



**Founded 1964**

# **U-Mara**

**Newsletter of the National Council of Women - Malta**



**NCW Malta exhibition stand in Istanbul**



**The Hon Dr Francis Zammit Dimech with NCW Vice President Nadyanne Mangion at the Presentation of Certificates**



**The Environment Committee enjoying the countryside**



**NCW President Grace Attard at the EESC new mandate Plenary**



**The Maltese delegation at the Istanbul WOMENist Conference**



**Presentation of certificates for NCW courses**

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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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#### Office Hours

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



Founded 1964

# NCWara

NEWSLETTER OF THE NATIONAL COUNCIL OF WOMEN - MALTA

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## President's Message



### Dear Colleagues and Friends,

As we come to the end of another year, we are in the process of evaluating the initiatives undertaken by NCW- reflecting on our work programme for 2010, what was successful, what we did beyond our plans and where we want to go. It is not an easy task, as many unexpected events, circumstances, consultation documents both at national and EU level needed be studied, issues that required our immediate attention, opportunities for projects that came our way, new courses run at NCW Centre.....

However I am proud that always all the member of NCW Committees never failed in their enthusiasm and in the wide range of initiatives undertaken. NCW has always been forward looking, prompt in understanding the needs of vulnerable groups, often almost invisible to society; at the same time always alert to success stories of women from different sectors of society who serve as role models for young women who are at a stage in their life when they have to take decisions, not only about their career, but more

so about how to balance their career and their private life. We have seen an increase in the role of men in the family; this is indeed encouraging; men too need role models

Our Council is already in the course of planning its future - joining organisations that work at EU level - networking is essential to the growth of the Council; taking up renewed responsibilities in areas that are gaining more importance to our society, consumer affairs, climate change, energy, the environment, entrepreneurship, innovation - for us they are not just buzz words but areas that require concrete action

In January we shall convene the NCW Annual General Meeting; I hope I shall see many of you there to share with us our future plans and take action with the rest of us. 2011 is the European Year for Volunteering and we shall be deeply involved together with other citizens. We shall be following the EU Parliament and the EU Commission on developing the necessary framework for citizens' rights and participative democracy in practice. We also look forward to the recognition of Civil Society and its enhanced role in the MCESD - the most relevant forum for civil society to gain its consultative and participative status

However we must not forget that it is Christmas - a time to welcome Jesus as a child in our hearts, family, society, with the hope of gaining our inner energy to work for others - a gift that is often being left by the wayside in society today.

***I wish you all the joy of Christmas  
and the joy of being in such a unique  
position where you can work for the  
good of others!***

**Grace Attard**

## Messaġġ Mill-Ministru Dolores Cristina Fl-Okkażjoni Tal-Jum Internazzjonali Kontra L-Vjolenza Domestika: Il-Vjolenza Domestika M'hix Tollerata



Fl-okkażjoni tal-Jum Internazzjonali kontra l-Vjolenza Domestika, il-Ministru tal-Edukazzjoni, Xogħol u l-Familja, Dolores Cristina, issellem lill-vittmi tal-vjolenza domestika f'pajjiżna, tesprimi solidarjeta' shiha magħhom u ġgedded l-impenn tal-Gvern li jibqa' joffri servizzi ta' appoġġ lil dawn il-vittmi biex jgħinohom joħorġu

minn dawn is-sitwazzjonijiet diffiċli, filwaqt li tikkundanna kull forma ta' vjolenza domestika li ma tista' qatt tkun tollerata.

Is-soċjetà kollha kemm hi għandha tiġġieled din il-pjaga soċjali li qed tpoġġi numru ta' persuni u uliedhom fi tbaġhtija u tneżzagħhom mid-dinjita' li tixraq lil kull persuna. Il-pajjiż għandu diversi strutturi li jahdmu biex iqajmu kuxjenza pubblika kontra dan l-abbuż u oħrajn li joffru appoġġ u sostenn lil min isib ruħu f'dawn iċ-ċirkostanzi.

Il-Kummissjoni dwar il-Vjolenza Domestika tiegħu diversi inizjattivi f'dan ir-rigward mhux biss permezz ta' kampanji ta' għarfien dwar dan il-

fenomenu imma wkoll billi tħarreg professjonisti minn dixxiplini differenti u ssahhaħ is-servizzi li jingħataw lill-vittmi. L-Aġenzija Appoġġ u għaqdiet volonarij oħra wkoll joffru servizzi, fosthom l-emergency shelter u servizzi oħra.

Il-Ministru tal-Edukazzjoni, Xogħol u l-Familja, tixtieq tiegħu din l-okkażjoni biex tkegħġegħ lil dawk kollha li jsibu ruħhom f'sitwazzjonijiet fejn ikunu qed isofru vjolenza domestika biex jagħmlu kuraġġ u ma jcedux għal din l-aggressjoni u minflok ifittxu s-servizzi ta' appoġġ li l-pajjiż, il-Knisja u għaqdiet volontarji oħra li joffru għajjnuna f'dawn iċ-ċirkostanzi.

Min-naħa l-oħra l-Ministru tixtieq tiringrazzja lill-haddiema u l-professjonisti kollha li jgħinu lill-vittmi tal-vjolenza domestika kif ukoll lill-amministraturi u l-impjegati fid-Djar Residenzjali li joffru kenn u servizzi oħra lil dawn il-vittmi u jgħinuhom biex jibnu hajjithom mill-ġdid u jintegraw lura fis-soċjetà.

Il-Ministru Cristina ġeddedt l-impenn tal-Gvern li flimkien mas-soċjetà ċivili jibqa' jiġġieled dawn l-abbużi u joffri sostenn u appoġġ lill-vittmi tal-vjolenza domestika.

**DOI – 25.11.2010**

## The Fifth Report On Economic, Social And Territorial Cohesion

The consultaion was held during a business breakfast on the 16th of November. The report gave details of the €885 of cohesion funds that were allocated to Malta during 2007-2013. A staggering amount of €318 million went for environmental projects, amongst which were the Limestone Heritage and Wasteserv's Sant Antnin Waste Management Plant at Marsascala as well as the sewage treatment plant, amongst others. Other funds were directed towards improving transport, on reseach and development, entrepreneurship especially for SMEs and the development of ICT products, technologies and services. It was also reported that Malta had a very good record of utilising all the funds that were allocated. New funding will be available for the 2013-2020 period

The fifth report on economic, social and territorial cohesion shows that the policy has created new jobs, increased human capital, built critical infrastructure and improved environmental protection. Undoubtedly it would have been more difficult for the less developed regions to attain these

results without cohesion policy. The fifth cohesion report sets out some of the Commission's key ideas for the reform of cohesion policy and reforms needed to maximise the impact of cohesion investment . A contract between Member States and the Commission would detail on how these would be implemented.

To do this the Commission proposes establishing a comprehensive overall strategic framework detailing priorities, objectives and the reforms needed to maximise the impact of cohesion investment, in order to ensure effective delivery and visible results. The Cohesion Fund will continue to benefit Member States whose GNI per capita is lower than 90% of the Union average. The Commission invites all stakeholders to give their responses to the questions raised in the conclusions of the 5th Cohesion report on –line : [http://ec.europa.eu/regional\\_policy/consultation/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/consultation/index_en.htm) until 31st January 2011.

**Mary Gaerty,  
NCW Vice-President**



## News from the European Economic and Social Committee (EESC)

### EESC New Mandate for 2010-2015

The Maltese Delegation is composed of: Stefano Mallia (group I employers); Vince Farrugia (group I employers); Michael Parnis (group II Trade Unions); Annamaria Darmanin (group II) Elected EESC vice-president; Grace Attard (group III) Elected SOC vice-president, Group III Bureau member, LMO, CCMI, INT member and REX Euromed follow-up committee

During the September Plenary the incoming new members were invited to an orientation experience at the EESC building in Rue Belliard. Steffan Nillson, (group III) was elected EESC President. Elections to different committees took place during the October Plenary together with the official confirmation of the EESC members. During this session the members debated the incoming President's Plan of Action for 2010-2012



**EESC Member Grace Attard, Vice-President Anna Maria Darmanin & George Dassis, Group II President.**

### Extension of Maternity Leave directive

The National Council of Women publicly deplored the negative vote leading to the defeat of the proposed directive on the extension of maternity leave by the Council of Ministers, stating that this shows that monetary priorities come before the health and safety of working mothers and their newborn child as well as the demographic deficit and related fertility rates which are nose-diving all over Europe and which are counter to economic growth.

Although financial incentives by government to encourage female participation in the labour market have not been lacking, they are not reaching their goal. We need to find out if the lack of measures that will allow mothers and also fathers to be with their children during the most sensitive and vulnerable phases in their life are the real obstacles and if so ensure that the relevant policies

address these needs.

All stakeholders need to study carefully the revision of this directive by the Commission in the coming months. The crucial points are: extension to 18 rather than 20 weeks; member states to decide on payment of maternity leave in agreement with social partners and controversy over the 2 weeks paternity leave NCW looks forward to consensus so that long-term measures will lead to working force with a more balanced male/female participation. The



Commission is working with the Belgian and the Hungarian Presidency (first half of 2011 to reach an agreement

### No to Violence against Women: an every day commitment

As in previous years, the National Council of Women highlighted the importance of the 25<sup>th</sup> of November of every year, which marks the anniversary of the Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women designated by the United Nations Assembly in 1999. Women and girls around the world still suffer and are subject to violence including rape and beatings by their partners. NCW is deeply concerned with the increase of violence against women as it not only violates human rights but stands as a barrier to achieving equality, development and peace.

The European Parliament backed by a majority of MEPs, called on the Commission to establish a European year for combating violence against women within the next five years. MEPs signed a declaration urging the members of the Commission to take action.

The European Commission is currently finalising a **European Strategy on Violence Against Women and Girls**. Grace Attard was a member of the working group set up by the EU Commission together with representatives of EU member states and organisations representing employers, workers, researchers and representatives of women and family organisations.

On the 17 November 2010, The European Economic and Social Committee participated in the Final

Symposium of the SPREAD project, a **Daphne project** coordinated by SURT Foundation. On Violence Against Women. One of the most invisible groups in our society is that of women in prisons. To this end, SURT started working on women and prison through a project in the framework of the 5<sup>th</sup> Framework programme called MIP. Women Integration and Prison (2002-2005). One of the main findings of the research carried out by MIP was the links between social exclusion, crime and gender violence. The project also revealed that a great number of women inmates have suffered gender violence before entering prison.

**Euromed Summit held in Rome 10-12 November 2010** with the participation of NCW President Grace Attard

### Key outcomes:

- Agreement on the setting up of an **UfM Assembly of Economic and Social Councils and Similar Institutions and the adoption of its Statute** which will fully involve organised civil society in cooperation within the UfM
- Adoption of **recommendations on the role of Women in Society follow-up to the Istanbul and Marrekech Ministerial Conference**
- Adoption of a **Report on Assessment and Evaluation of the Conclusions of the UfM conference in Marrakech on Strengthening the role of Women in Society** by a working group made up of representatives of Euromed partner countries. Grace Attard represented the EESC in the working group
- The setting up of an *ad hoc* working group to monitor gender equality developments in the UfM on a yearly basis on the recommendation put forward by NCW President Grace Attard

The EESC is also working on an opinion in response to the EU Commission White Paper (Consultation Paper) on **Pensions Reform**. So far there has been considerable difficulty to reach agreement. The EESC is in the process of setting up a **Standing Committee on the European Year for Volunteering 2011**

## Final Symposium on Tackling Gender Violence in Prison within the EU

On the 17 November 2010, The European Economic and Social Committee was invited to participate in the Final Symposium of the SPREAD project, a Daphne project coordinated by SURT Foundation.



SURT is recognised as an innovative and transformative project for today's society that aims at: fostering equality between women and men at the social, political, economic sphere and supporting the process of women's labour insertion, especially those who find themselves in situation of major vulnerability.

One of the most invisible groups in our society is the one constituted by women in prisons. Women are

a minority group inside prisons and there is the need to get to know this group and to explore intervention and research lines. To this end, SURT started working on women and prison through a project in the framework of the 5<sup>th</sup> Framework programme called MIP.Women Integration and Prison (2002-2005). One of the main findings of the research carried out by MIP was the links between social exclusion, crime and gender violence. The project also revealed that a great number of women inmates have suffered gender violence before entering prison.

After the MIP project, another research study was also carried out by SURT. The aim of the research was to analyse the incidence of gender violence within the female population

of Catalan penitentiary centres. The main results showed that there was a overrepresentation of women survivors of domestic violence inside prison. The research also highlighted that there was a lack of in prisons

programmes tackling the effects of gender violence among women inmates.

As a result of these findings, the ALTRA. Tackling gender violence in prison project, SURT (2006-2008) carried out research on existing in-prison programmes for men abusers and women survivors of gender violence in the EU. Within the ALTRA project, SURT and the rest of the partners designed and implemented a gender-based pilot in prison programmes in Hungary and Catalonia and elaborated an intervention manual for professionals. Moreover, training to prison staff was also implemented.

Due to the success of the ALTRA project, a follow-up by SPREAD project (2008-2010) updated the research on existing in-prison programmes for men abusers and women survivors of gender violence in the EU, designed and implemented gender-based in-prison

**Grace Attard**  
**EESC Member**

## Winners of the Anna Lindh Journalist Award announced



*France's Jean Daniel and Egypt's Mona El Tahawy receive the Mediterranean's leading prize for reporting across cultures. Winners of the Anna Lindh Journalist Award 2010 are announced in Monaco by the International Jury headed by Edgar Morin.*

**Monaco, 14 October 2010:** The winners of the 2010 edition of the 'Anna Lindh Mediterranean Journalist Award' were presented today by Prince Albert II and the International Award Jury at a ceremony taking place in the Principality of Monaco and bringing together media and civil society from across the two shores of the Mediterranean region.

Among the prize-receivers, **Jean Daniel** – French writer, journalist and founder of 'Le Nouvel Observateur'

- was awarded a special prize for his life-long work for a common Mediterranean region, while **Mona El Tahawy** – Egyptian-born columnist and opinion-leader at the international level – received a prize for outstanding professional contribution.

The Award Jury, which is chaired this year by renowned sociologist Edgar Morin and presided by André Azoulay, President of the Anna Lindh Foundation, was comprised by Abdel-Rahman Al-Rashed (General Manager of Al Arabiya Television), David Gardner (Foreign Affairs Editor for the Financial Times), Hala Hashish (Head of the Nile Television Network), Juan Luis Cebrian (Founder of El Pais), Alessandra Paradisi (Secretary General of COPEAM Audiovisual Network), and Rana Sabbagh (Executive Director of the Arab Reporters Investigative Journalism).

The official winners of the Anna Lindh Mediterranean Journalist

Award 2010 are:

• **The International Jury's Life-time Achievement Prize** for Jean-Daniel (France) and the **Professional Recognition Prize** for Mona El Tahawy (Egypt)

**Press Category:** Sarfraz Manzoor (UK) for 'My Month of Being Jewish' published in The Guardian

• **Audiovisual Category:** Pierre Mari (France) for 'Female Emigration' on Radio Kantara, and Ali Gohine (Egypt) for 'Illegal Migration' on Nile Television Network

• **Online Media:** Dalia Ziada (Egypt) for 'Unveiling the minds of Young Muslim Women' in Bikya Masr

• **Cultural Heritage:** Yizhar Beer (Israel) for 'The city and the dogs' in the Huffington Post

The Anna Lindh Journalist Award is the Mediterranean region's leading prize for reporting across cultures and on issues of cultural diversity.

**For further information on the Award, log on to: [www.journalistaward.org](http://www.journalistaward.org)**

## Address by The Hon Joe Cassar, Minister for Health, the Elderly and Community Care, at the conference on Women and Mental Health organised by the National Council of Women - Valletta - 6 october 2010

The issue of women and mental health is very close to my heart. I am glad that the National Council of Women chose this theme on the occasion of World Mental Health Day.

Women are in the forefront. Very often, women in our society are seen as the carers - the ones who can cope. Whatever life throws at them - they will always cope. They have multiple roles, modules and hats. But we always **assume** that they will cope. In other words, they are taken for granted - their presence, their strength and their care are all taken for granted.

Women, and particularly Maltese women, are on call twenty four hours a day, seven days a week, whether their children are sick, their husbands are out of work or their parents are old and frail and need their help. They will cook and clean, go out to work, attend to the needs of those around them. It can take enormous courage for women to admit they **cannot** cope, that they may need help - from family and friends or the support systems offered by the state, the individual professionals and organisations or support groups.

Frequently women attempt to survive through tough times alone, sometimes, falling into a deeper

and darker depression as they feel more and more trapped by the life they are leading. As their world closes in on them their self esteem starts to dwindle away as they retreat further and further from those who could help them.

This fragile side to women's mental health may be triggered through the biological make-up of women. We often blame it on the hormones which play their role (or should I say "trick") in a woman's life. Women's cycle, anti-natal, post-natal, menopause, all contribute to the complex fragility of women's mental health. But that is not all.

There is also a vulnerability related to women's **social role**. Girls, more than boys, are abused as children and women, more than men, are victims of domestic violence. Single women are often the ones caring for children when a marriage fails. In other words, women's mental health is more often than not related to finding a balance. It is almost **expected** of women to find this balance.

Many women and men turn to alcohol and other addictions, to numb the pain of their despair. But because it is seen in women as less acceptable to admit to any form of dependence, it often goes unnoticed. They are merely perceived as having a nervous disposition. Their suffering may not be seen or may be misunderstood.



*The Hon. Minister Joe Cassar addressing the conference.*

Perhaps we need to look more closely at the cause of the illness rather than attempt to suppress it. To accept that putting a lid on powerful feelings and emotions cannot be the healthy option. That to offer women the opportunity to express themselves courageously, could be a far more effective use of resources, rather than wait until their strength to survive dies out.

If we as a society continue to re-enforce the idea that women should only do things that are thought to benefit their family without taking care of themselves, if they feel they must sacrifice everything for their loved ones even at the cost of their health, their inner strength and their own self worth; they will live only in the shadow of others and their mental health will surely suffer.

But if we can help to give women their right to fulfil their own potential and to share it with their family, children or friends, maybe fewer women would find themselves living a life obscured by depression and poor mental health. I hope this conference will help all involved to understand the needs of women more clearly and help to give them back their rightful, mentally healthy life.





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## Seminar Caring for the Unborn Child

The Malta Unborn Child Movement and the Swedish Embassy in Malta, in collaboration with the Department of Midwifery, Faculty of Health Sciences, University of Malta and the Malta Midwives Association organised the Seminar - **Caring for the Unborn Child** at the Auditorium of Mater Dei Hospital, on 10th December, 2010. The National Council of Women, Agenzija Sedqa of the Foundation for Social Welfare Services, the Malta Midwives Association, Caritas Malta, the Health Promotion and Disease Prevention Department, the Union Haddiema Maghqudin and the Social Assistance Secretariat of Catholic Action, member organisations of the Malta Unborn Child Movement, were the main promoters of the Seminar.

Ms Grace Attard, President, National Council of Women and Member of the European Economic and Social Committee was Chairperson of the seminar. In his welcome address, Tony Mifsud Coordinator, Malta Unborn Children Movement stated that the UK press reported that at least 600 Scottish babies a year were judged to be at risk of abuse before they are even born..and that official figures reveal that in the lately 331 unborn babies were placed on the official child protection register, many of them because of their mother's drink or drug problem.

He added that research had revealed that babies in the womb were being exposed to cocktails of toxic chemical and that their blood was swimming with dangerous compounds found in everyday household cleaners, perfumes and even pans and furniture. This, he insisted, is affecting the climate for the unborn child in the womb.

Mr Mifsud suggested that an opportunity is arising for Malta to take the initiative in the workings of international bodies and initiatives dedicated to the welfare of children to proclaim before all the member states of the EU, and the world community, that "all men are created equal" and that all unborn children, 200 million every year world-wide, including 4000 in Malta - the common beginners in all mankind, and "created equal" everywhere - should be considered the "common concern of all mankind" and that their dignity, rights, protection, care and development should be the common moral, legal and political responsibility of the world community.... in word... on

paper ...and in deed... everywhere.

In her welcome speech, H.E. Ulla Gudmundson, Ambassador of Sweden to Malta, expressed her keen interest working on this issue in Malta and on a very positive note stated that we all need to work together on issues that are similar in Malta and Sweden, but that need to be addressed in the context of the different cultures, not least where traditional alcohol intake is one of the problems

Hon Dr Peter Micallef, Parliamentary Assistant at the Ministry of Health addressed the Seminar giving a holistic overview of ethics regarding the rights of the unborn child from the moment of conception. He also spoke about preparations for both father and mother when they are expecting a child; preventive measures for pregnant mothers, especially those in vulnerable situations of substance abuse, smoking and alcohol abuse.



**The Hon. Peter Micallef, Parliamentary Assistant within the Ministry of Health, addresses the Seminar. Others on the panel are Keynote speaker Ms Eva-Karin Enwall - Project Director, Swedish National Institute for Public Health, H.E. Ulla Gudmundson, Ambassador of Sweden to Malta, Ms Grace Attard NCW President who chaired the seminar and Mr Tony Mifsud, President of the Unborn Child Movement.**

Ms Eva Karin Enwall, Project Director Swedish National Institute for Public Health, Sweden gave a presentation of an evidence-based project that she has been working on for the past 7 years together with her personal experience on Ante-Natal Care, Child Health Services and Alcohol and Drugs during Pregnancy - as a Matter of Public Health.

Grace Attard opened the discussion emphasising the importance of addressing all types of families which all have their particular needs. Participants, including a wide range of medical practitioners, service providers, PhD students who are carrying out research on related topics as

well as non-governmental organisations spoke about their experience unfolding several aspects linked to the well-being of the unborn child, including, planning a pregnancy (MAM), workplace legislation and enforcement on alcohol abuse and substance abuse, how to deal with difficulties drug starters come across as well as hardened abusers, the different types of drugs and current statistics on abuse by sex and age groups (Sedqa), the social and economic consequences, adequate support structures on the role of the media in advertising and the strong lobbies of alcohol companies among others. The importance of appropriate education at all levels was also emphasised. Perhaps revealing the situation of pregnant inmates who are serving a prison sentence and the conditions mothers live with their children of various ages was one of the most areas of deep concern in particular the negative psychological, mental and social consequences for children later on in life

What can be done at EU level? A short discussion by H.E. Ulla Gudmundson and Grace Attard outlined several initiatives that the EU Commission is taking in particular with regards to The Rights of the Child, Reducing alcohol related harm, child poverty and children's wellbeing, maternity leave, breastfeeding, work/life balance. However reaching agreement in Parliament and in the Council of Ministers according to the New Treaty is not an easy matter

The closing address by Dr Rita Borg Xuereb Ph.D. Head, Department of Midwifery, Faculty of Health Sciences, University of Malta was based on a study she carried revealed some very useful findings on the fertility rate in Malta, fathers' attitudes to the unborn child, single parenthood, emotional wellbeing, work-life balance. Referring to the increased awareness of the need to care for the environment, Dr Borg Xuereb ended her presentation with a very significant statement - "If there is one thing that we can change within our limits is the way we care for the unborn child"

**Full texts of presentations will be available on NCW website in the coming days**

**Grace Attard,  
President NCW**

## Presentation of Certificate-Giving for Courses organised by NCW

Over the years it has been the aim of the National Council of Women to work on two levels: policy recommendations to government and relevant authorities to ensure *de facto* equal opportunities and educational programmes for women, through several initiatives, among others, courses run everyday at NCW Centre. Through these initiatives, women are empowered



**The Hon. Francis Zammit Dimech**  
presenting the certificates

and encouraged to further their studies and improve their employability skills.

On Wednesday 27<sup>th</sup> October 2010, the National Council of Women held a Certificate-Giving Ceremony for participants, who have

throughout 2009-2010 attended courses in English Language, Mathematics, Maltese and Information Technology at different levels. Participants for NCW courses come from all walks of life. The courses are open to both men and women.

NCW General Secretary welcomed the course participants and congratulated them for their determination and success in obtaining such excellent results.

The Hon. Francis Zammit Dimech presented the certificates to one hundred seventy participants. He expressed his satisfaction that so many men and women are making use of Lifelong Learning programmes to achieve better knowledge and skills. He also added that the Minister for Education, Employment and the Family the Hon. Dolores Cristina was looking forward to meeting all the participants but due to important parliamentary work was unable to attend.

Mr Victor Galea Service Manager, Directorate for Lifelong Learning within the Ministry of Education, Employment and the Family congratulated all the participants and spoke about the further introduction of initiatives taken to encourage men and

women to participate in Lifelong Learning Programmes especially now that all courses



**Mr Victor Galea Service Manager, DILL**  
addressing the participants.

fall under the National Qualification Framework certification, which lead to local and international recognition.

In their reactions, many of the participants spoke about the welcoming atmosphere at NCW Centre, the encouragement they received in particular from the teachers, the support of their colleagues and the feeling of achievement which, it is hoped will further their participation in other programmes.

**Marie Demicoli,**  
Course Coordinator

## Consumer Information: a fundamental right of citizenship

*'My vision is well-informed consumers who can take educated decisions on the goods and services they consume' (Commissioner Dalli, The Times December 13, 2010)*

People's right to information, the right to be informed in particular the right to consumer information is recognised as a fundamental right in the Community's legal system in primary legislation (*EU Charter of Fundamental Rights*). However, the content of consumers' rights to information are not dealt with consistently in Community law and reveal omissions and duplications which have an impact on Member States' National legislation which is detrimental to both consumers and economic players and also to efforts to develop a single market for the 21st century as part of the EU 2020 strategy. When defining consumer laws falling within EU competence, the concept of the weaker or more vulnerable party should dominate and not that of the 'enlightened' consumer who makes decisions only on a purely economic basis. Therefore the concept of 'suitable information' should reflect the **quality** of information and not the **quantity** in order to meet the consumers real needs and expectations, gauged in line with the purpose, content, presentation and context of such information. With regards to the role of commercial communications in informing consumers, including advertising, the rules in the directive that apply to package travel should equally apply to other goods and services thus ensuring precise, concrete information about any good or service. The definition of misleading commercial practices through action or omission have brought

about a deterioration in the role played by advertising and marketing, in truthfully informing consumers; this therefore clearly points out that advertising practices do not provide objective information, particularly to vulnerable groups because of their mental or physical infirmity, age etc. The Commission's proposal on consumer rights where a genuine 'Charter of Consumers Rights to Information' is to be compiled needs to ensure other aspects, including also the right to advice and assistance and a definition of 'deficiencies' and the consequences of omissions of information and incorrect information. There should be other obligations which also need to be defined: a general obligation to provide pre-contractual information covering the goods and services concerned, the professional involved, the price for executing the contract and associated conditions; the right to withdrawal and the conflict settlement method adopted. The information should be adjusted in keeping with the goods/services concerned especially if it has an impact on consumers' health and safety. The information provided should comply with the general principle of fairness; it should not be misleading, nor omit any key aspects and it should be clear and understandable also in the way it is marketed. The precontractual information should also include the contract concluded by the consumer. The principle of cost free information on fundamental aspects of the contract should be established along with aligning of prices on costs. The consumer should have a right to access the pre-contractual information and a right to obtain clarification as well

as on the content and consequences of the contract. Provision should be made for an obligation to be placed on the professional to provide assistance and advice when products and/or services which entail health and safety risk for consumers in particular. The 'average' consumer versus the 'vulnerable' consumer – the concept of adequate information is highly important for consumer protection. The concept of the 'average' consumer who is 'reasonably well informed' does not cover the needs of the 'vulnerable' consumer which effectively translates into less consumer protection. Information to which the consumer ought to have access is becoming more relevant and the concept of 'suitable' information is assuming greater importance. Information needs to be adjusted to the consumers for whom it is addressed, reaching their real needs and expectations. The main criteria for this should be reliability, precision, relevance, clarity, comprehensibility and ease of access among others. The right to provide information must be recognised throughout the period of execution of the contract and after its completion, particularly those whose effects are long-lasting.

There is a clear need to ensure proper information for consumers within a renewed internal market in order to gain their confidence and secure constructive cooperation, thus dispelling fears and doubts and reluctance especially when it comes to cross-border trade

<http://www.eesc.europa.eu/?i=portal.en.consumer-information>

**Grace Attard**



## Taking A Gender Perspective Towards Mental Health Problems

Women who live in socio-economic disadvantaged environments, have low income and income inequality, and have multiple roles in the family and in caring for others are the most likely to suffer from mental illness.

Exposure to sexual and domestic violence renders women more susceptible to post traumatic stress disorders, anxiety disorder, bi-polar disorder, depression, borderline personality disorder, eating disorder, post partum depression and schizophrenia.



**Mrs. C. Gonzi & the Hon. Minister Joe Cassar at the public dialogue "Women and Mental Health".**

All these problems were discussed during a public dialogue on women and mental health organized by the Social Issues Committee of the National Council of Women on the 6th of October at Dar l-Ewropa.

Ms Grace Attard, President National Council of Women in her opening speech stated that addressing the different situations which affect women's mental health and that of the different members of the family, in particular children, needs to be given priority; few women and men are aware, and fewer still seek professional help. The aim of the public dialogue is to increase awareness and education and as follow-up initiate a number of ongoing initiatives.

The Hon. Joe Cassar Minister of Health, the Elderly and the Community addressed the conference by saying that women have women in the Maltese community have multiple roles in caring for the family, they clean, go to work and attends to the needs of others. It takes courage to admit that these women cannot cope with the situation and seek professional help. Dr.Cassar expressed his concern on the fact that women often go through dark moments on their own with the result of deep depression. He expressed his concern that girls more than boys are vulnerable to abuse and women more to domestic violence.

Addressing the legal issues, Dr.Lorraine Schembri Orland, past NCW President said that women with mental health problems are already at a disadvantage when they go to court. They may be incapable of

making decisions and the role of the court is to encourage the women to seek help. She expressed concern about cases of couple separation where the next of kin has the right to commit the person to a mental institution. Often, women are the most affected.

Dr. Angela Abela, Psychologist and Family Therapist said research findings show that women are mostly affected by anxiety and mood disorder, while male are more susceptible to substance abuse. Consequently, women are more susceptible to mental health problems. In a research she conducted findings revealed that one of three families experienced depression, those coming from poor families most affected.

Ms Dolores Gauci, CEO Richmond Foundation said that women are more prone to depression than men as they are affected by pre and post natal depression and most often are victims of domestic violence and abuse. Apart from mental health problems women face other problems such as those arising from the double burden

of juggling with career and caring for the family. Women tend to drown in their feelings and do not come forward to express their problems because of a deep sense of responsibility to their family;

Being a probation officer myself, I pointed out how female offenders have a multitude of problems and chaotic lifestyles which make it hard for them to abide by law and conditions imposed by the courts. Also, research indicates that there is a strong link between childhood abuse and mental health problems later as adults which manifest as depression, panic attacks, eating disorders and post traumatic stress disorders. Women need to be taken out of their chaotic lifestyles by providing for them an environment which addresses their problems. In most circumstances, women with substance abuse problems and chaotic lifestyles do not fit into the residential settings' lists of criteria.

'According to the EU working conditions survey between 2001 and 2005 Malta was placed second in the increase of stress and mental health problems,' added Ms Priscilla Muscat, Psychologist NCW member. Ms Muscat also analyzed the relationship between stress and mental health problems from the psychological aspect and how stress can have physical effects and can trigger depression and anxiety disorders. Ms Muscat added that there are two types of stress which are

chronic and acute physical stress.

Mr. Joe Farrugia, Director, Malta Employers Association said there are about 30 % of employers at the workplace who suffer from problems related to stress. At times new responsibilities can create stress for which the individual may not be prepared. Problems such as harassment, unclearly defined duties and personal issues with employers at the workplace among others may arise and add to more stress. People with mental illness may have problems with performance or abstain from work and this put their jobs at high risk.

Comments and recommendations form the panelists and the floor stressed the dire need for specialized services to address women's specific mental health, which is lacking, although the effects of mental illness are almost doubled on women. Women need to feel confident to seek help, as very often fear of stigma and the consequences on the family are still culturally ingrained.

At the workplace, both public and private sector need to ensure that mechanisms regarding family-friendly measures are functioning effectively. Female workers must not be penalized for being mothers - it is the responsibility of state and social partners to ensure that the health and safety of both mother and child are paramount; The concept of productivity versus the number of hours at the workplace should fast introduce new forms of work organisation, especially with the growing developments in technology, thus increasing opportunities for female participation and reducing stress.



Childcare services both before and after school should be addressed seriously ensuring accessibility and affordability, shared by state, employers and employees NCW believes that this public dialogue will serve as a roadmap to address the specific needs of women which will empower women through a series of ongoing initiatives.

**Mary Anne Zammit,  
Coordinator NCW Social Issues  
Committee**

## ECICW President's Report and Update - December 2010

### Re. ECICW General Assembly in Turkey 23-26 September 2010. Council of Europe work on ECICW Resolution on Children

**1. ECICW GA, September 2010.** This took place at the end of September on the Princes' Island near Istanbul, where the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Turkish National Council of Women was commemorated. ECICW members attended from Belgium, France, Germany, Great Britain, Greece, Italy, FYROM, Malta, Spain, Monaco, Netherlands, and Turkey, with observers from, Slovenia, Rumania and North Cyprus. We were warmly welcomed by Fatos Inal, the former President, representing the President. Professor Karol, who regrettably was prevented by illness from attending. Our thanks go to the Turkish Council for arranging such an excellent meeting, and the short optional sight-seeing visit to Istanbul which followed.

**A seminar on Food Safety** was organised by the Universities of Istanbul and Ankara, to celebrate the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary, and this together with a celebratory event and Gala Dinner was attended also by many Turkish women and by local Government representatives. Grace Wedekind, President of ECICW, congratulated the Turkish Council and spoke also on behalf of the President of ICW, Cosima Schenk, who was in Asia

in connection with the forthcoming APRC Regional Conference.

During the ECICW discussions, reference was made to the Working Groups on the effect on women of the global economic recession, and on the ECICW Resolution on the Commercial Manipulation of Children.

**Work Programme:** An agreed work programme to be recommended to ECICW member National Councils was drawn up – based on common concerns among delegates present. This covered:

- **the need for more women in Parliaments, and in decision-making;**
- **the effects of the economic recession on women and families (together with the associated rise in cases of domestic violence and child abuse);**
- **concern about an apparent increase in discrimination against women;**
- **the ICW Resolution on sexualisation of children;**
- **the ECICW Resolution on the commercial manipulation of children.**

**2. COUNCIL OF EUROPE** – Since the ECICW meeting in Turkey, the Council of Europe has responded to my letter to the Secretary General about the ECICW Resolution on

Commercial Manipulation of Children. The Head of the Children's Rights Policy Division, Mrs Regina Jensdottir, has invited ECICW to join a CoE work programme across Europe to publicise and call for action against the rising cases of sexual exploitation and sexual abuse of children. I was also invited last week to attend the High Level Launch of the



new programme “**Stop Sexual Violence against Children**” in Rome on 29-30 November, but was unable to accept. I have, however, agreed with the Council of Europe that ECICW and its member Councils will take all possible measures to support and raise awareness of this new campaign, which is clearly within the spirit of both the ICW and the ECICW recent resolutions.

**Grace Wedekind**  
**President ECICW**

## Rome Euromed Summit November 2010



The Euromed Summit of the Economic and Social Councils and Similar Institutions was held in Rome on the 20-21

November 2010. The Maltese members participating in this year's Summit were Grace Attard and Michael Parnis, both members of the External Relations Section – Euromed Follow-up Committee. During the Summit, which this year was particularly characterized by a spirit of collaboration, delegations from most UfM countries and the European Economic and Social Committee (EESC) discussed the involvement of civil society in the UfM and more specifically the setting up of an Assembly of Economic and Social Councils and Similar Institutions in the UfM institutional structure.

Other issues on the agenda were decent work and sustainable development around the Mediterranean; vocational training as a factor for competitiveness and job creation; building a fairer society in the Euromed region and agricultural policies in the UfM countries.

**On building a fairer society in the Euromed region, agreement**

**was reached on the following recommendations:**

- To call on the governments of the region to act in order to help their populations, and especially the most vulnerable sectors, to overcome the negative effects of the economic and financial crisis;
- That they are pleased that 2010 has, at the initiative of Tunisia, been declared the Year of Youth by the United Nations General Assembly;
- Welcome the Common Framework of Action 2006-2011 that was adopted at the Ministerial conference on strengthening the role of women in society in Istanbul in 2006 and the follow-up provided at the UfM Ministerial conference held in Marrakesh in November 2009.
- They underline the need to allocate adequate resources in order to ensure the effective implementation of the actions;
- Consider it crucial to attach more importance to the issue of immigrant and retired women in the Euro-Mediterranean region;
- Call for women to be able to receive high-quality education, and for women to be better represented in the media, in order to give greater visibility to the position of women in the region;
- Reiterate the commitment of the Economic and Social Councils and similar institutions in this field, which has been a standing

point on the agenda of the Euromed Summits of Economic and Social Councils and Similar Institutions and subject to several reports since 2006.

- They welcome the invitation, underlined in the Marrakesh conclusions, to be further involved in the implementation of the Common Framework of Action; they propose to set up a permanent working group on strengthening the role of women in society which will report on the situation on a yearly basis to the meetings of the Economic and Social Councils and Similar Institutions and to the UfM bodies;

**On the 2011-2012 programme, the following groups were set up**

Immigration and cooperation in the Euro-Mediterranean region under the direction of the Promotion of entrepreneurship, innovation and creativity in the Euromed region

Rural development and employment in the Euromed region.

Take note of the completion of the Tresmed 3 Project and the European Commission's support for its renewal

Finally they declare that in 2012 the theme of integrated industrial policies (particularly regarding energy) will be addressed

The full declaration can be viewed on [www.ncwmalta.com](http://www.ncwmalta.com)

**Grace Attard,**  
**EESC member**

## Ambassadors in Malta for Increasing women Entrepreneurs (AMIE)

The Foundation for Women Entrepreneurs in partnership with Reach Beyond Foundation, the Malta Business Bureau, the National Council for Women and the Malta Association of Women in Business have successfully applied for a calls of proposals within the Competitiveness and Innovation Framework Programme (CIP) – Funded action number: ENT/CIP/09/E/N08S003 entitled “European Network of Female Entrepreneurship Ambassadors”.

The AMIE project was launched in Brussels on the 8<sup>th</sup> December, 2010. Maryrose Francica as the coordinator of the local project AMIE led a delegation of ten Maltese Female Entrepreneurs to Brussels where an Induction event was held at the Grand Auditorium of the Musée des Beaux Arts. The session commenced with a welcome speech by Ms. Sabine LARUELLE, Belgian Minister for SMEs, Self-employed, Agriculture and Scientific Policy. Other speeches were by Mr. Antonio PRETO, Head of the Cabinet of Antonio Tajani, Vice-President of the European Commission, and Commissioner for Enterprise and Industry and Dr. Joanna Drake, Director for Promotion of SMEs' competitiveness within DG Enterprise and Industry.

The session continued with various activities including sharing of best practices and experiences of other women Entrepreneur ambassadors from various countries. The Maltese ambassadors hailing from diverse sectors had the opportunity to discuss and network with other ambassadors from other EU member states.

The day was rounded up by a gala dinner which was held at the Musée du

Cinquanteaire where the new ambassadors were awarded a diploma and had a chance to get to know each other.

The main objective of AMIE is that of promoting Female Entrepreneurship in Malta through the establishment of a Network of Women Ambassadors. This Network, is be part of the European Network of



Women Entrepreneurs, and will campaign amongst unemployed women, women in active professional life as well as students to set-up their own businesses and become entrepreneurs.

Furthermore the objective of the Ambassadors are to act as role models so as to raise women's ability to create a vision for themselves as entrepreneurs as well as the required motivation and self-confidence in setting up and creating a successful business. The Ambassadors shall be role models to inspire other women to become entrepreneurs by 'telling their story'.

AMIE shall translate the objective outlined above by implementing a number of activities. The selected Maltese Ambassadors

are Mrs. Helen Azzopardi, Ms. Josette Bartolo, Ms. Shirley Cauchi, Mrs. Jenifer Debono, Ms. Theresa Delia, Mrs. Miriam Duca, Mrs. Mary Gaerty, Mrs. Charlotte Gregory, Ms. Ruth Vella and Mrs. Sandra Zammit. These Ambassadors were selected on the basis of pre-established criteria amongst which shall be the potential to inspire other women to become entrepreneurs.

The Ambassadors shall be trained to be able to not only tell their story in an effective manner but also be facilitators to instilling the required confidence and motivation amongst women to take the entrepreneurial step.

The Ambassadors shall engage in a number of activities targeted at students and women. These activities shall include visits to schools and also educational sessions for women in employment and those seeking gainful occupation, whereby the potentials of entrepreneurship shall be outlined and discussed. The project shall also target indirect beneficiaries who are deemed to be, for the purpose of AMIE, guidance teachers and stakeholders such as chambers. These are seen as very important multipliers and therefore they shall be engaged to also promote women entrepreneurship.

Overall AMIE aims to carry out the activities outlined above so as to increase the potential of women becoming entrepreneurs. It is the intention of all the partners of the consortium to sustain this action even beyond the project duration of AMIE.

**For further details on this project please contact Maryrose Francica on [maryrose@women.org.mt](mailto:maryrose@women.org.mt)**

## Republic Day Honours 2010



**Cecilia Xuereb**

While congratulating all recipients of Awards bestowed by the President of Malta earlier this month, a special mention goes to Mrs Cecilia Xuereb, who was awarded the

Medal for Service

to the Republic. Mrs Xuereb, former President of the National Council of Women in 1995-1998, prominent music critic and teacher at St Joseph's School, Blata l-Bajda, has been an active NCW member for many years. She has been particularly involved in recent years in the Council's BMV Music Competition, a very suitable outlet for her vast knowledge of and passion for music.

## NCW expanding its training facilities

The popularity of the wide range of courses offered NCW Centre in Blata l-Bajda has encouraged us to refurbish one of the larger rooms with the latest type of equipment for ICT Courses. This has been a costly initiative; however we were determined to go ahead as we believe that not only women but also men can gain much from it. It is a great satisfaction to see how the different 'students integrate socially and this is very important to us as we believe that these are unique opportunities to share ideas, views, practices, so valuable for personal and social growth.

In fact the number of adults who train at our Centre in a number of other subjects is always increasing. We particularly wish to thank Playmobil Malta who is supporting us financially in this venture, which we are sure will go far in reducing the digital gender deficit





## WOMANist International Conference on November 5-6, 2010 at Istanbul Congress Centre Turkey



**Grace Attard and Doris Bingley with  
White Ribbon Canada Campaign  
Founder Mr Michael Kaufman**

The "WOMANist. – International Istanbul Women's Meeting", organized by the Istanbul Research Centre on Women (IKAM), on 5 – 6 November 2010, took place under the patronage of the Turkish Republic Ministry of State and the support of the Municipality of Istanbul. It had the high patronage of

H.E. Recep Tayyip Erdogan, Prime Minister of Turkey, and Mrs Esme Erdogan.

NCW President Grace Attard and General Secretary Doris Bingley participated in the above International Conference and set up a stand at the Exhibition to showcase the National Council of Women's projects, publications and activities.

Turkey was awarded the Istanbul 2010 European Capital of Culture. The conference took place within the scope of the European Capital of Culture activities to promote close cooperation, sharing of experience and strengthen an open dialogue on women's issues through international joint efforts and diversity. Invited participants from civil society, public and local administrations and professional organisations discussed and drew attention to women's problems and aimed to reach for solutions through this multi-faceted perspective.

Over 3000 women from around the world gathered in Istanbul for this occasion

The conference tackled issues related to social justice and poverty, gender and the media, access to the labour market and equality at work. The White Ribbon Canada Campaign Founder Mr Michael Kaufman led the session on how to engage men and boys to end domestic violence. Other sessions and debates addressed the women and violence issue with the hope that the event in Istanbul would contribute to a solution of the problem. As this was the European Year for Combating Poverty and Social Exclusion, the empowerment of women and gender equality were portrayed as crucial elements in the battle against poverty in our societies. In fact these two aspects were main issues in many of the sessions with an attempt to find a comprehensive solution. Also very important was the session on Gender and the Media. The media can play a vital role in transforming public awareness and changing the public mindsets, both essential in ensuring that legislation on gender equality is achieved.

Representatives from the United Nations discussed the progress made since the establishment of the CEDAW in 1979. Representatives from UNDP and UNFPA discussed the promotion of gender equality and "women friendly cities" with Ms Claudette Abela Baldacchino, Deputy Mayor of Qrendi Malta as one of the speakers.

The Parliamentary Assembly of the Mediterranean organized a parallel session entitled "How can MPs and women NGOs work better together?" This session was co-



chaired by Hon. Askin Asan and Ms Celine Cervi. It addressed issues such as the introduction of quotas; the necessity of more balanced party lists; professional training; women's financial assets; the necessity for women who have broken the glass ceiling to serve as role models to others. It was refreshing to hear parliamentarians from the Mediterranean region stress the need to have proper consultation mechanisms in place in order to ensure that legislations accurately reflect women's needs and perspective. Ms Anna Coleiro represented the Malta MPs.



**Istanbul Cultural Tour**

This International Conference brought together a large community to discuss gender equality issues relevant to their countries. The sharing of experience and good practice by the vast participation and the richness provided by the different approaches will surely be a contribution to the improvement of role of women in their communities and their countries. Networking in this very well organised conference will have long term benefits and will be advantageous and important to our future endeavours.

**Doris Bingley,  
NCW General Secretary**

## Discussion TV NET - the Budget from a Woman's Point of View



Mary Gaerty participated in a programme presented by Pierre Portelli on NET TV on the 4th November, with the budget as a topic. The four women present, represented the NCW, the Labour Party, the PN and the students. The title of the programme was THE BUDGET FROM A WOMAN'S POINT OF VIEW.

Needless to say the discussion started out with working women and the difficulties that women with children, aged parents and disabled children and adults face when wishing to go out to work. The NCW's view has always been that a woman goes out to work only when and if she wishes to do so not because she is forced to. Childcare facilities were discussed, with all present agreeing that the government has already embarked on creating several childcare facilities as well

as teleworking, reduced hours and other family friendly measures.

All those present also agreed that most women go out to work due to financial needs. It was also noted that although the rate of female university students has increased considerably in the last years, these young women seem to disappear after they graduate, or they find jobs for which they are overqualified in order to be able to cope with the family and try to balance their work and family life. The budget offers incentives for women who wish to start a business as well as training.

In conclusion it was also noted that although several incentives and training programmes are available these are little known and more information should be available to these women.

**Mary Gaerty,  
NCW Vice-President**

## NCW Pays homage Nobel Peace Laureate Daw Aung San Suu Kyi

NCW is deeply affected by the news of Aung San Suu Kyi's release from her illegal detention by one of the world's most brutal military regimes. The Council has been following the dramatic events of her personal and political life during the past 15 years.

We have looked upon her as a role model of peaceful resistance to political injustice besides Burma's hero and a leader of the pro-democracy movement. Although her freedom could be a turning point toward democracy, we still hope that the lurking fear that her life is still under threat will not become a reality.

Aung San Suu Kyi is Burma's legitimate leader -- she was democratically elected in a landslide victory 20 years ago. However, the military immediately locked her up and kept her in detention, along with over

two thousand monks and peaceful democracy activists whose sole crime has been to challenge the violence and injustice of the junta.

Together with many other supporters from all over the world, NCW has signed a petition to show our support for this brave and determined woman and - in the hope that through diplomatic engagement the way will be paved for a genuine democracy and freedom for all the people of Burma

For more information visit [http://www.avaaz.org/en/aung\\_san\\_suu\\_kyi\\_tribute/?v1](http://www.avaaz.org/en/aung_san_suu_kyi_tribute/?v1)



## BMV Music Competition 2011



The National Council of Women proudly presents the 13th Bice Mizzi Vassallo Music Competition - 2011

Application forms and regulations may be collected

from NCW Centre, Mountbatten Street, Blata l-Bajda on Mondays and Wednesdays from 10.00 a.m to 12noon or down loaded from NCW website <http://www.ncwmalta.com/camline.net.mt>

AWARDS: First prize: short summer course abroad, all expenses paid, Second prize: 400 euro, Third prize: 200 euro

Applications must arrive at NCW Centre by Friday 15th July 2011

Applications received before 15th June 2011 will benefit from a discount of 15 euro.

Application forms should also include:

I.D.Card or Birth Certificate and Music score of chosen piece/s

Registration Fee of €60 (Cheques payable to the National Council of Women)

In case of any difficulty, applicants may telephone organizers on 21248881, 21246982

or email: [ncwmalta@camline.net.mt](mailto:ncwmalta@camline.net.mt)

or visit our website: [www.ncwmalta.com](http://www.ncwmalta.com)



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## NCW Comments on Small Business Act Malta

### SMEs: A favourable business environment: supporting enterprise and job creation

The following are NCW proposals to draft legislative text.

The gender dimension should be one of the priorities of the National Action Plan to increase job creation and economic growth in particular through women's participation in entrepreneurship. The Act requires taking into consideration the gender dimension with particular focus on business activities run by women in the most critical stages

NCW is aware that that at a time when there is a global financial and economic crisis, it is companies, in particular SMEs that are the most sensitive and at the same time the most important elements in terms of job creation and recovery capacity and that SMEs are a crucial part of our economy and a major source of employment, entrepreneurial skills and innovation

#### Fully supports

- the adoption of national legislation to give binding effect to the 'Think small first' principle proposed by the EU Commission in its communication 'Think Small First: A Small Business Act for Europe' with a view to the specific situation and needs of various types of SMEs (COM(2008) 394 final)
- Setting up of a Consultative Council for Enterprise
- drawing up a Small Business Act national plan (separate from the NRP)

- appointing a national SME envoy charged with both managing implementation of the of the Small Business Act European style (SBAE) and ensuring that national laws transpose EU legislation that comply with the fundamental principles of *Think small first*; (Malta Enterprise)
- Policy measures other than suitable financing that would help SMEs to grow and develop, recognising SMEs as the rule and not the exception
- the establishment of obligation to ease the administrative burden for companies

#### General Recommendations

- more SME friendly public service through specialised SME training in particular in the VAT department
- putting in place the framework conditions to the process of reaching the ambitious 3% of the GDP target for R&D spending in the next five years
- pilot measures on energy efficiency for SMEs in the construction sector
- ensuring that the specific needs of women entrepreneurs are addressed to increase their participation in economic activity
- strengthening the innovation capacity of SMEs by facilitating access to technology and finance, providing innovative support services
- improving the availability, access (meeting the needs of working

mothers) and quality of adequate training offers for individuals both women and men and the physical infrastructure (roads and transport) to facilitate access to and by clients

- nurturing a national entrepreneurial mindset through the National Curriculum at all levels of education for both women and men to encourage risk-taking,
- innovation and opting for non-traditional choices, involving companies in training and education schemes
- ensuring effective and full use of Community instruments, either for the development of regional infrastructures or to support transitions in sectors affected by structural changes through the European Social Fund (ESF) and the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) in particular in the Tourism and Manufacturing Industry
- strengthening financial mechanisms by making better use of the European Investment Bank (EIB) in taking part of the risk on the SMEs and to look at ways in which banks in Malta can still further boost the support they provide to SMEs, in particular those run by women

Grace Attard,  
NCW President, Member of the  
Consultative Committee for Enterprise

## NCW pays tribute to First NCW president Josephine Amato Gauci and ICW Vice-President Lydie Rossini van Hissenhoven



The National Council of Women has recently suffered a sad loss in the person of its first president. It was back in 1964 that a group of like-minded determined women met

and set up an association to fight in earnest so that women could get the same legal rights as men. It was a time when women in Government service were paid only two-thirds of the salary that men got for the same work, they were prevented from holding public office and once they got married they not only had to resign from their jobs if employed with the government but they forfeited most of their civil rights in favour of their husband. Heading this group of women was Josephine Amato Gauci, nee Bartolo: a small determined woman who in her very quiet way would not let anything stand in the way of her goal. ... and Josephine's dream saw its fruition when in 1988 the Maltese Parliament unanimously voted in favour of adopting the Convention for Equal Rights. Since that day, a lot has been achieved not only in the promotion of

equal rights for women but also in making it possible for women to exploit these rights: more needs to be done, but Ms Amato Gauci and her colleagues certainly placed women on the agenda and charted the right path. In 1984, Ms Amato Gauci was awarded NCW Honorary Life Membership, followed by Honorary Presidency in 2007 for her key role in promoting women's rights half a century ago

Soft-spoken and gentle in her ways, Josephine was passionate in everything that she did. A very cultured lady her interests ranged from music to literature, to sports and politics: name it and she would always give you news of the latest developments in the subject. She was a woman who loved life and made sure that she lived it to the full. Talking to her was always entertaining as well as illuminating. Although she may not have been aware of it she influenced so many women who followed in her path and who looked upon her as a role-model – a person with strong principles who combined her public persona with being a loving wife to her husband Frederick and a loving mother to her three children, Allan,

Sandra and Ann. To the very end of her long life she was a real lady – always generous with her advice as well as with her appreciation of what others were doing.

The National Council of Women will certainly miss her as will also her many friends and her family. To her husband Frederick, who always supported her in all she did, to her daughters Ann and Sandra of whom she was so proud, and to her in-laws and grand-children that she was so fond of go out sincere condolences.

The national Council of Women of Malta is deeply sorry at the sudden demise of Lydie Rossini van Hissenhoven on the 14th of October 2010 in Rome. She dedicated 35 years of her life to ICW and ECICW. Lydie was the ICW Permanent Representative to FAO in Rome for 30 years. She became an ICW Board member in 2006 and she was elected first Vice-President in October 2009 at the ICW General Assembly in Johannesburg. She was a champion of women, a dear friend and a global citizen. She will be greatly missed by all of us.





## DIARY OF EVENTS OCTOBER 2010 TO DECEMBER 2010

<b>October</b>		29th	Press Breakfast. Persons of Addiction and Ex Prisoners. Dar L-Europa. Mary Ann Zammit attended	28th	Bingley participated. The First International Voluntary Day Event. At 10am Gozo Sports Complex
5th	Bagit 2011 Process ta Konsultazzjoni fil lukanda Corinthia Attard. MariosaVella Cardona attended	29th	Meeting Creative Economy Project. The Ministry of Gozo		
	MCESD Civil Society Committee meeting with Mr G. Cordina about Pre Budget 2011	29th	Fondazzjoni IDEAT. Seminar. 'Main streaming sustainable development into E U policies' at Dar L-Europa. Grace Attard attended	1st	<b>December</b> Il-partit Laburista - Kollokju ma L-Imsieha Socjali bit tema "Il-klima tad djalogu socjali fi krizi internazzjonali " Dar l-Ewropa 17.30-20.00, Grace Attard and Doris Bingley attended
6th	"Women Mental Health" Public Dialogue Organised by National Council of Women at Dar l-Ewropa			3rd	Seminar, " An Evidence based response to Domestic Violence" by the commission for Domestic Violence. Grand Hotel Excelsior. Grace Attard, Doris Bingley and Mary Anne Zammit attended.
8th	Richmond Foundation Malta Conference. Problemi ta Sahha Mentali, il faqar u l-Eskluzjoni Sociali. MEUSAC consultation session on GMOs at Dar L-Europa	2nd	<b>November</b> MEUSAC Sectoral Committee, Employment, Social Policy and Health meeting, Doris Bingley attended	3rd	Nghixu b mod shih fis socjeta. K N P D Persuni b disabilta. Lukanda Phoenixia 9-1pm.
	Grace Attard invited to participate on TVM 12.05 about the Maternity Leave Directive.	4th	Fondazzjoni IDEAT, Malta's Progressive Think Tank Seminar on the co-decision process at Dar L- Europa	3rd	Visit to the Carmelite Priory in Mdina organized by the Education Committee.
	EESC and MCESD meeting at The Phoenixia Hotel, Grace Attard and Doris Bingley attended	4th	8th WOMENist conference and Exhibition Istanbul Turkey, Grace Attard and Doris Bingley participated.	4th	Funeral of NCW's First President, Ms Josephine Amato Gauci
9th	Programme Ghandi x'ngnid on Radio Malta. Grace Attard participated	5th	Gozo Outing organized by the Environment Committee National Council of Women	6th	Talk "STIs: Prevention is better than cure" by Dr. Roderick Bugeja organized by the Health Committee at NCW Centre
12th	Spanish National Day, reception given by Her Excellency the ambassador of Spain. Doris Bingley and Marie Demicoli attended	6th	E U Parliament Citizens Forum at Westin Dragonara . Doreen Micallef on the panel	7th-8th	December EESC Plenary Session
15th	Breast Health Day. Europa Donna. Launch of make Healthy choices Mater Day Hospital. Mary Rose Zahra attended.	10th	Meeting with Department of Lifelong learning Director Mr Mario Azzopardi	8th	MCESD Civil Society meeting, Doris Bingley participated
15th	Unlocking the Female Potential. - Equality mark at Montekristo Estate, MariosaVella Cardona represented NCW	13th	Fundraising Dinner in aid of the Bice Mizzi Vassallo Music Competition.		Maryanne Zammit on TVM Bongu discussing the Maternity Leave Directive
16th	Fundraising Concert and Launch of BMV Music Competition at St James Cavalier, organized by the BMV Music Committee .	13th	Sexual Health Related Issues Seminar organized by the PSD Association	9th	Enterprise Consultative Council at Phoenixia Hotel Grace Attard attended.
16th	& 19th - Doris Bingley meets Commonwealth Foundation Director, Dr Mark Collins at Hotel Meridien	14th	Remembrance Day St John Co Cathedral Valletta	10th	Seminar Caring for the Unborn Child at Mater Dei Hospital, Grace Attard chaired and Doris Bingley participated.
19th	EESC Extraordinary Meeting of Group III	16th	Business Meeting Presentation of the 5th Cohesion Report at the Excelsior Hotel		2010 European Year for Combating Poverty and Social Exclusion National Closing Conference, Josephine Dalli represented NCW
20th	Doris Bingley meeting with Commonwealth Foundation Chair Ms Simone de Comarmond during CAPAM	17th	Monitoring Committee meeting OP1. Investing in Competitiveness for a better Quality of Life - Therese Cassola attended	14th	MEUSAC - Sectoral Committee Competition, Consumers' Affairs, Economy and Finance - European Single Market Act
20-21st	EESC Plenary Session	17th	Presentation of the Communication from the commission on "The CAP towards 2020" at Dar L-Europa	15th	Doris Bingley attends Symposium "The Role of Gender in International Relations"
21st	Launch of the Small Business Act White Paper. Grace Attard attended	17th	Final Symposium on Tackling Gender Violence in Prison within the EU (funded by DAPHNE)		'The CAP towards 2020: Meeting the food, natural resources and territorial challenges of the future.' Environment Sectoral Committee
22nd	Doris Bingley attends NISCO meeting at MCC.	17th - 19th	Commonwealth Civil Society Meeting, Marlborough House London, Doris Bingley participated.		HPV talk with Dr Katia Vella at 7.00pm at the National Council of Women Centre
23rd	Environment Committee Country walk at the outskirts of Rabat	18th	Round Table Event. The 2010 European Year for Combating Poverty and Social Exclusion in collaboration with Caritas		EESC Labour Market Observatory
25th	Monitoring Committee at Auberge de Castile, Doris Bingley attended	18th	Consultative Committee on Industrial Change		EESCStudy Group - Innovative Workplaces
	Doris Bingley on NET TV on NCW and Budget 2011	19th	November Extraordinary Meeting of EESC Group III	16th	MEUSAC - Education, Youth & Culture Sectoral Committee - Youth on the Move
27th	NCW Courses - Presentation of Certificates 2010 at the National Council of Women Centre	23rd	Consultation session on the EU's proposed soil framework directions. Europa house Valletta	17th	Central committee / Executive Meeting.
27th	EESC External Relations section Meeting	23rd	EESC External Relations Section Meeting		
28th	EESCSection for the Single Market, Production and Consumption	24th	EESC Employment, Social Affairs and Citizenship Section Meeting		
28th	Breast Care Support Group annual lecture at the Phoenixia Hotel, Nadyanne Mangion attended.	25th	ICT For all scheme. Information session at MCA premises. Doris Bingley and Marie Demicoli attended		
		26th	Sexual Health Policy Launch, Doris		

## Annual General Meeting 22 January 2011 AGENDA

The Annual General Meeting will be held on **Saturday 22 January 2011** at The Palace Hotel, High Street Sliema, (complimentary parking at the Victoria Hotel car park) with the following agenda:

1. 8.30 Registration & Coffee
2. 9.00 Opening prayers, Welcome and Notices.  
Nomination of Tellers
3. 9.15 Minutes of the last General Meeting.
4. 9.25 President's Address.
5. 9.35 Annual Report by General Secretary
6. 9.50 Financial Report by Treasurer.
7. 10.00 Election of President, Officers and Members of the Executive
8. 10.15 Reports of Standing and Sectional Committees.
9. 11.15 Results of Election
10. 11.20 Amendments to Statute – Promoting the role of women in emerging economic spheres and global challenges

### 11. 11.40 Reaffirmation of Policy

- a) A Small Business Act - NCW Executive Committee
- b) Consumer driven health services policy - Malta Union of Midwives & Nurses (MUMN)
- c) Gender dimension in Sustainable development and the Environment - NCW Environment Committee
- d) Protecting Children using the Internet - NCW

- Executive Committee
- e) Health Promotion and Prevention by Family Health Nurse/Midwife in the Community - Malta Union of Midwives and Nurses
  - f) Sexual health Policy - NCW Health Committee
  - g) Strengthening and implementing domestic violence legislation - NCW Social Issues Committee.

### 12. 11.55–13.10 Adoption of Resolutions. (5 mins each)

- 1) Addressing undeclared domestic work - NCW Executive Committee
- 2) Proposals for Pensions Reform - NCW Executive Committee
- 3) Separated Women's entitlement to pension - NCW Social Issues Committee
- 4) Breast Care Awareness - BCSG Europa Donna Malta
- 5) Increasing Initiation and duration of breastfeeding - Malta Midwives Association
- 6) Engaging men and boys in the elimination of violence against women and girls - NCW Executive Committee
- 7) Extension of Maternity Leave - NCW Executive Committee
- 8) Promoting Natural Childbirth - Malta Midwives Association
- 9) Normalising childbirth - Malta Midwives Association
- 10) The European Year for Volunteering 2011 - NCW Executive Committee

- 11) Maltese MATSEC exams - NCW Education Committee
- 12) L-Addozzjoni - Catholic Enquiry Centre, Emigrants Commission
- 13) Thejjija ghaz-zwieg - Catholic Enquiry Centre, Emigrants Commission
- 14) Women and Mental Health - NCW Social Issues Committee
- 13) 13.10 - Correspondence. ICW, CHOGM, Commonwealth Year Theme "Women as Agents of Transformation."
- 14) Other Matters
- 15) 13.20 - Concluding Address by President

### End of AGM - L U N C H

#### Notes:

The full text of the resolutions will be available at the AGM.

The following are the posts on the Executive Committee to be filled by elections

- ◆ President
- ◆ 3 Vice Presidents,
- ◆ General Secretary
- ◆ Treasurer
- ◆ 3 Executive members

**All members and affiliated organisations are urged to attend. As only paid up members are entitled to vote, subscriptions should be renewed during the month of January or paid before the start of the AGM.**

**Doris Bingley**  
**Hon. General Secretary**  
**21 December 2010**

## FORTHCOMING EVENTS

### January

**5th January 2011** - NCW Festive Season Buffet Dinner at The Waterfront Hotel Sliema at 19.30hrs

**22nd January 2011- Annual General Meeting at The Palace Hotel, High Street Sliema at 8.30am**

### February

**18th February 2011** - Foundation Day Dinner at 19.30hrs Venue to be announced.

### March

**2nd March 2011** - Celebrating the 100 years of International Women's Day with an evening thanksgiving Mass by His Grace the Archbishop Mgr. Paul Cremona.

### International Women' Day Concert



For International Women's day, NCW does not only want to celebrate female talent but also to support the Maltese community. With these two aims in mind, NCW is organizing a concert by Soprano Lydia Caruana. The concert will be held under the auspices of His Excellency The President of Malta and Ms Abela on Wednesday March 9, 2011 at 19:30 at the Manoel Theatre. The concert is also a fund raising event for the Malta Community Chest Fund.

**Tickets (25 euro, 20 euro and 15 euro) may be bought from the Manoel Theatre Booking Office as from February 14th, 2011.**

**For more information contact NCW Office on 21248881 or 21246982 between 9.30am and 2.30pm or email [ncwmalta@camline.net.mt](mailto:ncwmalta@camline.net.mt)**

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