zmien li jgħaqqad ma l -Istrategija ta' Lisbona magħrufa bhala EU 2020 li qed tigi diskussa wkoll u li għandha tinkudi il-perspettiva ta' l -ugwaljanza bħal kontribut siewi għall- futur bil-miri li nsahhu l-ekonomja u jizdied ix-xogħol

Fl-ahhar, il-Kunsill jipproponi lill-Kummissjoni Ewrepeja biex thejji studju dwar il-kontribuzzjoni tal-mara fl-ekonomija tal-familja u il-kontribut tagħha fil-qasam imprenditorjali waqt il krizi finanzjarja biex ikollna indikaturi ta' l-istrategiji u l-mizuri implimentati li wasslu lil dawn in- nisa għal success fl-intraprizi tagħhom.

Grace Attard

Women's Day Musico-literary Evening 2010

On Thursday 18th March 2010 NCW organised a musico-literary evening at Sala Isouard Manoel Theatre under the patronage of Mrs Margaret Abela spouse of H.E Dr George Abela President of Malta.

This activity was the idea of the NCW Education Committee who worked hard for the evening to be a success. Prose and poetry works by leading Maltese female authors and poets were very ably narrated by Ms Monica Attard. These works were interspersed with arias sung by mezzo soprano Connie Francis Zerafa to the piano accompaniment of Dr



Monica Attard reciting selected poetry during the NCW Musico Literary Evening

Romina Morrow.

The president's address was read by Nadya Anne Mangion vice-president. Dr

Julian Vassallo from the European Parliament Office in Malta which collaborated with the National Council of Women for International Women's Day events also addressed those present.

The evening was well-attended and the audience much appreciated the works presented. On behalf of the council I wish to thank all our members and friends who support us in these activities.

**Nadya Anne Mangion,
First vice-president**

Art Exhibition by all female Artist at San Anton Palace



Mrs Margaret Abela spouse of H. E. Dr. George Abela admiring the paintings.

On the occasion of International Women's Day, the National Council of Women organised an all-female Maltese Artists exhibition of original works. Proceeds from the exhibition were donated to the Community Chest Fund. The exhibition was held at San Anton Palace. The official opening of the Exhibition was on Friday

5th March 2010. Mrs Margaret Abela spouse of H. E. Dr. George Abela and NCW President Grace Attard inaugurated the exhibition amongst the distinguished guests there were Ambassadors, Ministers, representatives from the affiliated organisations, NCW members and other guests.

EU/GENDER EQUALITY: Commission deepens its commitment to gender equality with its "Women's Charter"

Brussels, 05/03/2010 (Agence Europe)- To coincide with International Women's Day on 8 March, the president of the European Commission, José Manuel Barroso, and his vice-president with responsibility for equal opportunities, Viviane Reding, made a political declaration before the press in Brussels, bearing witness to the Commission's commitment to gender equality, with its "Women's Charter".

President Barroso, who believes that "it is only through sustainable equality that we will be able to offer the citizens better living standards", pointed out that "equality is just as valid for men as it is for women. We must therefore promote gender equality in Europe and put this at the heart of the EU 2020 strategy ". This charter, which will be followed up by a new gender equality strategy to be adopted by the Commission in mid-2010, contains five principles. It aims, José Manuel Barroso announced, to promote: (1) equality on the employment market and equal economic independence for men and women, via the EU 2020 strategy; (2) the principle of "equal pay for equal work", working together

with the member states to bring down the salary gap between men and women by a considerable amount over the next five years; (3) equality in the decision-making process via EU incentives; (4) dignity, integrity and eradication of violence based on sex by means of a detailed framework of action; (5) gender equality beyond the borders of the EU, discussing the issue within external relations and with the international organisations.

Barroso welcomed the fact that the member states had ensured a decent proportion of women in its new Commission: "Currently, we have nine women out of 27 member states of the College and 53% of our staff are women. I appointed the first ever woman to the post of secretary general of the Commission, Catherine Day!" The president added that the number of women with a high-level position within his institution has grown from 8% in 1998 to 20% at the end of 2008.

"We do not see gender equality as a women's policy! Equality will not become reality unless men are involved", said Viviane Reding. In

the view of the first-vice-president of the Commission, "this Charter is our work, our label for gender equality, it is our commitment to ensure that this equality comes out of its box and extends to all European proposals and political actions". Reding stressed that the EU 2020 strategy had an extremely strong "equality" dimension. Gender equality should be integrated "in a collegial spirit. We will work together at the Commission to ensure that gender equality is fully integrated within this House. This is the start of a new Commission!", she concluded.

This strategy will provide a coordinated framework for cross-cutting action in all fields of activity of the EU, a press release stresses. This initiative comes 15 years after the adoption of the Beijing action programme, following the fourth United Nations conference on women. It comes further to the commitment taken by President Barroso in his speech before the European Parliament on 5 September 2009, to create a Women's Charter. (G. B./transl.fl).

Environment Committee Poster Competition

The Environment Committee together with Nature Trust organized an Eco Poster competition for school children in two categories: 6yrs to



1st Prize Poster by Jonathan Young - Category A

10yrs and 11yrs to 16yrs. Each school selected the best poster from each category and entries were sent to NCW. A team of adjudicators awarded the following prizes:

Category A:

1st prize: Jonathan Young from the Sacred Heart Seminary Victoria

2nd Prize: Thalia Massa and Andrea Cini from St. Dorothy Senior School Zebbug

3rd Prize: Michael Cutajar from Stella Maris College Gzira/Nicole Camilleri from Agius de Soldanis Victoria Gozo

Category B:

1st prize: Svetlana Dalli from St. Benedict College primary School

2nd prize: Maria Catania from St. Francis School B'Kara

The prize giving ceremony took place on Friday, 19th February at Dar l-Ewropa, Valletta. During the ceremony Mr. Vincent Attard, President of Nature Trust emphasized the importance of safeguarding the environment with a very informative Power Point presentation. NCW President Grace Attard thanked teachers and students for their efforts and participation. She highlighted that many a time adults are aware of safeguarding and appreciating the environment through their children.

Dr. Paul Pace on behalf of the adjudicators said that the winning posters had eco-friendly messages, which were interesting and very creative. The winning posters will be printed and distributed amongst various schools.

Mr. Ivan Refalo representing

Playmobilmalta Ltd., distributed the certificate of participation to all students and school's representatives

The committee would like to thank



1st Prize Poster by Svetlana Dalli - Category B

the following sponsors: The Ministry for Rural Affairs and the Environment, Forestalls for donating the first prize, Playmobil Malta for donating the second prize and Merlin Library for donating the third prize of each category.

**Marie Demicoli
Environment Committee**

DISMISSAL DURING PREGNANCY OR MATERNITY LEAVE IS AGAINST THE LAW

Protecting pregnant women from all forms of discrimination including dismissal from employment during pregnancy and maternity leave is basic principle both in EU and national legislation.

Pregnancy is also covered by a health and safety directive to ensure that working conditions such as extremely long hours of work or inhaling specific chemicals that are harmful both to the mother and to the child among others. A mother should inform her employer as soon as she knows that she is pregnant, so that the employer can immediately take the necessary measures for the safety of both mother and child; sometimes this is not done for fear of losing the job.

On the other hand in a claim of

discrimination, such as dismissal during pregnancy or during the maternity leave period, the employer has to provide clear evidence that pregnancy was not the reason for dismissal – denying is not enough. In Malta, cases of unlawful dismissal or other forms of discrimination, whether as a result of pregnancy or for other reasons are often not reported, for fear of losing the job or the possibility of finding another job; Malta is a small island and such matters spread fast.

It is important that contracts are signed without unnecessary delay and that the conditions of work are clearly specified and understood, also when moving from one type of contract or employment agreement to another, which may give rise to various

issues that need to be addressed, both from the employers and from the employee's side. Moreover, women should seek to know their rights even before entering an employment agreement. NCPE and NCW can always be sought for information and advice, especially as soon as there are the first signs of any form of discrimination.

There is the need of a change of culture, putting in practice social responsibility on the part of the employer rather than penalising women for being mothers. The revised health and safety maternity directive that once again the EU Parliament has postponed for another two months actually seeks to strengthen the position of pregnant women in all forms of work.

GOING LOCAL IN MALTA

The active engagement of the Maltese members of the European Economic and Social Committee

Friday 12 March, I went for the first time to Malta in our effort to communicate and discuss Europe locally. In our Committee we have only five members from Malta but I can assure you they are all very active! So they took the initiative to have a debate on how to engage civil society



Maltese Ambassador to the EU Richard Cachia Caruana, EESC Vice President Irini Pari (centre) and the Maltese EESC members during a civil society seminar held in Malta

in the challenges facing Europe. This was very timely as we had the opportunity to discuss the freshly presented 2020 Europe strategy.

As a Mediterranean myself I was enchanted to be in Malta feeling that we belong to the same sea, having long common history between my country Greece and Malta and also enjoying this unique sense of hospitality.

The seminar we organised with the dynamic EESC Member Sylvia Gauci from Malta Chamber of SME's (GRTU), started on a sad background.

The evening before the seminar took place, GRTU Secretary General Vince Farrugia was violently attacked in his office. The whole island was talking about that incident. We sent our warmest greetings to the Secretary General, well knowing that violence will not stop him in his everyday efforts for the organisation he represents and for his country.

The debate we had was enlightening and good. Many of the interventions logically focused on the Europe 2020 strategy and the involvement of organised Civil Society. I pointed out that our Programme for Europe with the view of civil society and its concrete measures was well **reflected in the new strategy**. I was glad that now there were special objectives concerning young people something our Committee has been asking for so long. It is important that at least 40% of young people should have a degree or diploma but it is also important to make sure that education corresponds to the needs of the labour market. We cannot accept the increasing youth employment, while at the same time **European business cannot find the right qualifications**.

It was ensuring to hear the very active Maltese Ambassador to the European Union, Richard Cachia Caruana talk about "inclusive growth" and he insisted that in Europe we need to be ambitious but realistic and we now need to turn the 2020 strategy in tangible reality, taking civil society on board added the Maltese Minister Chris Said explaining the important long term decisions and measures

his government was taking and how organised Civil Society was a key component in Maltese Governance. My colleague of the Committee of the Region, Claudette Baldacchino, expressed a hope that the time for Communicating on institutional questions was over and that we, with the Lisbon Treaty in place, could start to focus on politics. After this came the European Parliament Representative Julian Vassallo and the Commission representative Bill Martin who were present through out the proceedings. We very much appreciate this openness and partnership.

All five EESC Members took part in the panel discussion. Grace Attard put focus on innovation and entrepreneurship, Edwin Calleja praised the internal market and its benefits to the citizens and enterprises, while asking for more focus to be given to its external dimension. Anna Maria Darmanin called for a stock exchange for SME's and suggested a renewed focus on sustainable consumption. Sylvia Gauci emphasized the need to have a special attention to Islands when formulating European policies. Considering that 20 million of European citizens live on Islands, we have to take this very seriously. Lastly Michael Parnis put focus on the progress being made in the Euromediterranean cooperation.

At the end of this meeting I could only say one thing "Malta is small but Malta is beautiful, Malta is efficient, Malta is dynamic and Malta is engaged!"

Irini Pari, EESC Vice President



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NCW AGM 2010 highlights healthcare reform and addressing the needs of vulnerable groups

The Annual General Meeting of the National Council of Women was held on Saturday 30 January, at the Victoria Hotel, Sliema. President Grace Attard highlighted the need for proactive **policies for the short and long term**, in the Council's commitment to identify and address future situations. 'The year 2009 has been a time of unprecedented circumstances, not least by **the current global economic, financial and social crisis and the negative impact on women** in particular in employment and on gender equality policies in general. However, the crisis can offer new opportunities for Member States to evaluate their current policies and from the lessons learnt during this difficult time realise the value of strengthening the gender perspective in all fields of policy.'

In line with Government Policy on the reform of Public Health, the resolutions submitted for approval concentrated on public health measures and on areas that require particular attention in the case of vulnerable groups reflecting the European Year for Combating Poverty and Social Exclusion 2010

The year 2010 represents an important step for the future of gender policies because it marks the end of the actions promoted by the **"Roadmap for Equality between Women and Men 2006-2010"** and the review for post 2010. The UN Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW, 1979), is under review as we commemorate its 30th anniversary, the **1995 UN Beijing Platform for Action** and its 12 critical areas of concern, again under review as we commemorate its 15th anniversary (Beijing +15), the 2000

UN Millennium Development Goals 10th anniversary and the commitments recently taken by Governments at the 98th session of the **International Labour Conference ILO (2009)**.

Grace Attard thanked the members of the various committees and the representatives of the affiliated organizations, who more than ever, have been very dynamic and augured that working closely together will remain a priority in the forthcoming months.

In conclusion she stated that there is the need to work towards further developing a European and global perspective. 'There is no longer room for isolation - we have to become European and global in our thinking, our attitudes, policy formulation and more so in practice if we want NCW to be truly engaged and effective in its mission for the benefit of society'

The General Assembly also discussed and approved a number of resolutions, dealing with

1. The Right Prosthesis for Breast Cancer - Action for Breast Cancer Foundation
2. Health promotion/prevention by family health nurse/midwife in the community MUMN
3. Consumer driven health services MUMN
4. A National Sexual Health Policy
5. Cancer Screening
6. Extension of Maternity Leave
7. Subsidy or tax refund to those women opting to uptake private medical care such as breast care or cervical screening MUMN
8. Legal Aid
9. Vulnerable Refugees
10. SEC - MATSEC Children with Learning difficulties

11. Regulations re energy friendly buildings

The Assembly also approved declarations on:

- European Year for Combating Poverty and Social Exclusion 2010
- European Year for Volunteering 2011
- Action Plan on Domestic Violence

The assembly unanimously approved bestowing Honorary Life Membership on Dr Joanna Drake 'for her outstanding contribution to Maltese society, through her efforts in promoting Malta's entry into the European Union and her continued valuable work in European Union representation and administration'.

The Executive Committee Members for 2010 are President Grace Attard,



First Executive Committee Meeting 2010

Vice Presidents: Doreen Micallef, Mary Gaerty, Nadya Ann Mangion, Hon. General Secretary Doris Bingley, Hon. Treasurer Therese Cassola, Members: Maria Camilleri, Helga Ellul, Jean Killick, Dr Mariosa Vella Cardona, Dr Mercedes Schembri Wismayer, Ruth Falzon, Maud Muscat, M'Rose Zahra and Dr Claudine Zarb, NCW Legal Advisor.

**Grace Attard,
President NCW**

Women and Politics: Presence and Participation in the European Union

The Public Policy Department at the University of Malta in collaboration with the National Commission for the Promotion of Equality (NCPE) and the National Council of Women (NCW) organised the first annual Lecture on Gender and Public Policy on the 11 March 2010. This memorial lecture honoured the memory of Agatha Barbara and Josephine Burns Debono two pioneering women who paved the road for the participation of Maltese women in the nation's public life.

The Memorial Lecture was delivered by Professor Emeritus Elizabeth Meehan

from Queen's University, Belfast at the University building, St Paul Street, Valletta. She spoke on *Women and Politics: Presence and Participation in the European Union*. Prof Elizabeth Meehan also spoke about the current Maltese situation, which she meticulously researched and which served as a basis for an interesting

discussion on the need for Maltese women to find their rightful place in the political decision-making roles at local, national and EU level.



NATIONAL COUNCIL OF WOMEN OF MALTA

General Assembly Meeting 2010 - Annual Report for 2009



2009, the European Year of Creativity and Innovation, was a very important milestone for the Council as it celebrated **45 years**. As in the past 2009 was a year of work which brought

progress and success to NCW Malta as we hosted three international events and many national activities. It is especially good to realise that NCW has recognition and credibility not only in Malta and Europe but also globally.

President, Grace Attard, and the Council's dynamic team attained many goals this past year. Our members and committees focused on knowledge-sharing and team work. It has been a year full of achievements, creativity and innovation. We worked closely with our thirty one affiliated organisations outlining our diversity by the range of activities undertaken, delivering clear and well balanced views. We continue to cover many issues, raise the profile of women in Malta based on strong family traditions and beliefs.

The Spring meeting of the European Centre of the International Council of Women (ECICW) was held in Malta at the end of April, on the invitation of the National Council of Women of Malta. Representatives came



from National Councils in Belgium, France, Great Britain, Greece, Hungary, Italy, Malta, Netherlands, North Cyprus, Romania, Spain, Switzerland, and Turkey. Apologies and regrets were received from Austria, Germany, Hungary, Israel, Monaco, Russia, and Slovenian. During a very full meeting the participants enjoyed a Seminar arranged by NCW Malta; elections were held for the Board of ECICW and Doreen Micallef was voted ECICW Vice-President for the next two years.

The second event was the consultation for the **Commonwealth People's Forum (CPF) for CHOGM 2009** with the theme: "Partnering for a More Equitable and Sustainable Future" held on Monday 8th June 2009 at the Royal Hall, The Palace Sliema. The Consultation in Malta was organized by the National Council of Women Malta with the support of the Commonwealth Foundation. The Consultation was opened by HE President Emeritus Prof Guido de Marco, former Chair of the Commonwealth Foundation while Commonwealth Foundation Deputy Director Vijay Krishnarayan outlined the scope of the Commonwealth People's Forum. Over sixty representatives of Government, Employers Associations, Unions, Academia and various Interest Groups (NGOs) attended. During a full day of presentations and deliberations, the discussion centred round National and International issues among them Human Rights, Education, Gender, Environment & Climate Change and above

all the Financial Crisis.

The National Council of Women of Malta hosted the **4th UNESCO Congress for Women Organisations from the Eight Small States of Europe** from the 24 to 27 September 2009 at The Palace Hotel, Sliema. Present were representatives from Andorra, Cyprus, Iceland, Liechtenstein, Luxembourg, Monaco and San Marino. Keynote Speaker was Ms. Esther Eghobamien, Head of Gender Section, Social Transformation Programmes Division, Commonwealth Secretariat Marlborough House London.

The aim of the Congress was to discuss the contribution of women in social and economic areas, in particular in the global financial crisis and its aftermath.

Other work in progress includes:

ARETUSA – A European network for the promotion of equal opportunity policies.

Anna Lindh Foundation Network - A Plan of Action of the Maltese Network is in place. Meetings are held regularly and preparation for a seminar is ongoing. The Malta contact is Vanessa Ficarra, Maltese ALF Network Coordinator, Mediterranean Institute, University of Malta and **Heritage Project**, a project approved in 2009 with NCW as one of the partners. Education and Training in wood conservation and restoration. The courses started in November at the National Museum of Archaeology Valletta and will be in Maltese and English. The courses are being offered in Gozo as well.

Conscious of the digital divide we extend to our members and others the opportunity to be computer literate. We offer **Computer awareness and ECDL level courses** with European recognised certification. We are proud to say that our success rate in exams has risen to 99%. **In 2009 we added "Basic Maths" to the "Basic Maltese" and "Basic English"** courses on offer at NCW. They are providing a great need and the numbers of participants increase yearly. These courses are a great help to those who left the academic world to raise a family. They give these adult students the energy and impetus to start all over again. Among our success stories are the ones who are continuing their studies at MCAST and University.

Mr Mario Azzopardi, Director Lifelong Learning And Adult Education Services at the Ministry for Education, Culture, Youth and Sport, presented certificates to 120 participants. Women are making use of Lifelong Learning programmes to achieve better knowledge and skills in Computer Literacy, English, Maltese and Maths, thus empowering themselves to further their studies and improve their employability. Attracting more women to the labour market is one of the challenges the country is facing as we strive to get closer to the Lisbon Agenda targets while enhancing our economic performance.

On the occasion of the 2009 **International Women's Day**, The National Council of Women and its affiliated



organisations, celebrated the occasion with a thanksgiving Mass at Our Lady of Victory Church Valletta. Another activity commemorating International Women's Day was a Musico-Literary Evening organised in conjunction

with *Ghaqda Poeti Maltin* at the Art Manufacture and Commerce Society Hall Valletta.

NCW delegates had the opportunity to keep abreast of issues that affect the daily lives of women at interactive workshops, seminars and conferences.

Executive Members and Committee Members attended over 75 conferences and Seminars in Malta. Many concerned EU matters and changes in Social Policies.

The seminars attended covered gender issues, health, education, family & work; consumer rights, environmental issues, persons with disability, youth and children, communication & media, social inclusion, employment and EU citizenship.

NCW organised a seminar on the subject of Maltese Women in the European Parliament which took place in April. Six women candidates in the coming European elections in June 2009 presented their case for more women in European decision-making, and outlined their plans and policies.

Other speakers included Grace Attard, President of NCW Malta, the Hon. Dr. Louis Galea, Speaker of the Maltese Parliament, Dr. Joanna Drake, Head of the European Commission in Malta, and a speaker from the European Parliament Information Office. The need to include the women's perspective in political decisions, and for more family-friendly policies, for action on women and poverty, and for inter-generational solidarity was emphasised. NCW's **Vote for Women MEPs** campaign for the European Parliament elections was very prominent in the first six months of 2009 till the election in June. Great effort was put into disseminating posters and literature.

The National Council of Women participates in **breast care awareness** in October,

NCW supports the two affiliated organisations, Breast Care Support Group and Action for Breast Care Foundation. NCW ended 2009 with an enjoyable **Christmas Dinner**, held at **the Malta Hilton, St Julians**. This was an ideal setting to the Christmas celebrations.

Doris Bingley attended and participated in the **53rd Session of the United Nations Commission on the Status of Women in New York**

President Grace Attard continued with her work at the **European Economic and Social Committee in Brussels** working on various opinions. The opinions prepared by EESC, go to the European Parliament and the European Commission before they become Directives.

Doris Bingley is a member of the Commonwealth Foundation Civil Society Advisory Committee, which consists of representatives from all the regions. She is on the Executive and Board of the Foundation. This involves teleconferencing, virtual discussions and meetings in London. She participated in the **Commonwealth People's Forum & CHOGM in November 2009 in Port of Spain, Trinidad & Tobago**. Doreen Micallef

Overseas visits were undertaken by, Grace Attard, Doris Bingley Doreen Micallef, Diane Xuereb, Mariosa Vella Cardona and Nadyanne Mangion. Valuable contacts and useful information were acquired for the Council. Funding

was made possible through Anna Lindh Foundation, the Commonwealth Foundation, the European Economic and Social Committee, DG Employment, Social Affairs & Equal Opportunities, European Parliament and by the members themselves. Reports were published in the Newspapers, *Il-Mara* and on the website.

NCW forms part of the **Forum for Civil Society Organisations (Malta)**. NCW holds the Vice-Presidency at this moment through Doris Bingley. Meetings are held regularly at MCESD to discuss various legislation and national issues, such as the reform in Education & the Tourism Sector. Contacts with Government & European Parliamentarians are ongoing, as well as contacts with Commissions, Corporations and Organisations.

At every AGM, a number of **resolutions** are approved. These are distributed to the Prime Minister, Leader of the Opposition, Ministers, Members of Parliament and relevant departments, agencies and commissions. They also go to the affiliated organisations, many of whom participate in presenting proposed resolutions, and to related groups in civil society and to the unions. NCW was pleased to receive positive comments regarding the resolutions from the relevant departments. Some resolutions have been incorporated in white papers.

The executive committee and sectional committees have been very busy these last twelve months. Apart from all the involvement the Council has as mentioned already, the Executive Committee met formally eleven times. The Central Committee met three times. The Officers communicated regularly. We are pleased to note that the individual membership continues to grow at a fast rate.

Publications and Communications

- The quarterly newsletter 'Il-Mara' is very popular locally and overseas. In 2009 we redesigned the cover.
- The Independent and The Times of Malta have published articles and press releases as did the other Maltese dailies.
- Our website, **www.ncwmalta.com** has been upgraded. It is attracting much attention.
- The increase in communications via the e-mail shows a positive trend, which makes our work quicker and easier.
- We also receive publications from different EU DGs and the Commonwealth Foundation. Students who come seeking information at our office find these extremely useful.

At 45 years old NCW is still fresh, full of ideas, innovation and creativity. It has become a contact centre for women especially at grassroots level. There are opportunities for women to develop skills in literacy and ICT and NCW offers these women a better future. The outcome of this eventful year was built on numerous consultations, communications and team work especially the continuous cooperation of the Affiliated Organisations.

**Doris Bingley,
Hon General Secretary**



Proposals and recommendations for the EU 2020 strategy

Vision for EU 2020 Strategy

The EU 2020 must be embedded in a global context. Both the recent financial crisis and the current recession together with the outcome of the Copenhagen Summit on Climate Change necessitate such an approach. The above developments have changed the global and the European Union scenario and therefore the EU 2020 needs to reflect the changes both in vision and in policies and practice. This strategy, in actual fact, is timely, as the EU moves into the implementation of the Lisbon Treaty, the new term of the EU Parliament and the incoming Commission.

There is the need for a strategy that will ensure responsibility and commitment of the EU 2020 in a binding integrated approach between EU Institutions and member states. It would be useful to see how the implementation of the Lisbon Treaty can provide basic structures to make this strategy an effective reality.

It is important that EU 2020 be built on a careful study of the successful aspects of the Lisbon Strategy. There is also need to identify the shortcomings of individual member states and the lack of co-ordination with EU Institutions, in particular the Commission.

Within member states it is important that the strategy is owned by all stakeholders: government, employers, trade unions and Civil Society, including NGOs through a structured process of consultation and participation.

Finally the strategy needs to ensure that the social, environmental and economic aspects of EU 2020 are reflected in a global approach, thus enabling the EU to be a leader in the global scenario – indeed not an easy task- and the role of developing technology which is a key factor of this changing scenario

Specific proposals

Although Member States have the main responsibility for implementation, there needs to be an appropriate European framework enabling the intended structural reforms to be implemented in a coordinated and consistent way through:

Strengthening the focus on growth in EU policy by creating a proper economic policy framework; improving the functioning of the internal market by striking a better balance between the economic, social and environmental dimension and promoting social cohesion as a factor in a stable and dynamic economy to boost growth and productivity.

Therefore the EU 2020 strategy must be geared towards social progress, the consolidation and sustainability of social protection systems and combating poverty, not least by preventing unequal distribution of wealth, thus creating an inclusive labour market:

Flexicurity must provide effective security in changing circumstances: The concept of flexicurity must ensure effective security in changing circumstances, with equal priority in practice for labour market security, stable employment and jobs, maintaining employability, social security, and labour market mobility geared towards good, productive jobs

Better coordination of tax policy: In line with the EU Treaties, greater efforts should be made to achieve EU-wide coordination of Member States' tax policy (including harmonised tax bases and minimum rates), primarily in those areas in which the tax basis is internationally mobile and the risk of tax evasion and tax competition between Member States is greatest.

Special emphasis should be placed on further **developing European industrial policy**, not least in the direction of "green technologies", nanotechnology and ICT, and on boosting socially responsible entrepreneurship, as well as on promoting business start-ups and enabling companies to stay in business

Meeting the challenge of demographic change and offer solutions to migration issues:

Dealing with the challenges of an ageing society are and continue to be growth and employment strategies. This applies equally to the younger and the older generation. Alongside tackling unemployment and creating more and better jobs, more must also be done – considering also birth rates - to achieve a work/life balance. Successful solutions in the area of migration and integration which promote Europe's potential for growth and at the same time do not put social cohesion at risk represent some of the key challenges of the post-2010 period.

The knowledge triangle (education, research, innovation) should be further promoted: Europe must further strengthen its potential in terms of skilled workers, science, research and technology and thus its capacity to innovate as a key element of competition. Initiatives by the Commission linked with *Future Skills for Future Jobs* and establishing Sector Councils on Employment need to be further developed across all member states. The notion of innovation has to be widened to include also "social innovation" in order to increase social capital which is important both for competitiveness and social cohesion.

Managing climate change as a key aspect of the EU 2020 strategy requires change in many areas: Promoting energy efficiency and renewable energy will, in addition to drawing on the environmental sector, be a key element of the post-2010 strategy.

The renewed strategy must include an action plan for a low-carbon economy. Having put in place a comprehensive legislative framework for energy and climate change, the EU should now concentrate on practical implementation. Effective policy measures should be integrated into the integrated guidelines, country-specific recommendations and national reform programmes.

Consolidating the external dimension:

In view of the rise of new global economic powers and the impact of the international economic crisis, it is more important than ever for the EU to give itself a new, more unified and assertive framework for its external activities, in order to secure an adequate, fair and sustainable opening of markets, raise the normative standards on the basis of the relevant rights involved, foster multilateralism and dialogue with key partners, and create a mutually beneficial area of progress that also includes the Mediterranean region and Africa

Governance

Boosting the role of the European institutions: An enhanced role for the European institutions is particularly important in the light of the current crisis.

Making the OMC more effective in Member States:

Instruments should be found of making the targets more binding and creating better incentives for Member States to pursue the target commitments to which they have agreed more consistently

Monitoring the EU 2020 goals via Member States' economic and social councils: partners in the individual Member States. The relevant reports which are to be drawn up by the ESCs should contain analyses on the implementation of the EU 2020 targets for submission to governments and the European institutions, who in turn would be encouraged to draw appropriate conclusions. The ESCs and civil society organisations could invite Commission representatives to discuss specific national circumstances. Likewise, national ESCs should be involved in the Commission's annual consultations. Maintaining exchanges of views and experience between the EESC and national ESCs on the national reform plans and the EU 2020 agenda is of particular importance here.

Greater credibility through the enhanced involvement of civil society

The national coordinators should work together consistently with all stakeholders in the preparation, implementation and evaluation of the national reform programmes.

Further steps should be taken to foster ongoing dialogue in the Member States based on the respective consultative procedures and competences of the social partners in the individual Member States. This dialogue should involve national ESCs and, potentially, also bring in other civil society stakeholders (NGOs, social economy organisations, etc.) and representatives of higher education institutions and think tanks.

Member State governments should provide more information about the results of civil and social dialogue held in connection with the EU 2020 goals.

Grace Attard

Jum il-Hajja

The Malta Unborn Child Movement celebrated 'Jum il-Hajja - 2010' on 7th February with Holy Mass at St John's Co-Cathedral Valletta. As part of the core group, NCW was invited to attend. Holy Mass was celebrated by Archbishop Emeritus Guzeppi Mercieca, where he stated that life is a gift from God thus as Catholics we are one with Him. No man can favour or agree to the elimination in whatever way of this gift.

For this celebration members of the Muslim, Jewish, Hindu and Bahai communities were also invited. After Mass a series of messages for the occasion were read in the Cathedral Oratory beneath the magnificent Caravaggio

painting of the Beheading of St John the Baptist. Mr Tony Mifsud coordinator of the Movement stated that it was a fitting setting since it was a celebration for prevention of termination of life in any way. Further messages interventions by Mr Peter Buontempo for the Valletta Local Council, Dr Tony Agius Decelis for the PL, the Honourable Mr Edwin Vassallo president of the Social Affairs Committee of the House of Representatives, the honourable Dr Tonio Borg deputy Prime Minister. Dr Josie Muscat who was amongst those present was asked to say a few words about his experiences as obstetrician.

Nadya Anne Mangion

International Women's Day Homily

The following is an extract of the homily delivered by Rev Fr Joe Cini SDB on the occasion of the NCW Mass commemorating International Women's Day March 2010

A most controversial issue in our society has always been to determine a woman's place in the world today. And this has not yet been solved, as you know; so different is the status of women in different countries! The Biblical testimony on the role of women is mixed, at best. It is not surprising then, that society has had difficulty defining that role as well. In Palestine in Biblical times the birth of a boy was an occasion for great joy. When the time of the birth was near at hand friends and local musicians gathered near the house. However, if the newborn baby was a girl the musicians went

silently and regretfully away. In Jesus' time a Hebrew rabbi was not supposed to speak to a woman at all in public. We are told that this applied even to his own wife and mother and yet Jesus talked to women, even to some women of shameful reputation. Jesus treated all persons, including women, with dignity and compassion. Women were also very prominent in his ministry. There are some principles I believe that all of us can agree on, as Christians, as we deal with this issue of a woman's place.

THE FIRST IS TO RECOGNIZE AND TO CELEBRATE THE FACT THAT THERE ARE DIFFERENCES BETWEEN MEN AND WOMEN. There are physical differences, but there are also emotional and cultural and psychological differences. For instance, studies have shown that women have a better memory for names and faces. Women are faster and more accurate in tasks requiring manual dexterity. That's why so many women are good typists and why more should be neuro-surgeons. Here's another important fact. Throughout their lives women smile more than men. This may be a handicap for women in business: studies show that a woman has to be twice as assertive in order to be taken as seriously as a man. So there are differences, and we

acknowledge and even celebrate these differences. **SECONDLY**, TRADITIONALLY THERE HAS ALSO BEEN A DIVISION OF RESPONSIBILITY BETWEEN MEN AND WOMEN. Man has been the hunter; woman has been the homemaker. Even in societies that have worked at it, this has been a difficult pattern to break. The most famous attempt has probably been in the Israeli kibutz in which all chores were assigned equally with no regard to sex. That experiment broke down in most of the kibutz. Women came to spend much more time than men looking after the children and doing household chores. Is it biological? Is it social conditioning? We simply do not know. Until the industrial revolution it continued to be a most practical arrangement for men to work outside the home and mums to look after the household. When St. Paul says to men, "Men love your wives," he is establishing a principle that cannot be ignored in this new society in which we live. There needs to be some adjustments. There are differences between men and women, and there is a division of responsibility, but that division needs to be equal and fair.

THIRDLY THERE IS ONE THING MORE TO BE SAID. WOMEN ARE TO BE ACCORDED DIGNITY. We ask, "What do women want?" Is it not the same thing every child of God wants: to be

regarded with dignity as a person of value and importance? Women deserve to be accorded dignity, the same dignity as a man enjoys; and this for two reasons. **One:** A woman, by her very nature, is equal to man. Every study shows that woman is just as able in almost every area as men. Then there is a **second reason** and an even more powerful reason. It is a verse of Scripture that more than balances all the rest of the Biblical testimony regarding the place of women in the universe. It is profound in its import. It is found in the first chapter of Genesis, verse 27: **"So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him, male and female he created them."** Both men and women have been created in the image of God. There is no hint in this verse that one is to be subservient to the other. There can be no place in the Christian family for violating the sacred dignity of either.



EUROPEAN WOMEN'S FORUM - BEIJING+15

The Spanish Presidency of the Council of the European Union (January-June 2010) hosted the European Women's Forum-Beijing+15 in the Palace of Congress of Cadiz on 4th- 5th February 2010. The Event was attended by official delegations of the 27 Member States and a number of Ministers together with invited NGO representatives from across the EU.



Therese Bugeja NCPE Director, George Sultana, MEEF Director, Doris Bingley Hon. Gen. Secretary, Eva Britt Svensson - President of the European Parliament Women's Rights and Gender Equality Commission.

MEEF Director, George Sultana, NCPE, Executive Director, Therese Bugeja and NCW General Secretary, Doris Bingley participated in the two day Forum.

The two day meeting was structured around the forthcoming 54th Session of the Commission on Status of Women in March 2010 and the review of the Beijing Platform for Action +15. The number of participants which exceeded 300 had the opportunity to dialogue and discuss the issues at the plenary sessions and interactive workshops. Eva Britt Svensson – President of the European Parliament Women's Rights and Gender Equality Commission stressed the need to involve "women and society as a whole" in eradicating inequality and especially the violence that affects "all women in all social classes".

Present at the closing ceremony were the executive director of UNIFEM, Inés Alberdi; the director of the Belgian Institute for Equality, Michel Pasteel, and the director of the European Institute for Gender Equality, Virginia Langbakk. The Spanish Presidency will represent the EU in the extraordinary session of the EWF Beijing+15, held at the beginning of March in the UN's headquarters in New York.

The Mayor of Cadiz opened the Forum by describing the opportunities presented by the Beijing Conference and suggested that European women should take action by calling for another World Conference. There could be benefits of a 5th World Conference on Women which should explore the role of women today and could further examine the role and impact of regional and local governments.

The Minister for Equality, Spain, Bibiana Aído was the keynote speaker and she urged participants to think about an EU Legacy. She urged attending delegations focus to be on girls and young women. One opportunity was to support measures to introduce a European Observatory on Violence Against Women – which would provide a vehicle to introduce a set of indicators on violence against women which are presently lacking.

Belinda Pyke, the Director of Equality between Women and Men at the European Commission, reminded the conference about the significant impact that the Beijing Platform had already made and urged participants to continue to use the framework to initiate change. The dual track process of gender mainstreaming and specific policy interventions had enabled Member States to focus their activities. Probably the most useful tool had been the Commission's Roadmap of Equality between

Women and Men 2006-2010, where policies, programmes and research had been harnessed together for optimum effect.

The Secretary of State for Equal Opportunities in Hungary championed the need to use the Lisbon Treaty to renew and strengthen the machinery in the EU to further support gender equality. The EU 2020 Strategy needed to see gender equality as an integral part of social and economic growth and efforts needed to be made to provide opportunities for women to play a more active role following the impact of the recession.

There was discussion on topics such as education where there were concerns that women's educational achievement did not translate into economic success. It was argued that social and economic policies were cross-cutting and that governments had a role in ensuring that long-medium term competitiveness had to be maintained. Budgets were a critical tool and it was suggested that people in power understood numbers in a way that they did not understand words, so it was important to think in those terms.

Following the opening speeches a plenary session was held on "Introduction to Beijing+15: The action platform and the European Union". A High Level Panel then discussed "Equality in the European Union: Challenges and Priorities". During the afternoon, participatory debates on three topics were held. These examined Health and Violence, the Economy and Education and the Media.

On the second day there was a High Level Panel on "Women and Decision Making", feedback from the workshop debates and the event's closing speeches. There was also broad agreement that the agenda should not be set by, and for, the benefit of men.

There were concerns that a number of reforms lacked credible data so there was a need for a strong evidence base in order to take matters further. The new Gender Equality Institute was welcomed to provide a regular exchange of information. There were calls for women's knowledge and insight to be taken into account in policy development otherwise women would continue to be marginalised.

In response to the opening remarks there were calls for increased funding for women's organisations at EU, national, regional and local levels and a debate about the desirability of quotas for political representation. Some felt that quotas could diminish progress by creating an artificial barrier at 50% while others believed that targets were needed to stimulate the initial increase in numbers.

The resulting Cadiz Declaration-Towards Successful and Sustainable Societies, outlined that the global economic crisis offered a unique opportunity for change. Equality between women and men is a pre-condition for sustainable growth, employment innovation, competitiveness and social cohesion.

The Cadiz Declaration is to be found on website:

**Doris Bingley
NCW General Secretary**



Therese Bugeja NCPE Director, Inés Alberdi Executive Director UNIFEM, Doris Bingley NCW Hon. General Secretary

Public Dialogue

Women in Public Life - A Changing Scenario

More Women in Senior positions – key to economic stability and growth

The global challenges that Malta is facing, as we recover from the recent recession require an innovative approach to the role of women in decision-making.

The public dialogue organised by the EP Office in Malta and the National Council of



Marlene Mizzi, Dr. Julian Vassallo, Grace Attard, during the presentation on Women in Public Life by MEP Edward Scicluna

Europa House on the 16 April, brought together all stakeholders MEPs, representatives of political parties, Trade Unions, Employers, entrepreneurs and EU experts to evaluate the current under-representation of women in senior positions, in political decision-making, local, regional and European, in public administration and in economic activity. Malta ranks lowest in political decision making 9% at national level and nil in the EP. The distribution



Hon. Chris Said Parliamentary Secretary OPM being presented with a memento of the event by NCW President Grace Attard

promoting gender balance.

The economic crisis has sharply revealed the lack of women in prominent positions in the financial sector. We are becoming more aware that the contribution of women can be beneficial to business. It is necessary therefore for both the public and the private sector to be innovative in ensuring the increase of women in business at all levels and in removing barriers

More efforts are needed to encourage women

entrepreneurs. In Europe women currently make up only 45% of all persons in employment (Malta 38%), but only a third of all those are self-employed. More women in science, research and development are key to innovation and competitiveness for the future of Europe, but the talent of women remain underutilised. Across Europe, decision-making bodies of Trade Unions include just less than 23% women members whilst employers' organisations have less than 12%

At EU level, progress has been slow in the field of public sector research (39% of posts are held by women), and only minor improvements have been seen in the economic and financial sectors (no directors of central banks are women and only 17% of central bank board members are female) with the figure being barely 3% for the boards of management of major companies



Whilst structural barriers still exist in spite of legislation, stereotypical attitudes and preconceptions of women's roles and abilities remain the most important obstacles, however lack of suitable female role models, family commitments, lack of management experience and lack of mentoring



opportunities amongst others also need to be addressed

Europa House was packed with a keen and participative audience and we hope that NCW will follow up this event by presenting recommendations made during the interactive discussion to the relevant authorities.

**Grace Attard,
President NCW**



WEB DESIGN



MULTIMEDIA



DATA CENTRE



SOFTWARE DEV.



SEO



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ECICW General Assembly Parma 9 - 11 April 2010 Report

The first ECICW General Assembly for 2010 was held between the 9 - 11 April in Parma Italy; by the kind invitation of Signora Gigliola Corduas, President of the National Council of Women of Italy (Consiglio Nazionale Donne Italiane) who had invited ECICW to hold their Spring Meeting there.



The Assembly's theme for this spring was Nutrition and Food Safety. The Italian Women's Council prepared a packed programme for the occasion. Parma, being in the Italian Food Valley offered much

scope for a very interesting itinerary. The first day started with a visit to the European Food Safety Authority (EFSA) in Parma itself. EFSA was setup in 2002 to carry out risk assessment of all food from farm to table inside the EU. It provides scientific advice and support for EU laws and policies on food and feed safety. It also provides independent information and communicates risks within the EU. EFSA information may be accessed through its website: www.efsa.europa.eu. Ms Lesley Koschel gave a very informative presentation of EFSA's aims and work.

The programme continued with a trip to Colorno 12km from Parma where we visited Palazzo Farnese. All delegates present were taken on an intense and very interesting guided tour of the Palace. The palace also houses the UNISG - Università di Scienze gastronomiche / Gastronomic Science University where aspiring chefs can attend master courses on food quality and biodiversity in Italian and English; as well as ALMA - La Scuola Internazionale di Cucina Italiana, the most prestigious cooking school in the world. This school was set up in 1988 by Gualtiero Marchesi and Marino Marini founders of the Slow Food Movement. ALMA is out-fitted with the latest teaching and cooking facilities; demonstration and theory classrooms; a pastry, ice cream and bread lab; a 5,000 volume reading reference and video lending library and a restaurant. Chef

Marchesi still lectures at the school while Marino Marini started the school's library by donating all his books and he is the school's librarian to date. (www.alma.scuolacucina.it)

A light lunch at the school's canteen followed which was finished off with an unforgettable vanilla, pistachio and nocciola ice cream made by the students themselves. A few more kilometres away and we visited the San Pietro Parma ham factory in Langhirano. The process of Parma ham manufacture from the carefully selected raw material to the final fragrant, sweet and tender product lasts a minimum of 12 months of curing in controlled conditions. Naturally the visit was finished off with a tasting session of ham accompanied by Malvasia sparkling wine.

We then returned to Parma and were greeted by the Giunta del Comune di Parma at the Mayor's Office. Ms Cristina Sassi presided in the Mayor's absence. She explained that they were one of the youngest Councils in Italy working on an ambitious programme called "Progetto Comune Amico" to render the city accessible to all by simplifying all services to the citizens but at the same time making use of all new technologies. We were then taken on a short tour of the building housing the Parma Council. The day came to an end with a well deserved meal at one of Parma's restaurants.

The next two days were devoted to the ECICW-ICW General Assembly meetings. Reports from various national women's councils were presented. Two working groups were established. One group focussed on the effects of the financial crisis on women with developments regarding maternity, parental, paternal leave and the gender pay gap. The second group concentrated on the manipulation of children by advertising, merchandising and the media and the risks to their physical, emotional, social and sexual development. The second working came up with a recommendation which was presented to the Council of Europe to coincide with the 25th anniversary of the Convention on Exploitation of Children. The Turkish women's Council representative cordially invited ECICW to hold the Autumn Meeting on Princes' Island Istanbul which was heartily accepted by all present.

Nadya Ann Mangion

Ir-Regettier u l-Mużew tal-Klassi - Ġabra ta' novelli ġodda mill-awtriċi Nora Macelli

X'jiġri meta għalliem jistimula student li ma jemminx fil-ferħ biex juża' dan ix-xetticiżmu tiegħu bħala tema għal proġett? X'forma jiehu l-proġett ta' l-istudent? **Il-Proġett ta' Darren** hija waħda minn erbatax-il novella dwar temi kontemporanji ta' interess għan-nisa u familji. Darren hu żagħżuġ sfinit li jgħix fl-istess dar ma' omm u missier mifrudin:

"Il-fatt li tghallem jiddistakka ruħu mil-logħba perikoluża perpetwa tagħhom biex josservahom minn barra x-xatba ta' qalbu għenitu jinheba biex la jservi ta' stedina għal taqbidha u lanqas jispiċċa mifluġ jew mgħaffeg. U spiċċa haġbu. Hemm u mhux hemm. Bla ħoss, bla kliem, u bla sliem."

Ir-regettier u l-Mużew tal-Klassi - l-istorja bit-titlu tal-ktieb - hija novella oħra li tiżvolġi f'kuntast tal-mixja edukattiva ta' studenti fi skola. L-istorja hija ġawhra ta' letteratura. Irrakkuntata mill-perspettiva ta' għalliema li tistieden regettier biex jiltaqa' mat-tfal tal-klassi biex jitkellem dwar il-mestier tiegħu. Minflok, dan ir-regettier jixpruna proċess parteċipattiv li jqanqal tagħlim u għarfien mislut mill-erperjenza personali ta' kull tifel u tifla fil-klassi, inkluż ta' l-għalliema nnifisha.

"Innutajt lil Martina tispjega ritratt diġitali ta' gwardarobba antika b'bieba waħda u mirja twal u doġoq ma' kull naħa. Hi qalet li għalkemm ommha kienet tilfet lill-mamà tagħha fi ċkunitha, kienet għadha tiftakarha ċar f'moħħha. Kull meta ommha tiftaħ il-bieba żzaqzaq ta' dik il-gwardarobba sewdinija, timmaġina lil ommha qed toħroġilha libsa tal-bellus aħmar b'għonq tal-bizzilla

halli joħroġu flimkien."

Il-mod kif student partikolari ma thallix barra minn proċess kollettiv kollaborattiv, ukoll, huwa ta' interess għall-għalliema. Il-Malti mħaddem mill-awtriċi huwa Malti haġ u dinamiku, b'vokabbularju għani u djalogu fin. L-istil mexxej malajr idahħlek f'atmosfera li tiġbdek bħal kalamita.

Il-holm u l-interpretazzjoni tiegħu niltaqgħu magħhom f'żewġ novelli interessantissimi. L-ewwel waħda, **Il-holma**, hija storja ta' terapija li ddaħħalna fil-fond ta' proċess terapewtiku. Din in-novella għandha tkun ta' interess qawwi għal psikologi u terapisti li jahdmu f'dan il-kuntast. It-tieni novella, **Il-Lotterija**, hija storja oħra li fiha tidhol it-tema tal-holm. Din ukoll, bħall-istess jor, oħra, thallik fuq ix-xwiek sa l-aħħar.

F'L-Għassiesa naraw l-effett tul is-snin, fuq familja, ta' abbuż sesswali. Ir-rakkont huwa minn żewġ perspettivi u għaldaqstant jirnexxilu jdahħall lill-qarrej fil-moħħ u l-qalb tal-karattri ewlenin. Tliet novelli huma msejsa barra minn xutna. Waħda minnhom hija **Bullettin ta' l-Aħbarijiet minn Barra**, novella umoristika fuq intenzjoni moħbija ta' żagħżuġha li taħdem f'kontinent il-bogħod minn Malta illi timla moħħ ommha u miessierha daqs balla bi ħsibijiet inkwetanti. Hija novella tassew interessanti li tqarreb persuni minn żewġ kulturi.

Ir-Regettier u l-Mużew tal-Klassi huwa ktieb li għandu jinqara minn qarrejja li qed ifittxu trattament serju, haġ u uman ta' issues kontemporanji li jmissu mill-fond ma' qagħdiet il-bniedem. Nirrikmandawh.

DIARY OF EVENTS JANUARY 2010 TO MARCH 2010

January

- 5th - EESC INT Section for Single Market, Production and Consumption – Grace Attard attended
- 7th - EESC REX Section for External Relations meeting - Grace Attard attended
- 12th - Meeting with UHM Officials MCESD Civil Society Committee attended
- 14th - EESC Study group on Integration of immigrant workers and Hearing – Grace Attard attended
- 17th - Study group Roadmap for Equality and follow-up – Grace Attard attended
- 18th - EU network of Female Entrepreneurship. Ambassador information meeting
Ministry of Finance (Doris Bingley attended)
- 20th - EESC January Plenary Session
- 21st - Commonwealth Foundation Tele Consultation
- 22nd - Last Executive Meeting before AGM
- 25th - Meeting with H. E. the Spanish Ambassador Grace Attard and Doris Bingley attended
- 26th - MEUSAC Public dialogue and Spanish Presidency
EESC SOC Section on Employment, Social Affairs and Citizenship – Grace Attard attended
– Vanessa Macdonald interviews Joe Cassar, Nadyanne Mangion and Doreen Micallef attended
- 27th - ICT Exhibition for all Marie Demicoli attended
Australia Day Palazzo Capua (Doris Bingley attended)
MEUSAC Meeting (Doris Bingley attended)
EESC Labour Market Observatory – Grace Attard attended
- 28th - Talk on Abuse organized by the Education Committee at NCW Centre
- 29th - MCCEI meeting – European Network of Female entrepreneurship Ambassador meeting
- 30th - NCW AGM Victoria

February

- 1st - MUESAC
- The future competition law framework applicable to the motor vehicle sector at Europe House St' Paul's Street.
- ETC Seminar Job mobility within the EU Radisson
EESC INT Section for Single Market, Production and Consumption – Grace Attard attended
- 2nd - Partit Laburista
- Balancing work and family life in the NCW decade Palace Hotel
(Ruth Falzon and Nadyanne Mangion attended)
- 3rd - EESC REX Section for External Relations meeting Grace Attard attended
Euromed Follow-Up Committee meeting – Grace Attard attended
- 3rd-6th European Women Forum – Beijing +15 Spanish Presidency, Cadiz – Doris Bingley participated
- 8th - Anna Lindh network meeting attended by Doris Bingley
- 11th - EESC Public Hearing oand Study Group on Innovation in Tourism for Islands, Excelsior Hotel, Malta. Grace Attard participated
- 12th - CMTU confederation of Malta Trade Unions -2010 congress. Social Dialogue in Prevailing economic trends at Corinthia San Gorg Doris Bingley and Marie Demicoli attended
- 12th - NCPE meeting attended by Grace Attard and Doris Bingley
MCESD CSC Meeting at OPM Grace Attard and Doris Bingley participated
- 13th - VO Council meeting Grace Attard attended
- NCPE meeting Grace Attard attended
- 17th - Dyslexia and homework talk in Gozo by Ruth Falzon at the Gozo Support Group.
EESC Plenary Session – Grace Attard attended
- 19th - Children's Competition Certificate Presentation at Dar L-Ewropa organized by
NCW Environment Committee
- 21st - Gift of Life sponsored walk
- 22nd - MEUSAC Environment Sectoral Committee meeting Doris Bingley

attended

- Meeting at MUMN Headquarters Mosta – Grace Attard, Doris Bingley and Marie Demicoli
- 23rd - EESC Soc Section Meeting Grace Attard attended
- 24th - Executive Committee first meeting for 2010
- 25th - Talk on parental Skills by Rita Catania at NCW Centre.
- 26th - Central committee meeting at NCW Centre
- Malta Network in the FTZ seminar workshop
- Anna Lindh Inter Cultural dialogue in practice at Dar L-Ewropa.
- 27th - Workshop Inter Cultural Dialogue in practice
University of Malta Doris Bingley and Grace Attard attended
Foundation Day Dinner

March

- 4th - Seminar Nisa Giljanizi, Jum Il-Mara at Pious Lounge – Le Meridien Hotel St. Julian's Doreen Micallef guest speaker Mercedes Schembri Wismayer and Mary Rose Zahra attended.
Commissioner Viviane Reding tele launch of the Eurobarometer results and Gender Pay Gap campaign at Dar L-Ewropa, Grace Attard and Doris Bingley guests of Mr William Martin, Acting Head of the European Commission in Malta
- 5th - Art Exhibition at San Anton organized by NCW Education Committee in aid of the Community Chest Fund.
- 6th - International Women's Day Mass at St. Patrick's Church
- 8th - GWU seminar Woman In decision Making Dr. Claire Vassollo Guest Speaker representing NCW. Doris Bingley and Therese Cassola attended
- Mary Garty represented NCW with the Pro-Life Group at a Courtesy call on H.E. Dr. George Abela
- The Palace Hotel Seminar on Woman in business, health and wellness - Doris Bingley was one of the speakers.
- Dialogue with Prime Minister and Ministry Dolores Christina at the OPM. Doris Bingley, Nadyanne Mangion attended.
- 9th - EESC REX/SOC Bureau meeting with ILO in Geneva. Grace Attard participated
- 10th - MNPN Seminar on Women in Society Grace Attard participated
- 11th - The Public Policy Dept. of UOM Annual Lecture in conjunction with NCW Gender and Public Policy University Building Valletta to 8.30pm . Grace Attard and Doris Bingley attended
- 12th - EESC Communicating Europe Meeting in Malta with the participation of the five Maltese EESC representatives. Grace Attard made a presentation on Innovation
- 12th - International Commission on Couple and Family
- 14th Relations (ICCFR) Conference organized by Cana Movement Doris Bingley and Grace Attard participated
- 13th - Partit Laburista Konferenza Nazzjonali at 8.30am Corinthia San Gorg, Il-Bajja ta' San Gorg, San Giljan. Grace Attard participated
- 16th - Environmental Committee 5.30pm
- 17th - EESC March Plenary Session. Grace Attard attended
- 18th - Grace Attard and Doris Bingley attended a two day conference at EESC Brussels on *An Roadmap for a Sustainable Economic and Social Recovery*
- 19th Aretusa General Assembly in Bergamo, Italy. Doreen Micallef attending
- 18th - Musica Letterarja Evening at Sala Isouard
- 19th organized by NCW Education Committee
- 19th - Reception at 19.00-21.00 Dar Carthage Hannibal Street Attard (The Ambassador of the Republic of Tunisia) attended by Nadya Anne Mangion
- 22nd - H.E. the Australian High Commissioner visits the National Council of Women Centre
- 24th - Passover Meal at NCW Centre
- 25th - Commonwealth Secretariat Civil Society Organisations' Meeting at Marlborough House attended by Doris Bingley
- 30th - Half Day of Recollection

CURRENT AND FORTHCOMING EVENTS

Exhibition of Old Traditional Crafts at the Gozo Ministry Victoria

National Council of Women in collaboration with the Ministry for Gozo would like to invite you to an exhibition, sales of works and demonstration of old traditional crafts such as weaving, spinning sheep's wool, macramé (the arts of Knots) and Kumihimo (the making of ropes). At 11.00am a talk entitled; Environmental and traditional old crafts: the best way of using them by Ms Alda Bugeja

Title: Promoting Old Traditional Crafts
 Date: Saturday 8th May 2010
 Time: 10.00 to 13.00hrs
 Venue: Ministry for Gozo St. Francis Square Victoria
 Transport: Transport (Limited to 25 persons) leaves Blata l-Bajda at 7.15am in time for the 9.00am ferryboat. Booking by Monday 3rd May.

Public Dialogue "Social Security Entitlement for Women".

As part of NCW activities for the European Year Combating Poverty & Social Exclusion 2010, Mr. Joe Camilleri Director of Social Services will make a presentation on social security measures with particular reference to entitlement of widows' benefits followed by a discussion at the Museum of Archaeology in Republic Street Valletta on **Thursday 13th May 2010 at 17.30hrs**

For further information and booking kindly contact the National Council of Women on 21248881/21246982 or email: ncwmalta@camline.net.mt

The National Council of Woman welcomes the following new members:

New Members

Ms. Claudine Cassar from Rabat
 Ms. Maria Carbonaro from Birkirkara
 Ms. Kristel Jo Bishop from Naxxar
 Ms. Joanne Bishop Magro from Tarxien
 Mrs. Roberta Scerri from Senglea
 Ms. Marceline Chetcuti from Qormi
 Ms. Jeanelle Catania from Mosta
 Ms. Claire Pisani Hughes from Attard
 Ms. Laura Lupi from Madliena
 Ms. Karen Axisa from St. Paul's Bay
 Ms. Rosanne Fenech from Santa Venera
 Ms. Annemarie De Barro from San Gwann

Dr. Nicole Vella de Fremeaux
 Mrs. Miriam Teuma St. Julian's
 Ms. Rita Catania from Naxxar
 Ms. Yvonne Alma Mangio from Ta' Xbiex
 Ms. Laura Clark St. Paul's Bay

Life Members

Ms. Maud Muscat
 Ms. Marcelle Muscat Fenech

Affiliated Organisation

Local Councils Association



The world's local bank