



I-Mara

Newsletter of the National Council of Women - Malta



Dr. Joanna Drake with NCW Executive Committee at the New Year Dinner



NCW Executive Committee Members meet his H.E the Ambassador of Tunisia Abderrahman Bel Hadj Ali and Mrs Ali at their residence in Attard



Dr. Sylvia Anie, Director of Social Transformation Programmes Division, Commonwealth Secretariat, presenting women agents of change to Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II



NCW President, Grace Attard, with Dr. Lorraine Schembri Orland, at the Foundation Day dinner



NCW Annual General Meeting 2011 at The Palace Hotel, Sliema



Ms. Viviane Amar, an international speaker and trainer on Women's Leadership with Mr. Joseph G. Woods, Ms. Grace Attard, Ms. Doris Bingley and Mr. Patrick Parnis founder of leading talks

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that they should do unto you."



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Il-Mara

NEWSLETTER OF THE NATIONAL COUNCIL OF WOMEN - MALTA

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Thanksgiving Mass Commemorating the European Year of Volunteering and the Centenary of International Women's Day



On Wednesday 2nd March 2011 the National Council of Women organised a memorable Thanksgiving Mass commemorating the European Year of Volunteering 2011 and the centenary of International Women's Day. The



magnificent Co-Cathedral of St. John in Valletta, the beautiful singing of the St. Paul Choral Society with soprano Arienne Gaerty and organist Elizabeth Conrad under the directorship of Dr. Hugh Agius Muscat, the celebrants and most particularly the homily of His Grace the



Archbishop contributed to a unity of prayer, thanksgiving and praise to our Lord. All those present including our foreign guests, Volunteers from various organisation and NCW members and affiliates praised the unity of prayer in a unique atmosphere

Articles on NCW Website

Due to lack of space in our newsletter please read these articles on NCW Website

www.ncwmalta.com, those that do not have access to internet kindly contact the office and we will send you hard copies.

- UN Secretary-General's Message on International Women's Day 8 March 2011
- AGM President's Address
- The Hungarian Presidency works on the improvement of the European Pact for Gender Equality.
- Il-Holqien tal-kunsens: is-soċjetà Ċivili tista' tghin biex tiggwida lis-Suq Uniku
- Ghodda imprezzabbli għall-graba ta' persuni b'mard mentali
- AGM 2011 Annual Report



President's Message

Dear Colleagues and friends,

As we go about our daily commitments, we all feel concerned about what is going on around us, both in the Euromed Region and in Europe. The situation in North African countries and

in the Middle East cannot but not affect Malta and Europe and indeed the whole world

On the other hand, recent news regarding the financial crisis in Portugal is also of deep concern for all eurozone member states and the rest of Europe. All this calls for us to listen carefully and weigh decisions that are taken in the interest of all, but not least of Malta

The importance of family policies not least in relation to the demographic deficit is a topic that is being given priority both at national and EU level. The Hungarian Presidency has asked the European Economic and Social Committee, EESC to study and make recommendations on the importance of the family and as member of the EESC I have been in a position to contribute to the discussion

On a different note, the widespread awareness of International Women's Day both in Malta, Europe and the world will serve, we hope to mobilize all

stakeholder from words to action. As you can see in this issue of our newsletter, NCW has been constantly visible in the media and at the same time submitting policy recommendations to government and other stakeholders but also in taking concrete action through our various initiatives, not least through our education and training programmes at our Centre at Błata l-Bajda.

The centenary celebrations of IWD should be a platform for change – change in attitudes, in policy and in concrete action in Malta; to our disappointment, Malta rates at the bottom of the list of EU countries in female participation in employment and in political and economic decision making positions. NCW reiterates, as it has done over the years, the need for a National Action Plan, involving all stakeholders – government, employers, trade unions, national agencies and Commissions and not least organisations representing women – an action plan that involves and addresses both men and women

NCW believes that the time has come, indeed it is overdue, that all of us, men and women need to change stereotypical attitudes in order to address current misconceptions ingrained in both men and women. I believe that reaching out to men, reciprocal communication based on better understanding of each other is the way forward for a truly gender equality based society

Grace Attard
President NCW

International Women's Day Celebrations

As part of the celebrations commemorating the 100th anniversary of International Women's Day, the National Council of Women organised a recital to celebrate female artistry and to use the opportunity to support our community.

The performance, by well-known Maltese soprano Lydia Caruana, accompanied by pianist Elizabeth Leonardi, was held on Wednesday March 9th 2011 at the Manoel Theatre. The concert was under the distinguished patronage of His Excellency the President of Malta and Ms Abela. All proceeds went towards the Malta Community Chest Fund. The recital programme presented an interesting blend of popular operatic arias by Mozart, Donizetti and Gounod together with Haydn's so called 'Insertion Arias', for a refreshing combination, and immortal pieces by Liszt, Delibes, Strauss, Lehar, Ardit and Rota.

On behalf of NCW I wish to thank His Excellency Dr George Abela President of Malta, distinguished



patron of this event and his spouse Ms Margaret Abela. Our gratitude also goes to the NCW Education and Culture Committee, for their enthusiasm and commitment and to the members of the NCW Executive Committee who assisted them in their work. I also wish to thank the Management of the Manoel Theatre together with leading Soprano Lydia Caruana and pianist Elizabeth Leonardi for their unique performance in this concert

Our appreciation also goes to the wide range of sponsors who have contributed to the success of this event, in particular to HSBC plc our main sponsors who have constantly supported NCW in its initiatives for the benefit of society. I also wish to thank our patrons for their positive comments on the performance. It was indeed an evening of delightful music for everybody.

Ruth Falzon
Education Committee

International Women's Day – 100 years after Women forging the way ahead



While acknowledging the work of many courageous women activists whose foresight in different parts of the world created the pathway to gender equality, not without difficulty and personal pain, NCW calls for an analysis of the Maltese situation to ensure that women forging the way ahead can be translated into action

In a study by NSO recently commissioned by NCW, 86.1 per cent of single and 80.0 per cent of married women thought that there should be a balance in parliament; whereas for men these figures stood at 62.7 per cent for single and 68.1 per cent for married. Also worth noting is that 15.0 per cent of men who think that there should not be a balance feel that women should look after the family, while 14.3 per cent of women who said there should not be a balance, said that women have no time.

Again, more single women than married ones (87.7 per cent and 81.2 per cent respectively) thought that there should be a balance, in Local Councils, while this was the other way round for men (64.7 per cent for single and 73.1 per cent for married). Once again, the largest proportion - 32.8 per cent - of persons who said that there should not be a balance said that this is because men are more suitable.

These results should not be taken lightly. Perceptions reflect the different attitudes and the different situations of life of men and women, who unconsciously or not are engaged in power sharing. The challenge is how to address power inequality and/or abuse of power. Very often, the demands of a patriarchal society or a male-dominated society like ours encourage and re-enforce the imbalance of power.

The power relations that prevent women from leading fulfilling lives operate at many levels of society. Often, as a result of lack of self-confidence or culturally ingrained attitudes and behaviour and lack of support structures, the potential of many capable women is lost. However, the success stories of the increasing number of women entrepreneurs in Malta clearly give a different dimension of women's determination to succeed

The traditional working patterns of many political parties and government structures continue to be barriers to women's participation in public life. Women may be discouraged from seeking political office by discriminatory attitudes and practices, family and child-care responsibilities, and the high cost of seeking and holding public office.

Lack of adequately addressing gender imbalance in our education system has not helped either. The State, a male dominated institution, has failed to put in place the necessary infrastructure to strongly address the 'socially construed' inequalities and the biological differences to ensure equal representation of men and women in all decision-making posts.

Gender inequality is further perpetuated by the way women are portrayed in the media, in particular in reporting news: women are almost always depicted as victims, hardly ever as achievers, except in sports. The media, also male dominated in decision-making posts, tends to reward women for the aesthetic qualities – fashion, beauty contests and the like, in short as objects to please rather than as beautiful yet intelligent, enterprising and hard working human beings.

Many women fail to understand that men's hostilities are based on fear and personal insecurities, fear of failing to make the 'masculine' grade as expected by society, in particular by their peers. We need to tackle the myth that naming violence against women and girls as a gendered issue is equivalent to labelling all men as potential perpetrators, or that perpetrators are never motivated to change their behaviour.

We should also be addressing issues of women in vulnerable groups such as women in undeclared domestic work. According to the ILO report drawn up for the conference held in June 2010 in industrialised countries, domestic work accounts for between 5% and 9% of all employment. The report's introduction states that "paid domestic work remains virtually invisible as a form of employment in many countries". Policies addressing the situation of single parents need to include active labour market policies and incentives to encourage entry in the labour market and reduce the risk of poverty.

The high incidence of domestic violence in Malta requires an effective national strategy. NCW reiterates the urgent need for an integrated, multidisciplinary approach, focusing more on prevention and early detection, with adequate and professional training in different sectors such as in the health services: professionals in hospital emergency department, primary care, pregnancy and childbirth services, midwives, nurses who often are in a position to detect early signs of violence.

NCW will be launching a campaign roping in men and boys in general to stand up against violence against women, encouraging them to have a proactive, rather than defensive, response and not to tolerate or perpetrate violence against women and girls. At the same time, the campaign will address those men and boys who commit violence against women and girls with the aim to stop them perpetrating violence.

Women in particular need to engage men in authentic discussion, using well chosen messages and male role models and male voices. The mentality that women's place is in the home still prevails, although in a more subtle manner. More emphasis on the importance of men as nurturers and carers can go far in dismantling these inequalities.

Grace Attard
NCW President, EESC member



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Annual General Meeting 2011

NCW AGM 2011 highlights women's role in the economy, pensions reform and engaging men and boys in the elimination of violence against women. The Annual General Meeting of



the National Council of Women was held on Saturday 22 January at the Palace, Sliema. Grace Attard who was confirmed president for another term highlighted the importance of women's role in economic growth and the creation of new jobs through entrepreneurship. She also spoke about the need to engage women in global challenges such as climate change, security of energy sources, science and research and in consumer and competition policies. "These challenges cannot be dealt with adequately unless we combine our efforts with those of other stakeholders at all levels"

As in previous resolutions the AGM highlighted the need to be innovative in providing measures to reconcile work and family responsibilities of both parents. Addressing the multiple issues surrounding violence against women, NCW will be embarking on projects involving men and boys to address the lack of preventive measures amongst others.

Referring to the rights of the citizens, as legally stated in the Lisbon Treaty, NCW President and General Secretary will be participating in the forthcoming Citizens Agora organised by the European Parliament. The themes of this event will be participative democracy and Citizens Right of Initiative – the

citizen at the heart of Europe. This event and initiatives for the European Year for Volunteering 2011 should give greater visibility to and recognition of the individual's role in society.

During the AGM NCW launched the International Women's Day logo 'Women forging the way forward' marking one hundred years since its establishment, which will be followed by a series of events throughout the year.

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 efforts towards further developing a European and global perspective need to be stepped up if Malta wants to retain the competitive edge

The general assembly also discussed a number of resolutions dealing with:

- addressing undeclared domestic work;
- Pensions reform; Separated Women's entitlement to pension;
- Breast Care Awareness;

Increasing Initiation and duration of breastfeeding.

- Engaging men and boys in the elimination of violence against women and girls;
- Extension of Maternity Leave; Women and Mental Health;
- The European Year for Volunteering 2011;
- Maltese MATSEC exams; L-Addozzjoni
- Thejjija ghaz-zwieg; and Promoting Natural Childbirth

The assembly unanimously approved bestowing Honorary Life Membership on Dr Lorraine Schembri Orland for her valid contribution as NCW Predsident at National and European level and for her continued commitment to women in particular those in vulnerable situations

The Executive Committee Members for 2011 are President Grace Attard, Vice Presidents: Nadya Ann Mangion, Mary Gaerty, Doreen Micallef, Hon. General Secretary Doris Bingley, Hon. Treasurer Therese Cassola, Members: Priscilla Muscat; Diane Xuereb, M'Anne Zammit, Helga Ellul, M'Rose Zahra, Jean Killick, Dr Mariosa Vella Cardona, Dr Mercedes Schembri Wismayer, and Dr Claudine Zarb, NCW Legal Advisor.



Foundation Day Dinner 2011



Presentation of Honorary Life Membership to Dr. Lorraine Schembri Orland in the presence of Ms. Margaret Abela, Ms. Catherine Gonzi, Ms. Michelle Muscat and NCW members

News from the European Economic and Social Committee

The EU 2020 Steering Committee

During the second meeting of the EESC Steering Committee, one of the most important items was an exchange of views concerning the opinion on the Communication from the Commission Annual Growth Survey: advancing the EU's comprehensive response to the crisis [COM(2011) 11 final] which was presented by Rapporteur-General Mr Michael Smyth, who highlighted the importance of taking decisions that reflect both the economic and social aspect, in particular in pension systems and in matters relating to wages/salaries

This was followed by a discussion

on the coordination of Europe 2020 activities within the EESC and with the Commission: Coherence between the flagship initiatives and related themes; also discussed was the work on the Digital Agenda

Another important item on the agenda was the "Europe 2020" Strategy – the state of play at EU level and in the Member States. Interventions on the role of the EU Commission were made by Mr Nociar, Head of Cabinet of Commissioner Šefčovič, Vice President of the Commission, Inter-Institutional Relations and Administration and by Mr Haag, Head of Unit, Direction D – Better Regulation and Coordination, European

Commission

These were followed by a strong debate during which representatives of the National Economic and Social Councils highlighted the importance of the targets of the National Reform Programmes, (NRPs) to realistically reflect the different targets of the EU2020 Strategy and the need for more time for adequate consultation and social dialogue at national level to ensure that the expectations of the citizens are taken into consideration also

The last item on the agenda focused on the topic 'Towards a Single Market Act' presented by Ms Kekeleki, Vice-President of the Single Market Observatory.

EESC March Plenary

At the EESC Plenary Session held on the 15-16 March, European Commission President Jose Manuel Barroso focused on the prospects for success of the EU2020 Strategy to address the major social and economic challenges facing Europe today. He spoke about the importance of creating a climate of trust without which there can be no investment and job creation. Economic governance would respond to the demands of the markets. Barroso emphasised that the most vulnerable should benefit most, through measures addressing poverty and social exclusion. EESC President Staffan Nilsson emphasised the importance of ensuring participative

democracy through consultation with organised Civil Society as a key partner of the EU 2020 Strategy through the National Economic and social councils at member state level in coordination with the EESC. In an intense debate, EESC members raised questions and comments on the importance of monitoring the progress, on social dialogue and the need for member states to work closely through the National Reform Programmes to ensure national targets realistically contribute to the success of the Strategy

Michel Barnier, Commissioner for the Internal Market and Services presented the Commission's Single Market Act

which aims to complete the creation of a truly European Market almost 20 years since its emergence. During the debate members addressed a number of aspects including the need to prioritise which of the 50 proposals member states were to focus on and the need for more coherence and interdependence of the different measures at member state and EU level

Some of the most important opinions adopted at the March Plenary include: Innovative Workplaces, Competition policy, Energy Integration, Pensions Reform and the Single Market Act

For more information visit WWSC website: www.eesc.europa.eu

Visit of Greek and Turkish Cypriot Women in Political Organisations and NGOs organised by the European Commission - 17-18 March 2011

Visit of Greek and Turkish Cypriot Women in Political Organisations and NGOs organised by the European Commission - 17-18 March 2011

As part of the visit of Greek and Turkish Cypriot Women in political organisations and NGOs the Commission organised a conference addressing a number of gender equality aspects. Ms. Grace Attard, EESC member of group III – Vice-President of SOC Section and President of the National Council of Women, Malta made a presentation on Changing Attitudes

Ms Attard highlighted key areas of the EU Commission Report on the Progress on Equality between Men and Women in 2010 with particular reference to the five priority areas of the Women's Charter and the Strategy: equal economic independence; equal pay for equal work and work of equal value; equality in decision-making; dignity, integrity and an end to gender-based violence; and gender equality outside the Union. The

presentation focused on the different levels regarding women's participation rates in political and economic decision making in EU member states.



This was followed by an interactive discussion on a number of stereotypical attitudes including statements such as tradition, culture and religion determine

the development of women's role in society; and men are more suitable than women in political decision-making roles; and private companies will lose the competitive edge if maternity leave is extended, among others. The discussion challenged these attitudes and the participants came up with proposals on how women in political posts, in the business sector, in trade unions and NGOs can help bring about changes in attitudes

The conference was also addressed by Ms. Myria Vassiliadou, Directorate General for Home Affairs on the Directive on Human Trafficking, referring to the forthcoming publication of the relevant directive by the Commission. Mr. Dimitrios Kourkoulas, Director – Enlargement Policy and Communication, Directorate General for Enlargement addressed the issue of European Integration

Grace Attard,
EESC member

AMIE Project Launch

Monday 4th April 2011 saw the launch of the AMIE Project. AMIE being the acronym for Ambassadors in Malta for Increasing women Entrepreneurs as well as the French word for female friend.

National Council of Women Malta together with Foundation for Women Entrepreneurs (FWE), Reach Beyond Foundation, Malta Business Bureau (MBB) and Malta Association of Women in Business (MAWB) have obtained funds from the European Union's Competitiveness and Innovation Framework Programme for a project to promote female entrepreneurship in Malta through the establishment of a Network of Women Ambassadors. This Network will be part of the European Network of Women Entrepreneurs and will campaign amongst unemployed women and women in active professional life to set-up their own businesses and become entrepreneurs. The launch took place with a conference held at The Corinthia San DorD Hotel St Julian's organized by Foundation for Women Entrepreneurs.

In the opening speech Ms Angele Giuliano (FEW), over-all project coordinator, set the tone of the conference by stating that ways in which to increase female entrepreneurship were constantly on her association's mind; in the male dominated business environment on the island. The majority of the university population in Malta is female standing at circa 60%; however only 37% of the labour force is female, with only 18.5% of self-employed being women. We hold the title of worst performers in terms of women's participation in the labour force in the EU27 (2010). These are not figures to be proud of. If the state is investing so much in education, and young girls are making use of these resources; how is it that such low returns are attained? Is this situation

not a waste of trained human resource that the country's economy can benefit from? How can we make the female population start off or return to the labour market and enrich the economy?



Ms Giuliano then tackled the strong points of the woman that would make her a good entrepreneur. Women are creative, able multi-taskers and good time managers as well as having a good head for numbers as most of them already handle the family's finances. However a lack of self-confidence, an ingrained culture of gender stereotyping, an aversion to taking risks and guilt-tripping especially if they already have a family; hinder a woman from considering herself in the position of an entrepreneur.

Over the last few years local as well as European organisations are giving help to enterprising women who are ready to take the risk. The first step on embarking into entrepreneurship always starts with the woman's personal commitment to take this step and make her initial idea a success. The female entrepreneur ambassadors chosen to participate in the AMIE project are an example of this commitment.

The objectives of the AMIE Project are to establish collaboration between women entrepreneurs on a European level, to promote female entrepreneurship in Malta and inspire other women when they hear the female ambassadors started

out and to increase the potential of women who are already in enterprise.

The project will be targeting schools with female students at secondary as well as primary level, female students in vocational colleges and University, guidance and counselling teachers, unemployed women who are thinking of starting or returning to work by collaboration with local councils, women who are unhappy in their present employment and the Chamber of commerce and employment organisations as stakeholders and policy makers. The female ambassadors shall visit schools, vocational colleges

and University to give talks. Workshops shall be held for guidance teachers and careers counsellors; as well as workshops with local councils for unemployed women to motivate and build confidence. Seminars for stakeholders are also being proposed.

To keep the team focussed, monthly partnership meetings will take place throughout the two-year course of the project. Media events to keep the general public aware of female entrepreneurship, the project and the network are planned. Any project activity taking place will appear regularly in press releases. The use of social media will further publicise the project and keep the public informed of progress to date.

The project will culminate with a national conference in October 2012. The results and effects of the AMIE project will be long term as already the ambassadors are networking with the contacts they have forged during the Brussels launch in December 2010. This is a pilot project for Malta and if successful will be a platform for future female enterprise locally.

Nadyanne Mangion
Project co-ordinator

Links:

- <http://www.independent.com.mt/news.asp?newsitemid=117431>
- <http://www.maltatoday.com.mt/news/national/women-entrepreneurship-initiative-launched>
- http://www.women.org.mt/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=41&Itemid=84
- <http://www.mmb.org.mt/Articles/Article.aspx?Section=newsroom&ArticleId=1244&Article=Ambassadors+in+Malta+for+Increasing+women+Entrepreneurs+%28AMIE%29+launched+in+Brussels++>
- http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/policies/sme/promoting-entrepreneurship/women/ambassadors/background_information_en.htm



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WOMEN AGENTS OF CHANGE !

This year the theme “Women as Agents of Change” was chosen to be celebrated throughout 2011. Special events took place during Commonwealth week (March 14th – 20)

Women and girls make up over half of the world population and in the Commonwealth that is over one billion people. By investing in women and girls, social, economic and political progress can accelerate. Education, access to health care, fair treatment and equal opportunities and protection can eradicate female poverty which in turn would have an impact on the family, community and society as a whole. Above all to ensure their needs and to ensure benefit for all society, women need to be included in decision-making.



Commonwealth Countries are encouraged to engage with the Commonwealth theme and organise activities throughout 2011 to raise awareness and address the challenges and highlight the opportunities.

The fifty year old Council for Education in the Commonwealth (CEC) organised a very successful conference in the Grand Committee Room of the House of Commons. The packed meeting issued the following:

CALL TO ACTION: WOMEN - AGENTS OF CHANGE!

Recognising the transformative impact that educating women has on society; With the aim of changing societal forms and values towards patterns that reflect and respect the genius, needs and interests of both genders; Recognising the progress that has been made, but regretting the cost to society and the blight on individual lives resulting from continuing educational inequality; We the undersigned call on Commonwealth Governments to:

- Close the gender gap in access to education
- Provide women with equal access to complete secondary education,
- Ensure all sectors of education have trained teaching and support staff.
- Support pastoral policies that prevent girls and women from dropping out of education due to early marriage, domestic and childcare responsibilities
- Ensure education programmes in all sectors, including higher, adult, vocational and continuing education
- Introduce employment legislation to ensure women's economic rewards reflect their academic achievements and abilities

And to ensure equality in decision-making on education, to commit to achieving equal representation of women in Commonwealth Parliaments, Governments and inter-governmental agencies

During the conference PLAN, the global children's charity and the Royal Commonwealth Society (RCS) launched a report that they had worked on together with the 2001 Commonwealth Theme in mind and the centenary of International Women's Day. The question asked: “Where is the best place to be born a girl in the Commonwealth?” The result of this research was compiled in a report entitled “Because You're a Girl – Growing up in the Commonwealth” and presents a country to country snapshot of

what it means to grow up a girl in the commonwealth looking at the barriers and opportunities girls face at each stage of their life. New Zealand comes top and Sierra Leone bottom though most worrying is that there are gender disparity in all the countries even in those that came top.

On Monday 14th afternoon a Commonwealth Day Multi-Faith Observance in the presence of Her Majesty the Queen and His Royal Highness The Duke of Edinburgh took place in Westminster Abbey. More than 2000 people from all over the world gathered together with Heads of Government, faith leaders, one thousand young people and school children, civil society organisation representatives, celebrity readers, dancers and musicians who made this a very colourful lively event.

In the pre-recorded message, the Queen marked the 2011 theme “Women as Agents of Change”. Her Majesty encouraged the citizens of the Commonwealth to give thought to ways in which they can provide support to girls and women. She said: Every birth

marks the start of a new life, a journey which begins with the hopes of parents, families and communities, and which is continued through the aspirations of those girls themselves. This year, the Commonwealth celebrates the important role that women already play in every walk of life and in every Commonwealth country – from the richest to the poorest areas, across continents and oceans, from villages to places of international debate, in every culture and faith – recognising that women are ‘agents of change’ in so many ways: as mothers and sisters, teachers and doctors, artists and craftspeople, smallholders and entrepreneurs, and as leaders of our societies, unleashing the potential of those around them.

The flags of the Commonwealth countries were paraded through the Abbey at the start of the service which also included cultural performances from Australia, India, Trinidad & Tobago and a London-based gospel school group.

The first women Poet Laureate Carol Ann Duffy paid tribute to the women and girls of the Commonwealth in a specially-commissioned poem “A Commonwealth Blessing for Girls” 2011 is unique for the Commonwealth as the first female Chairperson-in-Office, The Honourable Kamla Persad-Bissessar, Prime Minister of Trinidad and Tobago will hand over the Chair to another female prime minister The Honourable Julia Gillard, Prime Minister of Australia at the next CHOGM in October 2011 in Perth.

The events of Commonwealth Day Monday 14th March 2011 came to an end with a reception at Marlborough House hosted by the Commonwealth secretary-General and Mrs Babli Sharma in the presence of Her Majesty The Queen Head



of the Commonwealth.

As part of the commemoration, the Commonwealth Secretariat organised a ‘gender hub’ to celebrate the significant contributions women make to development and democracy. It brought together women and men from the different regions of the Commonwealth who have contributed to gender equality and women's empowerment through their strategic and impactful work.

WOMEN AS AGENTS OF CHANGE

There were five free standing banners under five thematic clusters resonating with the Commonwealth's Plan of Action for Gender Equality: Economic Transformation; Social Transformation; Transformatory Leadership; Justice and Good Governance and the

Commonwealth Plan of Action for Gender Equality 2005-2015. Her Majesty Queen Elisabeth 11 and the Royal Party visited the display and spent time speaking to the groups on gender issues and women's rights related to each cluster.

Doris Bingley Hon General Secretary National Council of Women Malta and Commonwealth Women's Network was one of the five representatives presented to HM Queen Elisabeth 11 and Prime Minister David Cameron.

Commission for the Status of Women 55th Session February-March 2011

NCW Malta was invited to participate in the fifty-fifth session of the Commission on the Status of Women at the United Nations Headquarters in New York. The priority theme of CSW was "Access and participation of women and girls to education, training, science and technology, including for the promotion of women's equal access to full employment and decent work"

Many Civil Society Organisations and NGOs organised side sessions among them the International Council of Women which had a meeting on girl's education and issued the following statement:

As in previous years the Gender Section of the Commonwealth Secretariat, held the annual New York meeting of the National Women's Machinery at the beginning of the CSW Session and focused on national economic strategies and financial mechanisms to enable more equitable growth at a time of increasing unemployment and public sector cuts.

Opening the meeting which called for gender resources to combat impact of financial crisis, Dr Sylvia Anie, Director responsible for Gender at the Commonwealth Secretariat, said that

women and men were being affected differently. Unemployment and under-employment, additional burdens of care and the need to devise coping strategies for survival and livelihoods have all



been the product of the financial crisis. Governments have had to adjust to this challenge by focusing on public sector cuts which has resulted in negative impacts on employment, investment in social sectors and safety nets for the most marginalised people. She noted that "The ongoing fuel and food crises, issues of climate change and situations of conflict have added a layer of complexity to this situation" Dr Anie added that the Millennium Development Goals were being placed at "serious risk" as a result.

Professor Stephanie Seguino, President of the International Association for Feminist Economics" gave the keynote address in which she stressed that employment should be the central indicator of well-being. In the context of this crisis, the single most important mantra (and thus an economic indicator) should be jobs, jobs, jobs. Expansion of jobs can reduce rising racial tensions and gender conflict, and job growth is good for business. She said "Greater weight should be given to fiscal policy (taxation) to control inflation and for monetary policy to generate employment growth"

Head of Gender, Esther Eghobamien, said "our work plan over the next three years directly addresses these issues, with specific focus on innovative programmes on gender and finance.

Commonwealth women's affairs ministers and senior officials have called for greater government resources to be allocated for gender in order to combat the fallout of the global financial crisis, which is disproportionately impacting on livelihoods of women and the most vulnerable.

COMMONWEALTH LECTURE - SONIA GANDHI

Sonia Gandhi, President of the Indian National Congress Party the ruling party of India and the oldest political party founded in 1885 was invited to give the 14th Commonwealth Lecture organised by the Commonwealth Foundation. The Commonwealth Lecture has become one of the most prestigious events in the Commonwealth Calendar.

Sonia Gandhi called for women's voices and concerns to be heard in the global climate change debate, to "help the world find a more sustainable and less consumerist path to development".

"Among all the challenges facing humankind in the twenty-first century, few are more pressing than climate change and global warming. Unfortunately... most of the climate debate so far has been gender-blind. Yet women have played a special role in raising environmental consciousness... Indira Gandhi herself... in 1972 powerfully expressed the link

between poverty and environmental degradation, an issue which continues to shape the current debate."

Mrs Gandhi also reminded the Commonwealth that "investing in women is the highest-return venture", and said that "if urbanisation is the world's future, we must design urban environments and services in ways that will give women greater security". Her lecture emphasised the Commonwealth message that by the empowerment of the disadvantaged, especially women and girls we can accelerate social, economic and political progress in our member countries.

Ms Gandhi highlighted the "powerful" role of technology in reducing gender inequalities through the creation of IT sector jobs allowing women to live

independently, and the proliferation of knowledge-based enterprises run by women in rural areas, allowing them to access government services.

Mrs Gandhi concluded that she hoped the twenty-first century would be when women achieved equality: "May this be, not the century of any particular country, but the century when women finally come into their own, the century when representative democracy is re-imagined to give women their due share, the century when the vocabulary of politics and culture is re-engineered fully to include that other half of mankind."

Women can change the world.
Doris Bingley
NCW Hon. General Secretary
Commonwealth Women's Network



Public presentation of the EUROMEDINCULTURE(s) Recommendations, European Parliament, 16th March 2011

On 16th March 2011 at the European Parliament in Brussels, the members of the EUROMEDINCULTURE network presented the outcome of a wide citizen survey on the challenges for culture within the European Union.

Marie Demicoli and Therese Cassola represented the National Council of Women at the conference. Organisations from Germany, Belgium, Bulgaria, Spain, Finland, France, Italy, Malta, Portugal, Slovenia and Albania form part of the EUROMEDINCULTUREs network.

The aim of the network is to reflect on the mobility of artists and cultural professionals, the enhancement of the economic potential of the fields of culture and art, the integration of the cultural aspects into education policies and the place of culture in the European Union's external relations.

The objectives of the project were:

- Reinforcing the mobility of artists and culture professionals, as well as fostering cultural cooperation, inside and outside Europe,
- Improving the inclusion of culture and the arts in educational policies,
- Highlighting the socio-economic potential of the cultural and artistic fields
- Emphasizing the place of culture in the EU external relations, especially with regard to Euro-Mediterranean relations.

The network conducted a survey and received 2368 questionnaires, organised regional debates and held 24 events in 10 countries with over 3550 participants.

Participants during the conference watched the film "For a Right to Culture" which incorporated the activities in various countries and messages from representatives of the network. Members of the network involved in the project gave a report on the findings of the questionnaire and the public meetings.

Malta, as one of the partners of Euromedinculture project, was represented by Gisella Orsini from Fondazzjoni Temi Zammit. Ms Orsini gave a power-point presentation regarding the key messages from the questionnaire. Those interviewed came from the art and culture sector and most strikingly was the fact that most of them



Therese Cassola, Frédéric Jambu, Marie Demicoli & Gisella Orsini

pointed out that, as Malta is an island, they feel hemmed in and that they need financial support and more opportunities to travel abroad to be known more widely among their Euro-Mediterranean counterparts.

Jordi Balta, Interarts (Spain) gave a power-point presentation and summarised the results of the findings of the questionnaire from all the partners, mainly pointing out the following:

- Cultural practice can provide a space for recognising others and fostering peace.
- Intercultural skills should be a major aim at all levels for internal and external relations.
- There is a strong desire to know other cultures – but limited resources and opportunities.
- Promoting access to cultural life should be an essential objective of Europe's cultural policies;
- Cultural relations between Europe and other regions such as Mediterranean countries should be enhanced through more balanced relations and co-operative skills.
- Need of better information and visibility of policies and programmes via information providers.
- Need for more ambitious cultural policies and better governance systems – through co-operation by EU, national and local authorities and civil society
- There is a need for innovative funding mechanism

The conference came to a close by a speech from Frédéric Jambu, Director and General Delegate of the network, finishing off by saying: "Speaking is the best way to be listened to" – "The voice of the citizens nowadays is significant".

The Right to Culture in Tomorrow's Europe recommendations report was distributed during the conference. More information can be found on www.euromedinculture.org

*Therese Cassola and Marie Demicoli
NCW Executive Members*

Studenti minn Skola f'Bormla ser isiru membri tal-Kumitat Ekonomiku u Socjali Ewropew ghal jumejn u jaghtu il-fehma taghhom dwar il-politika taz-zghazagh

It-Tnejn 21 ta' Frar 2011-02-28

Illum kienet ġurnata mhux tas-soltu għalina Jorge' Grech, Jamie Thomas Grech u Brenda Xuereb. Ahna, tliet studenti mill-Kulleġ ta' Santa Margherita, qed nippreparaw biex niehdu sehem f'Sessjoni Plenarja propju bħal tal-Kumitat Ekonomiku u Socjali Ewropew għewwa Brussels f'Mejju li ġej. Din l-esperjenza ġdida bdiet lejn l-aħħar tas-sena 2010. Is-Sur Simon Schembri, Youth Worker fil-iskola laqqa' l-istudenti tar-raba' sena sekondarja u introducienu mall-progett 'Your Europe! Your Say!' L-Ewropa Tieghekk! Il-Vuci Tieghekk li hu parti mill-programme 'Zghazagh Attivi' tal-Unjoni Ewropeja.

Minn fost hafna studenti ahna konna it-tlieta li ġejna magħżulin – żewġ subien u tfajla. Konna ferhanin u entuzjasti hafna. Issa li spiccajna l-ezamijiet ta' nofs is-sena qeghdin fuq ix-xwiek biex nibdew naħdmu fuq dan il-progett. U mhux hekk biss, issa sirna nafu li se niltaqghu ma rapprezentanta tal-KESE, li hi membru ta' dan il-Kumitat biex tghidilna aktar dwaru. Kienet sorpriza kbira għalina meta għal din il-laqqgħa sibna quddiemna ġurnalisti u cameramen tal-PBS u nNET TV li ġew biex jintervistawna. Ms Attard qaltilna li ahna, kull wiehed minna kellu jiehru ir-rwol ta' rapprezentant ta' min ihaddem, rapprezentant tal-haddiema u

rapprezentant tal-organizzazzjonijiet varji, bħal per eżempju tal-konsumaturi, tal-pensjonanti, ta' nies b'disabbilita' taz-zghazagh, ta' NGOs u oħrajn li jagħmlu parti mis-socjeta civili. Malajr iddecidejna: Jamie għazel li jirraprezenta lill-haddiema, Brenda lill-gruppi ta' Interessi varji u NGOs u Jorge' ta' min ihaddem.

Għamilna ftit hin niddiskutu si tfisser għalina L-Unjoni



Is-Sinjura Grace Attard u s-Sur Simon Schembri mal-istudenti tal-Kulleġ Santa Margherita, Bormla

Ewropeja u liema huma daww l-aspetti li jinteressawna. Il-ġurnalisti kienu herqana biex jissimghu x'għandna x'ngħidu u avolja konna eċċitati hafna spejgajnielhom kif beda dan il-progett u x'se nkunu qed nagħmlu. Għogħbitna hafna l-ideja li nistudjaw l-opinjoni 'zghazagh Attivi' li bhalissa qed jistudja il-KESE. Mhux hekk biss, se jkollna l-opportunita' li nagħmlu xi emendi wkoll biex din l-opinjoni tkun tista ttrifletti fuq kif naħsbuha ahna iż-zghazagh. Qatt ma bsarna li se ngħaddu minn esperjenza bħal din!

Ma' Mr Schembri u ma Ms Attard għamilna pjan ta' kif se naħdmu. Il-pjan kien jinkludi wkoll kif se nigbru kummenti u proposti minn għand shabna zghazagh sew ta' l-skola u oħrajn. Semmejna Facebook, Blog, Vox Pop, kwestjonarjuu, intervisti - insomma it-tlieta li ahna lesti għal din l-avventura!!!

*Brenda, Jamie u Jorge'
Studenti tal-Kulleġ Santa Margherita*

Approved Resolution on Pensions Reform AGM 2011

Justification

Background

Pensions reform is a complex exercise. There is the need for convergence of the following:

- Integrating policies on economic growth and increase in employment rates, in particular through incentives in the case of working mothers and older citizens; reviewing widows' social security schemes, contributory and non-contributory pensions schemes
- Addressing the demographic deficit is an immediate priority – pensions system reforms to allow and further incentivise (tax incentives) people to remain in the labour market and also further develop employability skills (2010 - 4 people in active age to 1 pensioner;) (2030 – 3 people to 1 pensioner;) (2060 - 2 people to 1 pensioners)
- As a result of the recession and its aftermath the need to address the public deficit, not necessarily through budget cuts as much as through better use of public finances that reduce financial waste, waste of human resources and abuse of benefits (productivity)
- Over the last three years Malta National Budgets have moved from tax-based policies to active policies in a number of areas including the labour market, energy, environment and others to spur economic growth. There is the need to retain such policies in a wider range of areas

Recommendations

- There is an urgent need to understand and introduce the concept of gender budgeting, which NCW has been proposing for the last 5 years
- Reaching the EU 2020 targets including the 75% employment rate for women and men
- Keeping in line with Commission Consultation paper on the revision of working time: the work-life cycle; adapting to the Maltese labour market
- Adopting the Malta Qualifications Framework Programme
- Priority to be given to the development of Education and Lifelong learning for all and vocational training to facilitate job mobility
- Improving the business environment in particular in the context of SMEs – (current White Paper – A Small Business Act)
- The concept of Innovation to be the underlying theme of all policies
- Focus on Key Enabling Technologies, (KET), ICT and R&D to stimulate development and to support the commercial and industrial application of these technologies
- Adequate information for the citizens; clarifying information on social security schemes and private schemes, occupational schemes and individual schemes and voluntary and mandatory schemes
- MCESD and MCESD Civil Society to discuss pensions reform and submit a 'consensus' document

Adequate, Sustainable Pensions Systems

Reviewing the current system

Recommendations

- Making the necessary adjustments to ensure fair pension systems in the context of poverty and social exclusion – establishing a system to guarantee an adequate adjustable minimum pension
- Actuarial studies to assess current sustainability of pensions: is the current equation sustainable : 12.50% government, 12.50% employers and 10% employees. With increasing new forms of work organization, increase in part-time work (especially in the case of the female population) and family friendly measures, the model to be adopted today needs careful study to have a clear picture of government income in particular from NI contributions
- Separation of funds for social benefits systems: health care and

long term care , social benefits related to the labour market, pensions - the need for a separation of the contributory and non-contributory fund

- Separation of pensionable age and retirement age. The need to gradually increase the pensionable age taking into consideration types of work and workers. Further incentives for older workers to remain in employment (retirement) both in the public and private sectors
- Part time work, reduced hours, teleworking, job sharing are counter-productive to full pension entitlement and therefore measures such as eg. a system where women will have the option to pay the difference in NI contributions in a staggered manner should be studied and introduced; (b) government to offer credits to ensure entitlement to adequate pension entitlement; (c) these measures should also include the contribution of employers
- There is also the need of an exercise to review the minimum contributions for a full pension entitlement in particular in the case of women
- Statistics on contributory and non-contributory beneficiaries by gender show a higher % of women beneficiaries in the non-contributory than men (NSO 2008). Measures to address this situation need to be taken
- Statistics on working mothers (a) entry (b) exit (c) re-entry in the labour market are not provided by NSO. This data is necessary so that government can adopt the adequate policy to ensure the increase of female participation in the labour market
- A revision of social benefits for single parents through active labour market policies such as training for employment, childcare subsidies for single parents who opt for employment; and review the gap between minimum wage and social benefits which is currently acting as a disincentive to enter the labour market
- ETC schemes

Supplementary Pensions

Establishing the second, third pillar pension systems

Recommendations

- A sound basis to safeguard the functioning and accountability of the Second Pillar with access to individuals at all levels of society. The adequate involvement of all stakeholders to share the burden of the second pillar.
- Medium to long-term policy decisions
- Supplementing public and private systems with pension packages
- Statutory measures offer more security than market/commercial options
- Incentives for third pillar pensions system

Separated Women's entitlement to pensions presented by NCW Social Issues Committee

Justification

Many women who are separated from their husbands often face problems in receiving the pension cheque to which they are entitled, especially those who separate while in their 60's.

It is understood that when the separation occurs and the woman has been awarded maintenance from the husband who is also a pensioner the entitlement to the woman is not automatically sent to the woman by the government, but she is at the mercy of her separated husband to give her the amount in cheque or cash. This applies to both parties.

NCW strongly recommends that the necessary measures be taken so that the amount to which the woman is entitled will be immediately deducted at source from the salary or pension of the separated husband and sent to the separated wife on a regular monthly basis.

Thejjija Qabel Zwigijiet bic-Civil

Proposti / Rezoluzzjonijiet mill-Catholic Enquiry Centre f'Dar l-Emigrant

Gustifikazzjoni

Il-preparazzjoni qabel zwigijiet bic-civil hija mixtieqa hafna biex koppi bhal dawn ikunu megħjuna jippreparaw ruhhom ahjar għaz-Zwieg u b'hekk ikollhom għajjnuna halli jiffurmaw Zwieg b'sahhtu u Familji magħqudin. Is-Socjeta' Maltija għandha bzonn hafna ta' familji aktar b'sahhithom

Rakkomandazzjoni tal-NCW

Li l-Gvern jibda joffri preparazzjoni xierqa qabel iz-Zwieg għal dawk il-koppi li huma residenti hawn Malta u jixtiequ jizzewgu bic-Civil u mhux bil-Knisja.

Il-Catholic Enquiry Centre lest li joffri għajjnuna f'din il-Preparazzjoni qabel iz-Zwieg.

Approved Resolution AGM 2011

The European year for Volunteering 2011

Justification

While appreciating the increased role of Local Councils in their contribution to society, NCW is deeply concerned that there is hardly any visibility of the voluntary sector and its social and economic contribution to society in the consultation document Pre budget 2011. Moreover there is no mention of the European Year for Volunteering 2011

The valuable contribution made by those many citizens who, by volunteering in a variety of areas, place themselves at the service of society and social cohesion should be given recognition

Recommendations

In line with The EU Commission proposed four objectives for a successful outcome of the EU Year 2011 and its follow-up on Volunteering NCW proposes

1. The creation of an enabling environment will help anchor volunteering as part of promoting civic participation and people-to-people activities.
 - Strengthening the legal framework is necessary to secure the infrastructure required for voluntary work at local, regional, national and European level and to make it easier for people to get involved. Furthermore, the requisite financial and political conditions must be in place to remove any obstacles to voluntary work.
2. To facilitate volunteering and to encourage networking, mobility and cooperation, voluntary organisations are to be empowered and the quality of the activity improved.

- Promoting voluntary organisations as places and catalysts for civic engagement is crucial: these organisations are for the most part the first and only contact point for volunteers and have often been set up by volunteers themselves. In 2011, particular attention should be paid to exchanges of experience and to improving the capacity and quality of work of voluntary organisations, which are the backbone of civil society and voluntary participation.

3. Volunteering activities are to be rewarded and recognised, not least by encouraging appropriate incentives for individuals, business and organisations
 - In connection with improving quality, the Commission proposal refers inter alia to "professionalisation". The main aim is to safeguard the quality of volunteering activity. Volunteers have the right to invest their free time in sectors they enjoy. Their commitment provides a service to society, to individuals – and also to themselves. Action is needed to secure the funding and staffing required to raise skills levels, to provide, further education and training and to give support during voluntary work
4. The general public are to be made more aware of the value and importance of volunteering. Raising awareness among the general public requires sufficient resources.
 - An effective and successful EU-level awareness-raising campaign conveying the opportunities and usefulness of volunteering would, if the message is really to get through to people, requires adequate funding

Resolution presented by the Malta Midwives Association

Title of Resolution: Normalising Childbirth

Committee submitting resolution: Malta Midwives Association

Justification/s

- a. Maternity care in Malta is over medicalised, to the detriment of women, babies and families. The National Caesarean Section Rate DOUBLED within a few years. Recent data shows that the rate of artificially induced births is 36% while the caesarean section rate is 33% and the rate of mothers who are breastfeeding when they leave the hospital is 61%. The European Perinatal Report published in December 2008 give details of the actual situation in Malta. This increase in operative deliveries has NOT BEEN ACCOMPANIED BY MEASURABLE IMPROVEMENT IN THE OUTCOME OF THE BABY.
- b. In the majority of cases labour is induced for no plausible reason. Medicalization of labour carries a great incidence of operative delivery consequently increasing morbidity. Thus the process of birth becomes unnecessarily labour intensive with increased cost on the tight health budget which can be used more efficiently.
- c. The above along with the lack of informed consent is disempowering women. They are made to feel that they do not have an option in the management of their labour.

NCW recommendation/s

To decrease the high rate of intervention during pregnancy and childbirth and to increase the rate of normal childbirth by applying

evidence based research into practice which is extremely essential. This can be achieved by:

- a. Adopting the W.H.O / N.I.C.E Guideline (National Institute for Clinical Excellence) U.K and by treating pregnancy as a normal physiological process unless there is an underlying medical problem.
- b. The public need to be informed by being given the right/unbiased information.
- c. The medical profession will be able to dedicate more of their time to the women with obstetric and/or medical problems.
- d. Midwives who are licensed health care professionals are allowed to practice the art of midwifery autonomously and to its fullest in giving care to women with low risk pregnancies, from antenatal through birth and to the postnatal period according to the E.U Legislation, WHO / NICE & ICM definition.
- e. Establishing Midwifery Led Practice in the local health care setting since this had proven to lessen unnecessary interventions during pregnancy and childbirth, improved health outcomes to mothers and babies and provide dramatic cost savings.
- f. Public money will be used more effectively and efficiently according to clinical needs. Great savings will be made since:
 - Unnecessary interventions often result in poor outcomes for mother and baby, prolong hospital stay, reduce the quality of care, as well as increase costs
 - Improvement in the long term health of the mothers and babies will reduce the chronic care burden.

Maltese MATSEC exams

Resolution submitted by Education Committee

Justification/s

- a. Number of children failing is abysmal according to statistics

| | Latest statistics |
|--------------------------|---|
| Paper 2A | Paper 2B |
| Registered to sit - 2689 | Registered to sit 2547 |
| Grade 1 - 111 | Grade 4 - 173 |
| Grade 2 - 461 | Grade 5 - 397 |
| Grade 3 - 488 | Grade 6 - 292 |
| Grade 4 - 790 | Grade 7 - 268 |
| Grade 5 - 473 | |
| U - 353 | U - 1250 (This is nearly 50% of Candidates) |
| Absent - 13 | |

N.B. The U grades are accounting for slightly more than 20% of all candidates.

- b. Exam not reflecting the students' ability in the usage of the language
- b. When applying for a job they have no certificate showing competence in the language if they have failed the exam due to their lack of knowledge in literature

NCW recommendation/s

1. Separate exams for Language and Literature or Literature and Language results given as percentages on the final result paper. By doing this candidates would know their level of competency in both areas.
 - a. Requirements for Junior College/6th form should be in Language only unless Maltese is one of the subjects chosen to be followed at a higher level. In that case it will be in Language and Literature

Resolutions 2011 will be continued in the next issue...

Statement by the EWL on the adoption of a new Pact for Gender Equality (2011-2020)



[Brussels, 16 March 2011] The EWL has issued a Statement in the aftermath of the Council of the EU's adoption last week of a new Pact

for Gender Equality 2011-2020. While welcoming the renewed commitment of the Member States to the fulfilment of the EU Treaty ambitions in relation to equality between women and men, the EWL regrets that no binding concrete measures, including targets, are foreseen in the Pact, except the renewed commitment to the Barcelona childcare objectives.

In its Statement, the EWL also regrets that the issue of equality between women and men is approached through a predominantly economic perspective, without attention to a framework of human rights. While recognising the importance

of the economic impact of inequalities, the EWL recalls the final aim of reaching equality between women and men and guaranteeing women's rights and human rights for all, ensuring dignity, democracy justice and integrity.

Focus welcome on integration of gender equality in implementation of Europe 2020 economic reform strategy

With the economic focus, the EWL welcomes the requests made in the Gender Pact to integrate gender equality in the implementation of Europe 2020: A European strategy for smart, sustainable and inclusive growth, and asks for these commitments must be put into practice immediately.

The need for dual approach of gender mainstreaming and specific measures

The EWL welcomes the commitment to the reinforcement of the gender mainstreaming strategy but stresses the need for a dual approach of gender mainstreaming and specific measures to

compensate for and eliminate inequalities between women and men is needed.

Issues covered by the Pact:

The EWL welcomes that the issue of violence against women, not addressed previous Gender Pact, is mentioned in the new document, the but regrets that some issues are completely absent from the Gender such as issues of social protection and notably pensions, health, human rights, media or the environment.

The need for monitoring and evaluation

Finally, the EWL hopes that mechanisms will be put in place, in order to ensure monitoring of progress and evaluation of the implementation of the Gender Pact.

The EWL document also comments in more detail on the different sections of the Pact, regarding governance, labour market, conciliation of private and working life and violence against women.

New Legislation to Combat Trafficking in Human Beings

On the 14th of December the European Parliament voted with a strong majority in favour of the Directive against trafficking in human beings that the Commission proposed in March 2010. This Directive on preventing and combating trafficking in human beings, and protecting victims, will replace the Council Framework Decision from 2002.

Tougher penalties for traffickers and better protection for victims are the key aims of the new EU law on trafficking in human beings. This new legislation will apply to trafficking in human beings for illegal adoption, forced marriages, sexual exploitation or labour exploitation. It also covers trafficking for the exploitation of criminal activities.

The new Directive further reconciles

discrepancies between the laws of the Member States. It obliges them to set up National Rapporteurs or equivalent mechanisms to be responsible for monitoring implementation of anti-trafficking policy at the national level.

On the 14th of December the European Commission appointed Ms Myria Vassiliadou to serve as Anti-Trafficking Coordinator. The establishment of an Anti Trafficking Coordinator will provide for an overall strategic and policy orientation in the field of trafficking in human beings. She will improve coordination and coherence between EU institutions and agencies as well as with Member States and international actors. The Anti-Trafficking Coordinator will contribute to the elaboration of existing and new EU policies relevant to the fight

against trafficking in human beings, in particular in relation to third countries. By bringing together prevention, law enforcement, and victim protection, she will ensure that all appropriate means for EU action against trafficking are adequately used and mobilized.

Myria Vassiliadou from Cyprus, until recently, Secretary General for the European Women's Lobby, EWL, based in Brussels, holds a PhD in Sociology and has an extensive experience in areas such as fundamental rights, human trafficking, migration and women's rights through her work in academia, European institutions and non-governmental organisations.

More information:

<http://ec.europa.eu/anti-trafficking/index.action>

Grace Attard, NCW President

Congratulations



NCW Malta welcomes the appointment of the Honorary General Secretary Doris Bingley to the Malta Council for the Voluntary Sector.



NCW Malta welcomes the appointment of Ms. Maud Muscat M.Ed., B.A. (Youth & Comm. Stud.), Dip. in Sc. Couns, NCW Executive Member as Commissioner of the National Commission for the Promotion of Equality (NCPE)

*NCW Malta
pays tribute
to...*



Marianne Nauta - Blijham

The national Council of Women of Malta is deeply sorry at the sudden demise of Marianne Nauta - Blijham on the 5th February 2011 in the Netherlands. She dedicated her life to ICW and ECICW. Marian was ECICW treasurer for many years. She was an active member of ICW. She was a strong supporter of women's rights and a dear friend. She will be greatly missed by all of us.

DIARY OF EVENTS JANUARY 2011 TO MARCH 2010

JANUARY

- 03rd CSF MEUSAC signing
 05th NCW Festive Buffet Dinner – Water Front Hotel
 06th H.E the Ambassador of Tunisia Visit NCW Centre
 07th Labour Party Reception - Grace Attard and Doris Bingley Attended
 10th ECDL Computer Courses January 2011 intake
 11th Presentation by Grace Attard to University Students on “Women as a Minority in Society”.
 12th Consultation on the conclusion of the 5th report on Economic, Social and Territorial
 13th Grace Attard – Meeting of EESC Consultative Committee on Industrial Change (CCMI)
 Doris Bingley – Meeting of the Malta Council for the Volunteer Sector (MCVS)
 15th P.N seminar “B'Solidarjeta Insahhu L-Inkuzzjoni Soċjali” – Dar Centrali - Doris Bingley and Grace Attard attended
 17th Information Session The Competitive and Innovation Framework program – Overview upcoming 2011 calls and consultation future programme
 18th Public Dialogue “A strong Europe Priorities and Programme of The Hungarian Presidency”.
 19th Presentation of CSF Funds at MEUSAC Offices- Therese Cassola Attended.
 Grace Attard – EESC January 2011 Plenary
 21st MOC's Conference “Validing Learning for an Inclusive Society” Doris Bingley attended.
 22nd National Council of Women Annual General Meeting.
 24th Grace Attard - Study Group REX/319 The new foreign policy of the EU and the role of Civil Society
 25th Mr. Nick Jeans University of Sheffield and Malta Communication Authority Representative Fiona Tesi visits NCW Community Learning Centre.
 26th Australia Day- Reception - Doris Bingley and Grace Attard attended.
 Launch of ESF Funded Project “ Closer To Europe” Doris Bingley attended.
 27th EESC EP Citizen's Agora EU Parliament - Grace Attard
 28th and Doris Bingley participated
 29th Konferenza Generali Annwali 2011. “Pajiz Li Jixraq Lil Uliedna.”
 31st Grace Attard – EESC SOC Section Meeting

FEBRUARY

- 1st P.L- L-Impatt Tas- Sitwazzjoni Ekonomika fuq il- Mara at City Theatre. Doris Bingley and Therese Cassola attended
 Grace Attard – EESC SOC/396 European Year for Volunteering Ist Meeting
 Grace Attard – EESC INT Section meeting
 3rd Grace Attard – Euromed follow-up Committee meeting
 Doris Bingley – MCVS Meeting
 Classifying Qualifications – A National Awards System Referenced to the Malta Qualifications Framework: a proposal' Doris Bingley attended
 4th Sexual Health Policy Workshop Main Doris Bingley and Grace Attard Attended.
 NISCO Meeting Cecilia Xuereb attended.
 Grace Attard - EESC REX Section Meeting
 6th Konferenza Generali Annwali P.L “ Pajiz li Jixraq Lil Uliedna”
 7th MQC Conference A learning Outcomes Approach to implementing the European.
 Qualifications Framework- Corinthia San Gorg Mary Gaerty Attended.
 Discussion Eurodesk Malta and The Euromed Youth Platform Within The European Union Programmers Agency (EUPA) at Dar l-Ewropa.
 8th Grace Attard - EESC Europe 2020 Steering Committee
 9th Sessjoni Ta' Konsultazzjoni Strategija Europea tad-Dizabilita' 2010-2020 –Dar l-Ewropa.
 NCW President Grace Attard , Hon. General Secretary Doris Bingley and members of NCW Executive, Mary Gaerty, Therese Cassola and Marie Demicoli were hosted to a reception by His Excellency the Tunisian Ambassador and his wife at their residence in Attard
 11th Maltese Alf network meeting at Europe House Valletta. Doris Bingley and Marie Demicoli attended.
 Consultation on the National Reform Program Europe 2020 Grace Attard and Doris Bingley participated
 MCESD Civil Society Committee meeting on Pensions Reform recommendations Grace Attard and Doris Bingley participated
 16th Grace Attard– EESC February Plenary session
 16 CSW and Annual Consultation of NWMs
 23rd Commonwealth Secretariat.
 18th NCW Foundation Day Dinner Honorary Life Membership bestowed on Dr Lorraine Schembri Orland
 21st Your Europe Your Say Project - Grace Attard held meeting with students from

St Margaret College participating in EESC project

- 22nd Grace Attard EESC CCM/086 Study Group on The effects of the crisis on SMS
 23rd Grace Attard Study Group on SC/034 Innovative workplaces
 AMIE Project Meeting Doris Bingley attended.
 24th MEUSAC – “Habits for a Healthy Child, Healthy Eating in School” info session.
 Grace Attard EESC SOC Section meeting
 The Ambassador of the United States of America - Reception to celebrate the U.S Fullbright Program.
 25th Meeting with Mr Spiteri Gingell re Pensions Reform Grace Attard and Doris Bingley participated.
 28th EESC Extraordinary Bureau Meeting of Group III

MARCH

- 1st MCESD Civil Society Meeting with EESC President Staffan Nillson Grace Attard and Doris Bingley attended
 2nd High Mass celebrated by His Grace the Archbishop of Malta at St. John's Co-Cathedral to celebrate the centenary of International Women's Day and the European Year for Volunteering.2011
 3rd Doris Bingley – MCVS meeting
 Ghaqda Nisa Giljanizi – Seminar “ Jum Il-Mara”. – Cavallieri Hotel- San Giljan.
 Grace Attard participated in a NET TV programme Il-Mara Illum presented by Gloria Mizzi on International Women's day
 4th KNPD Seminar “ Women With Disabilities” at the Victoria Hotel Doris Bingley Attended.
 7th Grace Attard interviewed for PBS Ewropa Taghna Programme re International Women's day
 Interviewed for PBS Radio News bulletin on IWD
 Interviewed for RTK programme Nithaddtuha
 Invitation to President to commemorate IWD –Lunch – British High Commissioner
 8th Centenary of International Women's Day
 9th NCW Manoel Theatre Recital by soprano Lydia Caruana in aid of MCCF
 10th Grace Attard made a presentation to University Students on Changing Attitudes regarding Gender equality
 Meeting of Commission Malta fl-Ewropa
 PBS Programme 1205 - Ray Calleja interviewed Grace Attard on Goods and Services Directive ECJ court ruling
 14th Commonwealth Day
 Doris Bingley attended the Education seminar at the House of Commons London, the Commonwealth multi faith observance at Westminster Abbey and a reception at Marlborough House in the presence of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth !!
 15th Jum Dinji Gha-Drittijiet tal-konsumaturi –conference “ Insahhu L-Fiducja bejn il-Konsumaturi u n-Negozju”. Louise Pace Gouder attended
 Grace Attard – EESC March Plenary
 17th Heritage Malta - Wood CPR Partners meeting.
 EUROMEDINCULTURE Network Final Conference at the European Parliament. Therese Cassola and Marie Demicoli attended.
 EESC CCM/086 Grace Attard participated
 Commonwealth Lecture- Sonia Gandhi- Women as Agents of Change
 21st MEUSAC information session on Industrial Emissions Mary Gaerty attending.
 22nd Malta Walks For Water- SOS Malta
 MCWO-- Benefici ta L-Attivitajiet Ta' Wara L-Iskola. Ruth Falzon NCW member was the keynote speaker during the seminar.
 23rd Consumers Affairs Committee Meeting
 EESC Study Group on European Year for volunteering 2nd meeting – Grace Attard participated
 MCSD- press conference on project ('closer to europe by tomorrow'). Doris Bingley attended.
 NCPE 7th Annual Conference.
 EESC SOC Section meeting – Grace Attard participated
 25th Executive Committee meeting
 University of Malta- Gender Issues Committee – Conference Women and leadership. How to maximize and integrate into society women graduates.
 26th National Conference “Volunteer! You make a difference” Corinthia Hotel Grace Attard, Doris Bingley and Marie Demicoli attended.
 28 EESC Study Group REX /319 – Grace Attard participated
 30th FTZ RIMED Responsible Industries of the Mediteranean open discussion. Doris Bingley attended
 30th EESC Study Group REX:/330 rural Development and Employment in the Euromed region Grace Attard participated

Forthcoming events

Half-day of Recollection

The Half Day of Recollection will be held at NCW centre on 20th Wednesday 2010 at 9.30am followed by Mass. Rev. Father Alfred Vella from the Immigrants Commission will conduct the service.

Spring Gozo Outing

NCW Environment Committee will be organizing a day to Gozo on Saturday 14th May 2011, Transport leaves Blata l-Bajda at 7.30am. **Places are limited.**

Poetry Reading with Traditional Maltese Food

at the lovely residence of Vice President Mary Gaerty on Tuesday 28th June 2011 at 6.00pm Transport leaves at 5.00pm

Il-Kwiekeb fid-Dlam Jixeghlu

vjaġġi ta' tama mterraqa minn
qrafa ta' persuni b'mard mentali



edituri
Connie Magro
Nora Macellì

Bice Mizzi Vassallo Music Competition

The National Council of Women is proud to announce the 13th edition of the Bice Mizzi-Vassallo Music Competition that will be held in October 2011. The Competition is open to young performers who reside in Malta and who will be below the age of 22 on December 31, 2011, and who play one of the following instruments: pianoforte, violin, viola, violoncello and double bass.

Applications close on the **Friday July 15, 2011** but candidates applying before **June 15, 2011** will benefit from a discount in the application fee.

Prizes include a short summer course abroad, all expenses paid, and cash prizes.

Full details as well as regulations and application forms may be collected from the Council's Centre, Mountbatten Street, Blata l-Bajda on Mondays and Wednesdays from 10.00a.m. to 12noon or downloaded from NCW website <http://www.ncwmalta.com>

For booking and further details please contact the office on 21248881 or 21246982 between 9.30am and 2.30pm or email ncwmalta@camline.net.nt

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