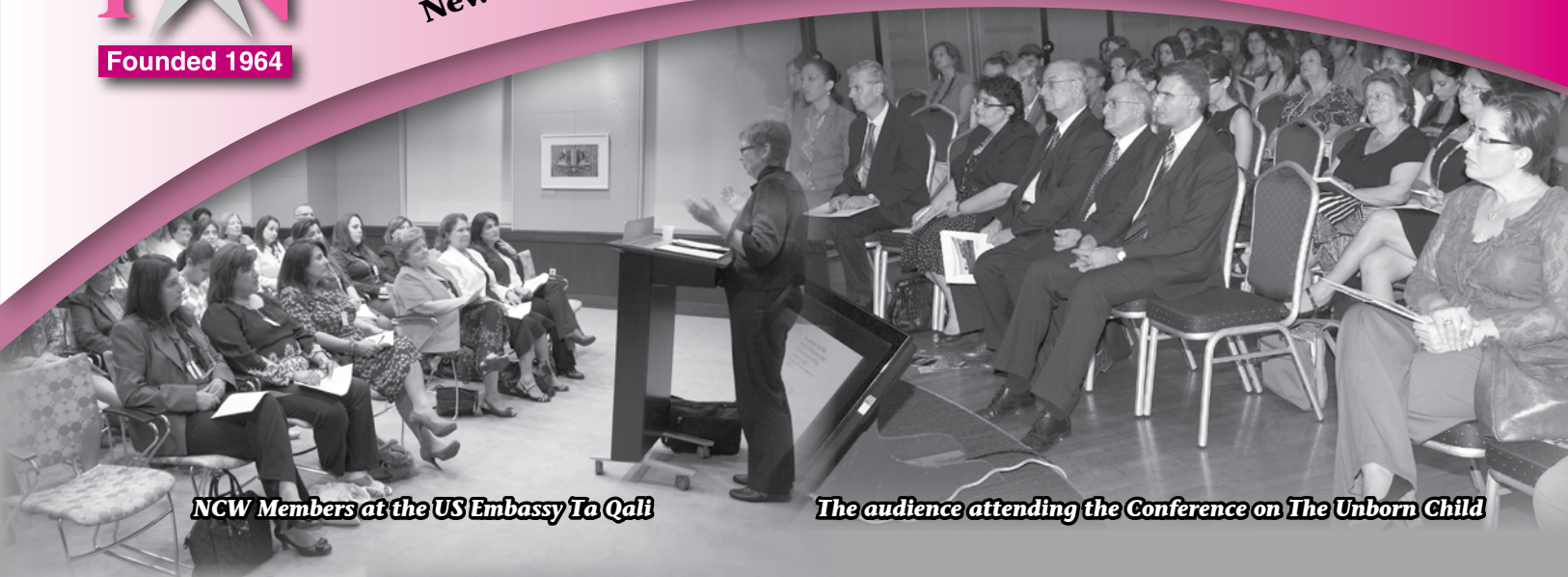


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N-Mara

Newsletter of the National Council of Women - Malta



NCW Members at the US Embassy Ta Qali

The audience attending the Conference on The Unborn Child



NCW AMIE Delegation with Dr. Joanna Drake at The Square Brussels

Women and Climate Change Seminar Env. Committee with the Speakers



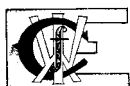
NCW stand during the TIC IAC Conference networking market

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Founded 1888

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



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

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Monday to Friday: 9.00 - 13.30

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IL-Mara

NEWSLETTER OF THE NATIONAL COUNCIL OF WOMEN - MALTA

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AGM and Agenda -

Annual General Meeting 26 January 2013

AGENDA:

The Annual General Meeting will be held on Saturday 26 January 2013 at The Victoria Hotel at the newly refurbished William Shakespeare Hall, (complimentary parking at the Hotel car park) with the following agenda:

1. 8.30 Registration
 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 Vice-Presidents, Officers and Members of the Executive
 8. 10.30 Coffee Break
 9. 11.00 Reports of Standing and Sectional Committees
 10. 11.45 Results of Election
 11. 11.55 Reaffirmation of Policy
 - a) Engaging youths in the elimination of domestic violence
 - b) Women's representation in local councils and parliament
 - c) Addressing alcohol consumption during pregnancy
 - d) Improving measures regarding refugee status to asylum seekers
 12. 12.15 Adoption of Resolutions. (5 mins each)
 1. National Framework for the setting up Social Enterprise
 2. Follow up of the EU Year of Active Ageing and Intergenerational Cooperation
 3. The EU Year of Citizens
 4. Active Labour Market Policies – addressing youth unemployment and prospects for older workers
 5. Women and Climate Change
 6. Gender balance in ICT, Research and Technology – increase the participation of women in these specialist skills
 7. Stop the violence against girls and young women (Malta Girl Guides)
 8. Normalising Childbirth and Breastfeeding (Malta Midwives Association)
 9. Legislation for Beauticians (Beauty Therapists Association)
 10. Women Asylum Seekers – Dignity and Work (Emigrants Commission)
 11. More Education about Gender Equality (Malta PSD Association)
 13. 13.15 Correspondence. ICW, ECICW
 14. 13.20 Other Matters
 15. 13.30 Concluding Address by President
- End of AGM - L U N C H

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

• **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, NCW

President’s Message



Dear friends, dear ladies,
Another year is gradually coming to an end, a year that for me has meant an increase in my workload, experiences as the president of NCW, new acquaintances and new friends. The work at NCW is forever increasing and I cannot but say thank you to the great, hardworking team.

In recent months the media put a spotlight on women, mainly due to the recent violence against women, the looming elections and therefore the debate why women are not present in parliament and politics, in the labour market, discussing the increase of working women, albeit many of them in jobs that suit their family requirements and women on boards and in decision making positions.

It was immensely gratifying to meet over fifty young women at a speed mentoring session held at the American embassy in Ta Qali. Their intelligence, high level of education, enthusiasm and healthy ambition to follow a career and reach a high position in their chosen field of work, was quite remarkable. In each group I met however, one question was always raised, how does a woman reconcile work with the family and will she balance out both important aspects. My answer to that was always to prioritise about what’s most important at that particular time, based on values and level of importance.

Some things can wait, others cannot! The financial situation has not eased up at all in several European countries and this is causing hardships to thousands of families , but with a larger impact on women. This factor was the basis of the recent meeting held in Sofia, Bulgaria,

where we discussed the new EU Directive regarding combating human trafficking and the support of the victims. It was concluded that in the countries with economic strife, trafficking of women for sexual exploitation has grown to immense proportions , with women trafficked from equally financially stricken countries, such as Hungary and Poland. Lack of skills and education play the major role in a girl and woman’s poverty level and work opportunities, perhaps with the risk of being trafficked. This does not exclude also trafficking of men for sexual exploitation and trafficking of children for human organs

The Bill for the Protection of Human Embryos cleared at Parliamentary Committee stage, followed by a positive vote in Parliament augurs well, so that finally we have a law regulating this delicate issue, at the same time as the Bill itself implies, the protection of the embryo. It is shocking to know that there are thousands of embryos in a frozen state, many of them orphaned, as their parents do not want them any more and hence they remain in such a state until they are adopted, destroyed or used in research. What a waste of life! I cannot but recall at this stage a recent conversation about the rights of the unborn child and the right to abort , since in many countries, the right to terminate life belongs to the woman, since the unborn child is not considered a human being in its own right. This mindset is none other than destructive towards life itself as what is the basis of a human right, but none other than the right to life itself.

December brings with it the lovely smells of Christmas cakes and mince pies and families celebrating the birth of Jesus Christ. Let’s bring back the true Christmas spirit in our lives, the spirit of peace! We wish you all a Happy New Year.

Contents

AGM Agenda	Page 2
President’s Message.....	Page 3
AMIE Project.....	Page 4
Embryo Protection legislation.....	Page 5
Association for Consumer Rights	Page 6
Women and Climate Change Seminar	Page 7
ARETUSA NEWS	Page 8/9
Hajja ta’ Kwalita’ għat-Tarbija li se Titwieled	Page 10
Anna Lindh Foundation Meeting in Casablanca	Page 11
EESC News	Page 12
50/50 Declaration for parity in institutions after 2014	Page 13
CEV Conference	Page 14
Diary of Events.....	Page 15
Forthcoming Events	Page 16

AMIE Project Teachers' Workshop - Building the Value of Entrepreneurial Skills 23 October 2012

The National Council of Women organised a three-hour workshop entitled "Building the Value of Entrepreneurial Skills" on Tuesday 23 October 2012 at the National Curriculum Centre, Hamrun. This event was facilitated by Dr Katie Birch from Reach Beyond Malta, one of the partners on the AMIE Project. NCW Hon. General Secretary Doris Bingley and Ms Marie Demicoli represented NCW on the day.

Dr Birch presented methods on inclusion and ways of encouraging students to consider entrepreneurship as an option for their future. A good number of Education Officers, Heads of Department for PSD, Social Studies, Home Economics, Business Studies, European Studies and Careers Counsellors attended. Ms Josephine Vassallo, Assistant Director Curriculum Management & eLearning at the Directorate for Quality and Standards in Education, a key person in bringing together the participants for this workshop, was present during the first part of the event. After a brief introduction, the participants had an opportunity to explore what they considered to be the important aspects of entrepreneurship and the relevant skills that could be incorporated into their individual syllabi. Group sessions followed which provoked discussion on ideas on the subject.

The feedback from the workshop



groups showed that there appears to be an enthusiasm and understanding of the need for entrepreneurship to form a key part of the curriculum; this was reflected in the discussions and individual comments to Dr Birch. An education officer and head of school at the end of the workshop requested in-service training for teachers to better implement entrepreneurship in the curriculum.

Education for entrepreneurship is one of the cross-curricular themes being proposed for implementation in the new National Curriculum Framework. In the analysis report, issued by the Directorate of Quality and Standards in Education in the Ministry of Education and Employment last August, 95.8% of all respondents agreed or strongly agreed that entrepreneurial skills should be an intrinsic aspect of the curriculum. This report further stated that entrepreneurship skills programmes should be included in Primary and Secondary schools and the education system should develop the full

potential of each student individually so that new entrants to the labour market would be well equipped with employability skills. The development of an entrepreneurship culture within the educational system at all levels and the creation of increased awareness on entrepreneurship education as a career was also included.

Dr Birch advised that follow up and further contact with the relevant people is strongly recommended to maintain the motivation of the education department.

NCW has worked intensively for two years together with Foundation for Women Entrepreneurs, Reach Beyond, the Malta Business Bureau and the Malta Association of Women in Business. This workshop brought together the most important stakeholders of the AMIE Project for the last time – teachers - who have to drive our message home to our future generation. Our thanks also go to all the AMIE Ambassadors, amongst them our President Ms Mary Gaerty and Jeanette Borg NCW member; who we hope are now considered as role models by the young girls they came into contact with during school visits by encouraging them to consider entrepreneurship as an option for their future.

Nadya Anne Mangion
AMIE Project Coordinator NCW

Women's Entrepreneurship Makes Business Sense

Five representatives of the National Council of Women Malta, the President Mary Gaerty, the Hon. General Secretary Doris Bingley, Vice President Nadyanne Mangion, and NCW members Jeanette Borg and Marie Demicoli attended the European SME Summit 2012. The SME week included among others a number of networking sessions on creative industry, education and social services, financing, high technology and innovation, professional services (including consulting), tourism and travel.

The summit which was attended by over 700 delegates, was a great opportunity for networking and promoting female entrepreneurship. The opening plenary session Dr addressed by Androulla Vassiliou, European Commissioner for Education, Culture, Multilingualism and Youth, Yannis Kontos, Director of Commerce, Industry and Tourism, Cyprus and Joanna Drake, Director SME & Entrepreneurship, European Commission DG Enterprise and Industry.

Androulla Vassiliou emphasized

that entrepreneurs are indispensable to Europe's economic growth, employment and prosperity. Women entrepreneurs represent the biggest untapped potential for entrepreneurship in Europe. The creative and entrepreneurial potential of women is a latent source of economic growth and new jobs and should be encouraged.

In her welcome address Dr Joanna Drake spoke about two success stories. She said that entrepreneurship allows flexible working hours although it means particularly at the beginning long working hours. The European Commission is working hard to support female entrepreneurship in Europe. In these difficult economic times female entrepreneurship represents a ray of sunshine and hope for the future of Europe. Moreover Dr. Drake said that Member States and the EU Commission need to join forces and come up with a concrete plan on how to encourage and support female entrepreneurship event further.



As a follow-up to its ongoing initiatives on female entrepreneurship, the European Commission is currently preparing an Entrepreneurship Action Plan for 2020. The summit continued with parallel workshops entitled: 1. Entrepreneurship Education and Women Entrepreneurs. 2. Women Entrepreneurs with a Migrant Background. 3. Access to finance for women Entrepreneurs. 4. Women in Technology-based business. Women's entrepreneurial potential is a very much underexploited source of economic growth and new jobs. The fact that women account for only 34.4% of the

self-employed in Europe suggests that they need more encouragement to become entrepreneurs.

The overall outcome of this summit is that European women are as well-educated as men, however only a few decide to set up a company following their graduation. Lack of take-up can partly be explained by difficulties they encounter in reconciling private and professional activities. In addition, existing business set-up support systems are not always tailored to

women's specific needs. Concerns faced by potential women entrepreneurs include: greater difficulty accessing financing, professional networks and training and a possible lack of confidence due to the absence of appropriate role models. Women also tend to be cautious and take more calculated risks, and to focus on creating companies in familiar areas and for which they can benefit from family support. They can fail to take full advantage of networking

opportunities. Women tend to develop their businesses at a slower rate, often if their family situation allows them to work long hours; however research shows that enterprises run by women have a higher rate of success than men's. Women, therefore require tailor-made support measures, which are different from the traditionally male support measures when setting up their businesses.

**Doris Bingley
and Marie Demicoli**

Clarifying Misconceptions on Embryo Protection Legislation (NCW November 2012 Press Release)

The National Council of Women deplores the mixed messages that are being made public on the media on the proposed legislation on the Protection of Embryos, in particular now that it is in its final stages before Parliament. The title of the Act focuses directly and specifically on the protection of embryos and it is in this context that the debate should be directed.

It is ethically irresponsible that such a sensitive issue is being dramatised in this manner playing upon people's emotions and at the same time creating confusion in people's minds, who as expected are not familiar with the implications of the importance of a legislation that will realistically protect embryos and that will make sure that as much as is humanly possible no loopholes are left, which can give rise to abuse. This certainly does not mean that the proposed legislation is ignoring important aspects such as the dignity of couples who are genuinely seeking this type of IVF treatment. At the same time one cannot ignore the fact that there can be abuse from other sources.

The public debate raises issues on the number of eggs to be implanted, which again should be directed to reducing the health risks of the mother and the unborn child. Raising the number of eggs to be implanted from two to three in treatment of women over 40 years or other identified difficulties should reach agreement. The debate on the role of the Embryo Protection Authority has also served to create misconceptions. This does not mean that it in any way it should interfere in the relationship between the medical professional and the parents; however, its regulatory role cannot be strangled to such an extent that it cannot regulate at all.

There is certainly the need to redefine the working methods rather than the role of the Authority to

safeguard this ethical concept. One of its most crucial roles is to ensure ethical standards are kept by all medical practitioners. It is in the interest of all such practitioners, to provide information to the Authority (data collection) , including an outline of the case history ,without divulging the identity of the couple, thus respecting and protecting their privacy as is normal practice in all medical (and other) professions.

The medical practitioner has the responsibility before the law to also protect his/her integrity as a professional according to legislation. If this information has not been collected so far, because there was no regulation in place, who can guarantee that there was no abuse! Is there any data to prove statements such as these that are being made, giving the impression that everything was or would be fine! Moreover, There is no reason at all for couples to go before the said Authority to 'get permission' if the process goes through the medical practitioner in consultation with the parents.

In the case of post natal visits in hospital, relevant medical information might need to be provided in certain situations where the health of both the mother and the child is at risk or where there is the need for a particular treatment, however such decisions can be made by the couple in consultation with their medical practitioner. There is also the need to clarify the composition of the Authority to ensure it is made up of experts on this form of IVF treatment in the medical field, experts in ethics, psychologists and other paramedics if necessary. Its functions should be twofold - regulatory and support to all parties involved.

There are other ethical issues to be considered in the cases of *force majeure* such as the death of a mother while undergoing treatment. How are the rights of the father to be respected in such cases. To whom



does the embryo belong? Who will be responsible in the absence of a father, other relatives? How will decisions on adoption be taken? These issues need to be addressed by parents, relatives in conjunction with the Authority only if necessary. It is in situations such as these that the embryo needs to be treated as a human being and not just as an object to be decided upon by an Authority that has not family ties with the embryo. Will these issues be covered and the rights of the embryo safeguarded by legislation on the rights of the child, which stipulate that the child's interests come first.

The last but not least is the issue of fines for breaking the law. These are not meant to give the impression of criminalising couples. Again this is a very unethical approach that would create unnecessary fear. It is another example of using the media to play upon people's emotions. There are so many instances in our laws where such fines are meant as a deterrent, that is as a 'preventive' measure, which however does not exclude taking action if the law is violated – we are dealing with human life!

It is vital at this stage that Malta has a strong legislative framework, that all parties reach consensus , including political parties as the decision-makers. This is not an issue that should be politicised. Responsible and mature decisions should ensure that the proposed legislation for the protection of embryos is not weakened as this can have far reaching consequences.

Grace Attard,
NCW Vice-President,
Member of the EESC

Meeting for members and friends of the Association for Consumer Rights (ACR)

The first meeting of the Association for Consumer Rights brought together members and friends in what turned out to be a lively and interactive session during which a number of consumer affairs issues were raised and discussed.

Mr Stefan Xuereb, President of the Association opened the meeting explaining the main objectives of the Association including identifying and addressing complaints in every day life, setting up a telephone line system to assist members and the general public on a variety of issues, keeping members informed through electronic means on developments in EU Consumer legislation among others.

The Association has also initiated a series of information and education talks with the expert help of Ms Joyce Borg Director MCCSS. During the first talk, Ms Borg gave an overview of the basic consumer rights. Ms Borg also

spoke about the Consultation document published by the MCCAA on Consumer Education. General Secretary, Grace Attard informed the participants that the Association worked on the consultation document which was then submitted to the Authority.

The importance of consumer education on the curriculum for all ages, including also through Lifelong Learning programmes was also discussed. Financial Literacy education, in particular in view of the Pensions Reform was also highlighted. Pauline Azzopardi, ACR Executive Committee member, who is an expert in this field, is currently sitting on the Committee responsible for the formulation of a Strategy on Financial Literacy within the newly set-up relevant Commission.



Consumers Association Talk at NCW

At the end of the meeting, light refreshments were served during which time participants made proposals on topics to be discussed in future talks. ACR welcomed the suggestion that these talks will take place on a monthly basis.

Grace Attard,
ACR General Secretary

American Embassy Conference 20 Points for Good Female Leadership

The U.S. Embassy and the National Council of Women organised a talk by Dr Mary M. Dwyer, Ph.D. on Wednesday, November 14, 2012 at the U.S. Embassy in Ta' Qali. Dr Dwyer discussed women's leadership and gender issues. Dr Dwyer is President and CEO of IES Abroad, the Institute for the International Education of Students, one of the USA's oldest, largest and most academically reputable not for profit study abroad program providers for US college and university students. Dr Dwyer is also active in multiple national efforts to advance international education policy and practice. The following is her advice to women when considering a leadership position.



1. Have a vision of your organisation.
2. Have your people participate in the goal setting.

3. Be clear in the expectations, rewards and accountability. Never make promises.
4. Give and request feedback.
5. Allow your people speak first – this makes the goals belong to the speaker.
6. Always question status-quo.
7. Take risks – well-informed risks. This increases resilience.
8. Learn how organisations really work – read up on this.
9. Expect resistance to change and

toughen up. You cannot make everybody happy. People make their own happiness.

10. You cannot be friends with your people. The best you can expect is respect.
11. Work hard and work smart.
12. Think strategically and long-term.
13. Participate in and exploit organisational governance to get results.
14. Persist, persist, and persist.
15. Do not expect to be the beneficiary of change.
16. Empower others and give them full credit for their work.
17. Achieve balance in work/life.
18. Help others.
19. Do not avoid conflict – some level of conflict is healthy.
20. Maintain a sense of humour.

Nadyanne Mangion,
NCW Vice President



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Women and Climate Change Seminar Organised by the Environment Committee



Minister Pullicino and Dr. Simone Borg with Evelyn Vella Brincat Environment committee coordinator during the seminar Women & Climate Change

The NCW Environment Committee organised a seminar entitled "Women and Climate Change" on Friday 9th November 2012 at Dar l-Ewropa, Valletta. The Hon. George Pullicino Minister for Resources and Rural Affairs opened the seminar. The Minister said that the priority is to continue to be directed towards adaptation policy and implementation measures that Malta requires to undertake to secure sustainability of its environment irrespective of whether projected climate change behaviour does materialise. The state of the environment has become one of the top policy issues, it is a national and personal obligation that every effort is done to protect the environment and

ensure that this generation hands over to future generations an environment that is self-sufficient. Dr. Simone Borg Ambassador for Climate Change gave the keynote speech.

She explained the importance of the National Strategy of Adaptation to Climate Change. She said that in the European Region, climate-related extreme weather events are increasing exponentially, which arouses concern. The human cost of these climatic events directly depends on the vulnerability of the people exposed. Social and environmental determinants of health, such as poverty, support systems, concurrent environmental stresses (including polluted water, unprotected waste disposal or polluted air) and displacement, all contribute to population vulnerability. These direct and indirect exposures can result in a variety of health impacts. Jeanette Borg gave a very interesting presentation entitled, "Food & Climate Change" She said that climate is a key factor in the production of tasty fruits and vegetables. Maltese soils have a slightly high pH. This can be negative to some plant species but beneficial to others such as vines. Water management plays

an important role too. Unfortunately, traditional ways of using water in tune with our climate have changed due to the use of borehole water. Veggies and fruits are made of more than 98% water. People were wiser before they used to plant trees and plants that need less water such as olives, carobs and figs, and base their diets on crops that require less water. Ms Borg also said that farmers have learnt how to reduce fertilisers and sprays and sometimes do without them completely. Farmers are more aware of the consequences of chemicals on nature and health.

Mr. Joseph Debono a member of the Learning and Development team in HSBC Malta and also an HSBC Climate Champion gave a very vivid description of his involvement in environmental activities. Participants could enjoy his hands-on experience in Oxford UK and Skaftafell Iceland. The seminar was chaired by Mrs Evelyn Vella Brincat Environment Committee Coordinator and the seminar was sponsored by the Ministry for Resources and Rural Affairs.

Marie Demicoli,
Environment Committee Rapporteur

Round Table on Female Employment and Economic Growth organized by the Swedish Ambassador to Malta

Ulla Gudmundson, Ambassador of Sweden to Malta on Friday 9 November 2012 at the Green Lounge of the Phoenicia Hotel Floriana. The introductory speech by the Hon Chris Said Minister of Justice, Dialogue and the Family highlighted the policies of government towards increasing the participation of women in employment.

Asa Loftstrom, Institute of Economics Umea University, Sweden made a presentation on the development of policies in Sweden, based on scientific research and at the same time traced historical developments in comparison with developments in Malta.

Dr Rose Marie Azzopardi, Faculty of Economics, Management and Accountancy, University of Malta made a presentation of recent research she has carried out. The first part of the study was a presentation of the situation of Maltese women in education, in employment, including



Hon Chris Said H.E. Ulla Gudmundson Ambassador of Sweden to Malta Grace Attard NCW and Round Table participants during the presentation

statistics on inactivity. It also revealed findings on current obstacles women face to enter/re-enter the labour market, many of which are comparable to the study NCW carried out in 2009 in collaboration with NSO.

The lively discussion from the participants concentrated mainly on the need for Child and Elderly Care, longer school hours, (after school services). In her intervention Grace Attard pointed out the need to look

at employment of women from a wider perspective: she highlighted three concepts that should motivate government, stakeholders, employers and Trade unions and NGOs in their respective areas: Innovation, Adaptation and Citizenship (The EU year 2013 should provide ample opportunities to address the employment of women, amongst other issues as 'citizens') to come up with innovative solutions and policies.

She also pointed out that other areas that need to be addressed are; female entrepreneurship from education to enterprise, increasing the number of women graduates at Masters and Doctoral levels and their professional contribution to industry, women's contribution to economic growth and strengthening the gender dimension in the EU 2020 Strategy.

Grace Attard,
NCW, EESC

Aretusa Conference in Sofia Bulgaria

The conference was held on the 7th of November in Sofia, Bulgaria, following the meeting held in Bergamo Italy earlier in the year. Poverty, Gender and Trafficking was the title of this seminar and the participating organisations all tackled the theme from different aspects. The hosting country, Bulgaria, was represented by Caritas Ruse. Their presentation dealt with the problems that Roma women face and the risk of being trafficked due to their poverty, lack of education and their immense attachment to the traditional way of living. Many of the victims are recruited by family members, acquaintances and criminals into what the victims think will be well paid jobs, but in fact they find themselves sexually exploited and far away from their country. Many of these women find themselves in other EU countries where brothels are legal and prostitution is considered as just another service. Of those trafficked the rate of women trafficked for sexual exploitation is around 85% with the other percentages being taken up by domestic work and agricultural work amongst others.

The presentation by Rumanian NGO was on the similar lines, adding to the facts that once these victims are deported back into their countries, the situation they find back home is no

consolation to what they had left behind and many a time find themselves re-trafficked. Poland however took a different aspect, targeting the children of the Roma people. These children are offered accommodation, education which will result in a better life for the future. Inclusion and integration with the village people is encouraged and although there is resistance on the part of the Roma people, results are now more visible.

The most shocking presentation was that by the Greek NGO who gave a picture of the situation in Greece where prostitution is rampant, brothels are legal and the situation is uncontrolled. This has now become a health hazard as sexually transmitted diseases are on the increase and are alarming. Women prostitutes arrive in Greece from Rumania, Bulgaria and this point even Malta was mentioned as a transit country but also as a source. Germany's NGO gave the picture of the situation in their country, perhaps not as bad as Greece but termed as the only growing market in these times of recession.

Malta's situation does not seem problematic when compared to these countries, however the greatest difficulty in recognising traffickers and its victims, in that these people enter our country in a legal manner by both sea and air travel and therefore hard to detect. The

recommendations included:

1. The setting up of a Task Force in each country, which would serve as the focal point of contact between the countries themselves as well as where victims can seek assistance.
2. When prosecuting it is important that the offence that the trafficker is being prosecuted for is actually found in the law itself.
3. Swift prosecution.
4. Assistance to victims and repatriation only if certain that the victim will not be re-trafficked.

The European Parliament declared in a resolution (2010/2162 (INI)) on the 8th of March 2011: "Considers that preventing and reducing women's poverty is an important component of the fundamental principle of social solidarity to which the European Union is committed as provided in Article 3 of the Treaty on European Union, implying equality between women and men, social justice and protection and combating social exclusion and discrimination".

"Recognises that 'the feminization of poverty' means that women have a higher incidence of poverty than men, that their poverty is more severe than that of men and that poverty among women is on the increase".

Mary Gaerty,
NCW President



A News

Round Table Conference held at the National Council of Women - 1st November 2012

Poverty affects women and increases the risk of unemployment, prostitution, trafficking, family breakdowns and domestic violence. How can we end these specific and serious human rights violation? Are they a direct result of social and political gender inequality? In Malta laws criminalising human trafficking for sexual exploitation, exploitation for the provision of services and exploitation for the removal of organs is already provided for in the Criminal Code.

According to a report issued by the American Embassy in Malta, Malta is a transit country, a destination and a source for trafficking of women and children. A thesis by Roberta Avellino however does not give evidence of any children being trafficked. Between 2002 and 2010 there were 10 cases of trafficking reported and 14 persons were convicted. What can Maltese NGOs do to raise awareness on the new EU Directive 2011/36/EU on preventing and combating trafficking in human beings and supporting the victims, both nationally and internationally?

During the conference, organised

by NCW, held on 21 November 2012 at NCW Centre, it was stated that research has shown that poverty is the main cause that makes women and men vulnerable and therefore a prey to traffickers, these victims being mostly women. Human trafficking may never be recognised as such unless the victims themselves report their situation to the police. The courage to go forward and report is many a time lost in the fear of losing the 'home' and false financial security that they would be experiencing at that moment. There is the need for adequate support to individuals who come forward and report. Decisions regarding victims who are sent back to their country of origin have been questioned as there is a serious risk for the victim to return to her previous misery and worse consequences. The possibility that the same person is re-trafficked is a reality. With only 4 persons reported as being trafficked in Malta in 2011, it is felt that trafficking is very difficult to detect since many of the victims arrive in Malta as regular immigrants and therefore no alarm is raised.

In conclusion, the following

recommendations, as established by the UN Palermo Protocol, were put forward: a) that the directive itself must be supported with training of personnel who might come in contact with these victims; b) transborder cooperation in order to detect cases of human trafficking, not only within the EU zone but also with third countries such as the Eastern countries; c) support to victims and witnesses must be strengthened, in order to offer the person the possibility of establishing a new life and d) penalising the trafficker according to the vulnerability of the victim, especially where children are the victims and e) finally, an education campaign informing all sectors of society to be able to detect signs in a person, which one may identify as a victim trafficking and f) the setting up of a Task Force, in order to set in motion and monitor progress of all the recommendations

Governments, the business community and NGOs must work together in order to eradicate poverty and therefore trafficking of human beings.

Tamara Gauci,
Rapporteur



Hajja ta' Kwalita' ghat-Tarbija li se Titwieled

Is-Sibt 13 ta' Ottubru, 2012 saret il-Konferenza Nazzjonali - Hajja ta' Kwalita ghat Tarbija li se Titwieled - fid- Dolmen Hotel Buġibba mill-Moviment Malti dwar it-Tarbija li se Titwieled bil-kooperazzjoni tal-Ministeru tal- Ġustizzja, Djalogu Pubbliku u l-Familja, li sponsorja il-Konferenza.

Ms Grace Attard, vici-president tal-Kunsill Nazzjonali tan-Nisa, ghaqda fil-Moviment, mexxiet il-Konferenza. Tkellem il-Ministru Chris Said li spjega il-hidma tal-Gvern fil-gzejjer Maltin, anki bil-legislazzjoni, biex jipproteġi il-hajja tat-tarbija li se titwieled mill-konċepiment tagħha. Qal li jhares 'l quddiem li titkompla il-kollaborazzjoni fuq il-ġid tat-tarbija fil-ġuf bejn il-Ministeru tiegħu u l-Moviment Malti dwar it-Tarbija li se Titwieled.

Ms Marianne Massa, speċjalista fil-pro-mozzjoni tas-saħħa, tkellmet fuq il-hidma tal-Moviment għall-ġid tat-tarbija li se titwieled matul l-aħħar tmien snin, kemm ilu mwaqqaf il-Moviment.. Dr Natalie Kenely mill- Università ta' Malta, u Chairperson tal-Kummissjoni Nazzjonali Famlija, li għamlet id-diskors ewlieni, spjegat fit-tul kif noholqu relazzjoni emozzjonali rikka mat-tarbija li se titwieled. Qalet li studji xjentifiċi juru li tarbija fil-ġuf hija sensittiva, konxja, u tista' tiftakar u li l-formazzjoni tal-personalitá tagħha tibda fil-ġuf. Il-ġuf huwa l-ewwel dinja għaliha u l-kwalita' tal-hajja tagħha fil-ġuf hija determinata minn omm it-tarbija. It-trobbija ma tibdiex meta titwieled it-tarbija, izda fil-ġuf u li t-tqala hija t-trobbija de facto. It-trobbija hija dwar il-holqien tal-bniedem shih li tinkludi l-iżvilupp emozzjonali tat-tarbija li se titwieled.

Saru żewġ panels ta' diskussjoni im-mexxijin minn żewġ ġurnalisti tat-televizjoni. Pierre Portelli mexxa Panel 1 dwar Il-Harsien tal-Hajja u s-Saħħa tat-Tarbija li se Titwieled u Il-Liġi u r-rwol tal-Familja



Dr Nathalie Kenelly, Chairperson of the National Commission for the Family, Hon Chris Said, NCW Vice-President Grace Attard and Marianne Massa, Director, Health Promotion

u s-Socjeta. Intqal li l-omm trid issib ambjent li fih se ssib l-ghajnuna. Ommijiet li jabbużaw waqt it-tqala m'ghandhomx jiġu stigmati u ma jibzghux imorru jifttxu l-ghajnuna. L-Agenzija Sedqa toffri ghajnuna lill-ġenituri sabiex jipprovdu ambjent tajjeb lil uliedhom. Issemiet l-importanza li nharsu lejn it-tqala bhala process naturali, u mhux bhala prodecura medika. Meta naghmlu kampanja ta edukazzjoni nipruvwaw nilhqu lil kulhadd. Ricerki juru li hafna nisa Maltin malli jsiru jafu li huma tqal jieqfu jixorbu. Hemm target groups partikolari. It-target group għandha tkun it-tarbija, izda, permezz tal-ġenituri.

Minkejja il-liġijiet li għandna dwar it-tarbija fil-ġuf irridu noqodu attenti li ma ngelldux lill-omm u t-tarbija. Hemm bzonn immexxu l-ideja li t-tnejn li huma għandhom isibu mod kif jimxu tajjeb flimkien. Fil-kwadru ta' dawn i-liġijiet il-hsieb qed jevolvi li għandu jinstab il-bilanċ delikat bejn l-interessi tat-tarbija fil- ġuf u l-interess tal-ġenituri. Intwera wkoll id-DVD qasir - When your unborn child is on drugs, alcohol or tobacco.

L-avukat Joe Mifsud mexxa Panel 2 li ddiskuta Il-Protezzjoni tal-Ġenituri u tat-Tarbija li se Titwieled fuq il- Postijiet tax-Xogħol u pprova jara ta' min hi r-responsabilita tat-tarbija li se titwieled fid-dinja tal-lum. Intqal li r-responsabilita' tat-tarbija li se titwieled fid-dinja tal-lum huwa tas-socjeta' kollha kemm f'Malta u anki lil hinn minnha. Saret enfasi kbira li kif il-mara ssir taf bit-tqala, għandha

tinforma lil employer tagħha, biex dan jevalwa, b'obligu legali, r-riski tax-xogħol li tagħmel din il-persuna u l-ambjent li taħdem fih. L-ambjent għandu jkun tajjeb għal mara bit-tarbija u jekk ikun il-bzonn, l-employer irid jipprovdi ambjent ieħor sann għal din l-omm.

Intqal li l-ġid u l-protezzjoni tat-tarbija li se titwieled għandha tkun 'Common Concern of Mankind' u li l-hajja umana, sa min qabel it-twelid, hi kwistjoni ferm għal qalb il-poplu Malti u għandha tkun hekk kullimkien.

Fid-diskors dwar formazzjoni tal-valuri, kemm Maltin u kemm Ewropej, intqal li min-naħa waħda fl-Ewropa hemm hafna li jagħtu każ aktar ta' ghasfur milli ta' tarbija se titwieled. Li nharsu hajja umana għandha tkun iktar għal qalb kulhadd fl-Ewropa kollha. Min-naħa l-oħra issem-miet l-ghajnuna vasta li tagħti l-Unjoni Ewropea fil-ġlieda kontra l-faqar u li l-liġi Ewropeja tagħmilha illegali li mara tqila titkeċċa mill-post tax- xogħol. Din, intqal, hija forma oħra ta' ghajnuna għat-tarbija mhux mwielda. Waħda mir-raġunijiet li għad m'hemm liġijiet fl' UE hija għaliex t-tarbija li se titwieled għadha mhix smata bhala persuna shiħa.

Sar diskors ukoll fuq pre-conception care u kemm huwa importanti li kull mara tkun taf is-sistema tagħha u jsiru check-ups qabel ma' l-mara taħseb biex tibda tqala. Gie sugġerit li meta jkun qiegħed ikun diskuss l-iżvilupp sostenibbli fl-agenda nazzjonal għandu jkun diskuss ukoll l-iżvilupp sostenibbli tat-tarbija li tkun se titwieled.

Tony Mifsud, Koordinatur, Moviment Malti dwar it-Tarbija li se Titwieled, Pauline Borg, Charlene Giordimaina, Catherine Bonnici u Dr Angelo Micallef

For further information visit:
www.unbornchildmalta.org

Trio Presidency work programme endorses 2014 as European Year for Reconciling Work and Family Life

At the 3210th meeting of the General Affairs Council in Brussels on the 11th December 2012, the representatives of the up-coming Trio Presidency, namely Ireland, Lithuania and Greece presented their 18 months work programme setting out the Council's work as established by the future Irish, Lithuanian and Greek Presidencies, covering the period January 2013 to June 2014

The document consists of two parts, one is the strategic framework, the other contains the operational programme of the Presidency Trio. Under the Operational Programme for Employment, Social Pol-

icy, Health and Consumer Affairs, there is a specific mention of the 2014 European Year for Reconciling Work and Family Life. It states that "Designating 2014 as the European Year for Reconciling Work and Family Life would help improving the social situation of families by triggering a reflection on the necessary responses to the far-reaching societal challenges in this context.". While acknowledging, that family policy and families are primarily within the competence of the Member States, "there is considerable scope for cooperation at EU level which can also provide added value to policy options and solutions at national level."

"This is very good news for COFACE, the 2014 Alliance, but also for women and men in Europe, for the families who are struggling to reconcile their family life with their work commitments and their carers responsibilities." sais Annemie Drieskens, the President of COFACE. She adds that "We are very pleased that the up-coming Presidencies have endorsed the idea of the year, as it is now more important than ever to rethink how the labour market is organised, to exchange knowledge on what public policies could work best to support working parents, carers, and all women and men in reconciling their work, family and private life."

Anna Lindh Foundation Meeting in Casablanca

The Anna Lindh Foundation was created to bring people together in a unique gathering from across the Mediterranean to improve mutual respect between cultures. Forum participants include youth leaders, civil society organisations, influential policy makers, and intercultural experts. Since its launch in 2005, the Anna Lindh Foundation has embarked upon and supported action across fields impacting on mutual perceptions among people of different cultures and beliefs, as well as developing a region-wide Network of over 3000 civil society organisations.

In the context of the preparation of Anna Lindh Mediterranean Forum 2013, which will take place in Marseille, France during the 4th to 7th April, the Anna Lindh Euro Mediterranean Foundation for the Dialogue between Cultures (ALF) held the second Forum Preparatory Meeting focusing on the role of women and their perspective in the framework of the 4D ALF Strategy: Dialogue, Democracy, Development and Diversity.

A call for participation was issued so that 30 participants would be identified, out of which ten were to be chosen from Morocco as hosting country. Ms Jennifer Barberi, as membership secretary and events co-ordinator of the Banking on Women Association within HSBC Malta, was successful in the call for participation and was invited to form part of the third thematic workshop described below. Besides active input via contribution of ideas based on the local scene, her role as rapporteur instigated eventual delivery of the ideas, best practices and recommendations discussed by participants during the thematic workshop.

The meeting was articulated around three thematic focuses addressing the ALF 4

D Strategy namely:

Intercultural Dialogue and Diversity

This theme focused upon challenges faced by women who act in favour of diversity, the manipulation of cultural dimension in promoting gender stereotypes and the presence of women in the new social media.

Intercultural Dialogue and Democracy

This workshop has focused upon challenges women face towards active citizenship, voice of young women as key actors for social change, changes with equality in participation and representation in civil society and political life as well as the role of education in building active and equal citizenship.

Intercultural Dialogue and Development

These working sessions have explored the major socio-economic and labor challenges facing women in the Region in the current socio-economic crisis, the role of development projects to facilitate the integration of women and their community and obstacles women meet in academic and research fields. Recommendations made from this workshop:

a) Governments together with NGOs are to be encouraged to collate timely statistics distinguishing between male and female data.

b) It is encouraged that the useful projects undertaken with rural women continue and are strengthened and supported.

c) Governments are to be encouraged to subsidise lending facilities to small business start up especially where there is the scope to emancipate women in rural and poor areas. Large organisations may collaborate as part of their Social Corporate Strategy.

d) ALF can serve also as a marketing tool, a medium enabling the produce of the projects undertaken with the help of the region's NGOs exhibited across other regions.

e) Laws enacted regarding sexual harassment, quotas, discrimination and gender equality should not only promote equality but should have a regulatory framework to ensure that these are followed.

f) There should be changes to the educational system including compulsory subjects tackling gender equality from the pre-school to both genders.

g) Family planning and sexual health education should be on the agenda. It is also warranted that legislation is changed in terms of adoption, single mothers and children rights. In instances of strong religious beliefs and in certain cultures, the introduction of an authority from the religious scene during the decision making procedure is vital. The authority is to collaborate to mutually reasonable solutions for the basic fundamental rights of these mothers and their children from the outset.

h) Introduction of quotas during decision making procedures should ensure women take active part and men also contribute towards women's emancipation.

The Forum was ended with a follow up working session from Casablanca to Marseille highlighting the most important themes and recommendations that ALF will be handling.

Jenny Barberi BOW HSBC



NCW request for Presidential Pardon for a mother found guilty of refusing access to father to be released from prison

The National Council of Women is shocked by the overall treatment of the recent case and the court's decision to imprison the mother for three months with regards to access to their teenage (17-year-old) son to visit his father. NCW is concerned that such an extreme penalty is one which is uncalled for especially in view of the fact that according to the son, his mother never directly prevented him not to visit the father.

NCW believes that the court's decision is one whose negative impact far outweighs the scope of the penalty and which does not in any way help improve the relationship between the son and his father. Was it really 'in the best interest' of the underage 17-year-old? The negative repercussions this must be having on the son must not be forgotten as he himself did not and does not want to be

with the father, after what happened.

The lack of seeking other ways to ensure the responsibility of both parents when dealing with the case, rather than simply calling them irresponsible does not reflect the way Malta's justice system values the family. Furthermore, turning a 57-year-old mother and teacher into a criminal, (whose trauma should not be minimised), who has to seek employment to be able to provide decently for her livelihood and more particularly for that of her son was never taken into consideration.

This was a case of an extremely difficult relationship, right from the start and therefore one cannot be biased in attributing blame to one of the parents – both are responsible for what happened. The treatment of this case is sending a very negative message as it will only lead mothers who are in the same

situation as this 57-year-old woman, to have to force their child/children to spend time with the father, no matter what their age is. Whichever way the mother will act, she will be assumed guilty. It would be assumed that taking no action to ensure access means that a mother is doing so out of revenge.

NCW together with affiliated organisations and all other organisations and individuals who have already voiced their support for the mother are presenting a petition to H.E. The President of Malta Dr. George Abela for a Presidential pardon to be granted as allowed in the Constitution of Malta for her release from prison and that she will be given back her job as a member of the teaching staff with government to be in a position to give a decent life to her son.

EESC Euromed Summit - Amman Jordan, 17-19 October 2012

The Situation of Women in the Euromed



The Euromed Summit of Economic and Social Councils held in Rome in 2010 mandated the setting up of a Permanent Group to follow the development of the Approved Declarations of the Istanbul, November 2006, and Marrakech, November 2009, Ministerial Conferences on the Role of Women in Society in the Euromed Region.

The Summit held in Istanbul from 16-18 November 2011 mandated the Euromed network of Economic and Social Councils and similar institutions to report back on the current situation in the 2012 Summit held in Amman. The report gave an overview of the situation of women before and after the uprisings in the different countries and put forward a set of recommendations that the Marrakech Ministerial Meeting of Ministers agreed to in 2009.

The following major themes were discussed at the Summit: the political context and rights-related issues; efforts to improve governance in the Euro-Mediterranean region through better involvement of civil society; social dialogue, training and networking; the need to protect and promote freedom of the media in the region; the need to advance the economic and social situation of women; the importance of developing the economy through coherent industrial policies, in

particular in the energy sector; promoting and maintaining the sustainable development drive; and civil society's role in the fight against corruption.

The 2012 EESC Euromed Declaration on the Role of Women – Amman, Jordan

- Deplores the significant deterioration in women's rights that has taken place in numerous countries of the Euro-Mediterranean region in recent months;
- Stresses that whilst women's rights so far have theoretically been supported in law, in practice implementation of these rights falls short of requirements. They stress that women's social and economic rights need to be aligned with those of male workers since at present women are suffering major inequalities in terms of pay, access to and quality of employment;
- It draws attention to the fact that the participation rate of women in the labour market in the southern Mediterranean region is the lowest in the world, at 24%, and that the segmentation of the labour market means that women's work is concentrated on a limited number of sectors.
- Ratification of gender-related ILO conventions (100; 111; 156; and 183) remains very low;
- Points out that 45-50% of women in the southern Mediterranean region cannot read or write and a primary prerequisite for enhancing women's integration into economic and social life is to improve their access to education;
- Underlines that in many countries of the southern Mediterranean region employers rather than the state are responsible for covering women's salaries during maternity leave which discourages the employment of women in non-traditional sectors;
- Laments the lack of in-depth and comparable data on the political, economic and social situation of women in the region, which in itself hampers coherent policy formulation and reflects a general lack of concern on the part of policy-makers for women's issues;
- Urges governments to demonstrate transparently that they are promoting public and private sector initiatives to tackle the inequality gap and that they are taking the necessary steps in their own budgets to allocate sufficient funds to measures to guarantee effective equal rights;
- Calls for more awareness raising amongst public officials, in particular the police, the judiciary and government officials, of women's rights and in particular their right to dignity;
- Calls on the Union for the Mediterranean to ensure that the principles of the Istanbul and Marrakesh declarations are taken into account in its projects;
- Insists that the EU must adhere to the principles it has set out in its European Neighbourhood Policy and ensure that its programmes in the region effectively advance.

Grace Attard,
NCW, EESC

Unleashing the potential of children and students with high intellectual abilities - EESC December Plenary

The issue of children and young people with high intellectual abilities has been fairly well researched. However, there is the need to adopt suitable measures to cater for diversity among all types of people. These should include programmes that would tap the potential of gifted children and young people in a wide variety of fields. The aims of this action would include facilitating employment and employability within

the framework of the EU, enhancing specialist knowledge and preventing brain drain to other parts of the world.

As care for high abilities is a relatively new and emerging concept, teacher training in this area needs to be built on, requiring systematic efforts in terms of both initial and ongoing training of teachers.

Pitfalls to avoid : assuming that gifted children will stand out in all

areas of their development, and will be emotionally mature with high self-control, independent, responsible and eager to please their teacher; believing that they will stand out in all areas of the school curriculum: teachers often expect brilliant students to achieve brilliant results in every area; expecting highly able children to be extremely motivated to do well at school and carry out any task set them with enthusiasm and interest.

Labour Market Observatory - Conference on Excluded or Included - Labour market participation of people with intellectual impairment or relational problems - 6 November 2012



For people with intellectual impairment or relational problems it is often difficult, if not impossible, to find a job on the open labour market, despite the well-meaning political discourse, existing programmes, financial support and so on.

The key question is whether we in Europe are able to offer these people real labour market participation, and not just passive forms of very meagre social assistance, paid out during their entire adult lifetime – about 60 years on average. If the latter is not acceptable, we have to find solutions. The aim of the conference was to launch a public debate on the labour market position and perspectives of these

people, whether or not they are recognised as disabled under national law. In a nutshell: how can we really improve their access to jobs? The European Economic and Social Committee hopes that the other EU institutions will pick up on the results of the conference and join the EESC in its efforts to find real solutions to improve the labour market position of people with intellectual impairment or relational problems.

50/50 Declaration for parity in institutions after 2014

MEPs are now ready to do battle to defend equality in the European institutions after the 2014 elections. A “multi-party” declaration was presented on Wednesday 22 November at the European Parliament during the plenary session. This declaration seeks to obtain a maximum number of signatures. The 50/50 Declaration has already obtained the support of around fifty MEPs from all the different parties.

This approach advocates the nomination by the member states of a female candidate and a male candidate for the post of Commissioner in the College of Commissioners after 2014, as well as for all senior official posts at the Commission. The list of

candidates for the European elections in 2014 should also contain parity and equality should also be reflected in the appointment of Parliamentary committee and Parliamentary bureau chairpersons, according to the 50/50 Declaration.

The declaration can be signed by all MEPs and MPs from national parliaments. The liberal MEP Anneli Jäätteenmäki (ALDE, Finland) is also insisting that men and women take part in this campaign and sign the petition. The declaration will be presented to the Commission at the beginning of next year. Franziska Brantner MEP (Greens/EFA, Germany) is subsequently hoping, “to mobilise and increase the pressure on institutions and governments” in

preparation for the European elections. She also explained that, “we no longer accept that more than half of the European population is constantly excluded from decision-making that affects their daily life”, in a reference to Yves Mersch, who is still being put forward as a candidate for the exclusively male Board of Governors at the European Central Bank. Her Socialist colleague, Zita Gurmai (S&D, Hungary) was keen to point out that more equality in decision making provided greater added value to the institutions and society. She is also highlighting the fact that gender equality is a fundamental principle of the European Union and to achieve this end, the European institutions should set an example.

Parliamentary pressure to counter domestic violence

Five MEPs are putting pressure on the EU to ratify the international convention to prevent and combat violence against women. Mikael Gustafsson (GUE/NGL, Sweden), Barbara Matera (EPP, Italy), Antonya Parvanova (ALDE, Bulgaria), Raül Romeva (Greens/EFA, Spain) and Britta Thomsen (S&D, Denmark) are urging their colleagues to sign a written declaration in this connection. The declaration calls on the EU to ratify the Council of Europe convention on tackling domestic violence and violence

against women. It also urges member states to subsequently take action against this phenomenon.

The written declaration outlined by MEPs calls on the Commission and EU member states to work with civil society organisations to implement this convention. The document will be sent to the Council, Commission, member states, Council of Europe and United Nations. The convention has been open to signatures since late 2011. Around 20 countries have countersigned the

document. 10 ratifications would enable the convention to formally enter into force. So far, however, only Turkey has ratified this document.

The declaration by MEPs was presented to the European Parliament on Tuesday 20 November, which will be meeting up for its plenary session in Strasbourg. The European women’s lobby has already demonstrated its support for this initiative.

The involvement and participation of older people in society, EESC November Plenary 2012

This own-initiative opinion is the result of a wide range of activities on the EU Year of Active Ageing and Intergenerational Solidarity 2012 carried out in EU member states to give recognition to the valuable contribution of older people to society and to make proposals for a long-term follow-up to this

dedicated year.

The aim of this opinion is to highlight the current active participation of older people in Europe, consider the barriers to enabling more people to be engaged, and emphasizing that such participation continues throughout person’s lifetime. Building an age-friendly Europe starts at

birth and requires a long term vision. This opinion builds on previous EESC opinions on older people and ageing.

Grace Attard,
NCW Vice-President,
EESC member

We're in this together? Volunteering and age friendly societies, Cascais Portugal

Diane Xuereb and Pauline Azzopardi represented the National Council of Women in the CEV symposium held in Portugal between the 19 and 20 of October 2012. The symposium's theme was 'Volunteering and age friendly societies – We're in this together?'

The CEV Symposium tackled the issue of volunteering in the context of the European Year of Active Ageing and Solidarity between Generations 2012. In addition to keynote addresses and visits to local projects connected with the theme participants had the opportunity to participate in **workshop sessions**.

CEV General Assembly

The CEV General Assembly was held before the symposium kicked off. **The Assembly was open to CEV full member organizations.** These are national or regional volunteer centres and volunteer development agencies throughout Europe whose main mission is the promotion of volunteering. **Associate members** were also present, including local volunteer centres and organisations who work on a range of issues amongst which volunteering is one priority.

During the assembly, the election of President and Board Member was held. The presidency was contested by two members. Eva Hambach from *Vlaams Steunpunt Vrijwilligerswerk* was re elected as CEV president with 21 votes. The other contestant, Dott. Renzo Rassano from Italy's Spes (Centrol d Servizio per il Volontariato del Lazio) obtained 20 votes. The second election was for a member. A member for the board was also elected. The Treasurer **András F. Tóth** announced that he was leaving CEV Board.

Some of the themes discussed during the General Assembly were the cooperation with another agency (NYC) for European volunteering. During the General Assembly, the members voted for the co-operation between CEV and NYC. Members also discussed the budget for 2012 and the work plan for 2013.

Highlights of the CEV symposium

Robert Leigh, a UK National who studied economics and development, was keynote speaker at the symposium. His speech was in relation to his appointment as a Senior Writer for the first State of the World's Volunteerism Report launched at the UN General Assembly in

December 2011.

Robert Leigh spoke about the timeliness of this report in view of globalization that is transforming both cultural and social norms. In a society where many people feel lack of control in their lives, volunteering helps people to acquire a sense of belonging and direction to their lives. Although volunteering is not a panacea, he highlighted that it would be a big oversight to fail to see the significant contribution it has on society. He reiterated that the well being and benefits deriving from volunteering extend beyond the individual. During his speech, Robert Leigh referred to an intergenerational activity held in San Diego California that combined youths and aged people. During this activity, youths had the opportunity to learn about the aging process whereas the aged group had the opportunity to mentor the young ones. Throughout his presentation, Robert Leigh emphasized the need for NGOs working with older people and youth to look at how the intergenerational element can be present. The report can be found at the following link: <http://www.unv.org/swvr2011.html>

Suzanna Szabo, representing **France Benevolat** on CEV Board of Directors gave a presentation on a study 'Intergenerational solidarity in Europe: comparison between Germany, Belgium, Italy and Sweden'. This study considered the solidarity between generations in society within Germany, Belgium, Italy and Sweden, with particular interest in solidarity within families, within the context of the public policy and the charitable projects around intergenerational solidarity. This study was conducted by university students within the Faculty of Political Science of Paris.

The study results show that there should be a right mix of young and

old people in an organization and that all generations must be involved. The highest point of solidarity is reached when people from all ages do things together.

The study's recommendations for a society where intergenerational solidarity is present, included the following points.

- Reduce age based discrimination in employment;
- Involve multiple stakeholders;
- Strengthen inter-familial solidarity;
- The need for cross-sector political policies;
- Strong co-operation between civil society organizations and the corresponding need for these organizations to strengthen their visibility;
- Funds for activity;
- Strong and more dynamic senior organizations are necessary for lobbying;
- Exchange of good practices to learn and network more easily.

The ICT digital workshop was presented by Joaquin Durany Seto where he spoke about the project entitled *CiberCaixa* that was implemented in different areas in Spain. With a budget of 500 million Euros, the project consisted of workshops that brought new technology to residents from centers for the elderly, to marginalized groups such as prisoners and immigrants. The aim of the project was to minimize the negative impact of institutions and promote ICT. The project empowered elderly individuals who started to understand new technology and helped them become a support group for other vulnerable social groups.

During this workshop, participants discussed examples of how ICT can be applied in volunteering. These examples included online volunteering such as children seeking support over skype or email on school homework, doctors explaining medical conditions and providing information through websites and a forum where people sharing the same life situation can come together.

The CEV symposium held an intercultural evening on 19 October where participants brought food and drinks from their respective countries and had the opportunity to talk about their NGOs and the contribution they do in terms of volunteering.

**Diane Xuereb
and Pauline Azzopardi**



DIARY OF EVENTS

OCTOBER

- 1st NCW President Mary Gaerty participated in the discussion on Domestic Violence on TVAM programme
- 3rd NCPE SEN National Workshop Doris Bingley attended
- 4th Meeting with Mr. Ray Borg of ETC, Employment in Social Economy Mary Gaerty and Doris Bingley attended Quality and Quantity of Water in Open Reservoirs organized by MEUSAC, Mary Gaerty attended
- 5th ALF Malta Network Meeting Doris Bingley attended
5-5 Leaders in Malta Summit Build-up skills Malta Stakeholders Platform Meeting, Evelyn Vella Brincat attended
- 8th Commission for Financial Literacy and Retirement Income Mary Gaerty and Pauline Azzopardi attended
NCW Executive Committee Meeting
- 9th CAREMARK Malta Launch at Corinthia Hotel St. George's Bay Grace Attard Gen Sec ACR, Doris Bingley and Marie Demicoli attended the Meeting of the Association for Consumer Rights
- 10th SME week at the Kitchen Garden San Anton – NCW stand with brochures Civil Society Committee MCESD at UHM premises Doris Bingley, Ben Rizzo & Father Saviour Grima attended.
- 11th EESC Meeting of Consultative Committee on Industrial Change Grace Attard participated
- 12th Mental Health Association Video Forum, Priscilla Muscat attended
- 13th Conference on the Rights of the Unborn Child, Grace Attard chaired the Conference, Doris Bingley, Therese Cassola and Marie Demicoli attended
- 17th European SME week in Brussels Summit 2012 at The Square in Brussels Mary Gaerty, Nadyanne Mangion, Jeanette Borg Doris Bingley and Marie Demicoli attended.
Reconciling Work and Family Responsibilities Public seminar at tal-Qroqq Campus, Pauline Azzopardi attended.
Eesc Euomed Summit in Amman Jordan Grace Attard participated. A report on the Situation of Women in the Mediterranean was presented
- 18th MUESAC in collaboration with MCCA consultation meeting on the National Action Plan on Sustainable Pesticides
- 19th CEV General Assembly in Cascais Portugal, Pauline Azzopardi and Diane Xuereb attended.
- 22nd Enterprise Consultative Council- NCW Member Jeanette Borg gave a presentation
Gender and Young Enterprise at Hotel Phoenicia, Doris Bingley represented NCW
Grace Attard (co-rapporteur) of the EESC Study Group on The Gender Dimension of the EU 2020 Strategy
- 23rd Building the Value of Entrepreneurial Skills by Dr Katie Birch PhD organized

- by NCW at the National Curriculum Centre (NCC)
- MCST Seminar at Bighi organized by Dr Marion Zammit Mangion and Grace Attard
Grace Attard (Vice-President SOC) attended the EESC Section Meeting for Employment, Social Affairs and Citizenship
- 24th NCW President Mary Gaerty participated in the programme Iswed fuq Abjad on NET TV.
Grace Attard participated in the EESC Section Meeting on Single Market, Production and Consumption
- 26th Daphne Project meeting with Roberta Lepre, Mary Gaerty and Doris Bingley attended.
EQF Colloquium National Coordination Point Tamara Gauci attended
- 29th Conference & NGO fair - TIC TAC Project financed by the Europe for Citizens programme organized by the Local Council Association. Doris Bingley, Marie Demicoli and Tamara Gauci participated.
Grace Attard participated in the EESC Study Group on Macro-regional strategy in the Mediterranean
- 30th Informal Carers & Volunteering in the Community at MCC Doris Bingley attended.

NOVEMBER

- 1st Round Table on Poverty, Gender & Trafficking – recommendations to be sent to ARETUSA network.
- 5th The Queen's Jubilee Classic Tea Party at Villa Messina, Doris Bingley, Maryrose Zahra and Marie Demicoli attended
- 6th Grace Attard participated in the EESC Conference on Labour market participation of people with intellectual impairment organized by the Labour Market Observatory
- 7th Europa Donna Breastcare support Mass at NCW Centre
Grace Attard Chaired the EESC Study group on European Research Area – Partnership for Excellence and Growth
- 9th Seminar "Women & Climate Change" organized by NCW Environment Committee at Dar L-Ewropa
- 12th NCW Executive Committee meeting MITA Meeting Doris Bingley and Mary Gaerty attended
Seminar on 'Female Employment and Economic Growth' was organized by H.E. Ulla Gudmundson, Ambassador of Sweden to Malta. Grace Attard was invited to participate
- 14th The U.S. Embassy and the National Council of Women organised a talk by Dr Mary M. Dwyer, Ph.D. at the U.S. Embassy in Ta' Qali.
EESC 484th November Plenary. Grace Attard participated
- 15th MCESD Civil Society Meeting Doris Bingley and Mary Gaerty attended

- MEUSAC Meeting "Working Beyond Retirement" at the Phoenicia Hotel Doris Bingley and Marie Demicoli attended.
- 16th E ageing conference organized by MCA Marie Demicoli gave a presentation, Doris Bingley attended.
Meeting at NCW with representative of Women Federation for World Peace
- 17th Girl Guides Association National Conference Corinthia Hotel San George's Bay, Mary Gaerty attended
- 19th Grace Attard participated in the EESC External Relations Section Meeting
- 20th Sectoral Sub Committee for Social Inclusion meeting at Centru Access Valletta Doris Bingley participated
- 23rd Commission for Domestic Violence Seminar; Violence against Women and Domestic Violence Forging ahead with new initiatives for Prevention at the Waterfront Hotel. Doris Bingley participated
Grace Attard participated in the EESC Section Meeting Employment, Social Affairs and Citizenship
- 24th EU Funding MEUSAC Seminar – The Contribution of NGOs at Le Meridien Hotel
- 26th Launching of the work of the Sectoral Sub-Committee regarding Accessibility, Doris Bingley participated
- 27th NCW Central Committee meeting
AMIE End of Project meeting
Reception to welcome the Australian Catholic University Study tour Doris Bingley attended
- 28th Association for Consumer Rights Malta first information meeting at NCW Centre
Presenting the Dyslexia Guidebook for parents to the Professionals – Dyslexia Association.
- 30th The National Council of Women Christmas Fair at NCW Centre
Grace Attard participated in Extraordinary Group III Meeting in Nicosia Cyprus on the theme Tourism in the Mediterranean

DECEMBER

- 3rd Kulhadd Differenti ilkoll Indaqs Konferenza Westin Dragonara
- 4th Official End Conference of the European Year 2012 in Malta Doris Bingley and Marie Demicoli attended
- 6th Breakfast meeting with Mr Riober Madelin – Director General Communication Networks, Content & Technology at the Westin Dragonara Hotel
- 7th NCW Executive Committee Meeting
- 12th NCW Executive Members invited by the American Ambassador at her residence
Grace Attard participated in the EESC December Plenary.
- 18th The BMV Prize winner recital during NCW Christmas Celebrations at the Casino Maltese Valletta
- 20th Grace Attard participated in the EESC SOC Section Meeting

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

Dates to remember

Annual General Meeting 26 January 2013

The Annual General Meeting will be held on Saturday 26 January 2013 at The Victoria Hotel at the newly refurbished William Shakespeare Hall, (complimentary parking at the Hotel car park). All members and affiliated organisations are urged to attend.

Saturday 2nd February at 2pm visit to the Salini Bird Park.

Saturday 23rd February at 7pm - Foundation Day Dinner

Thursday 7th March - Women's Day Celebration Mass at St. Patrick's Church Sliema.

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

Is ICT a man's world? Definitely not!

Recently, a Eurobarometer study interviewed over 25,000 young people from across Europe regarding their attitudes towards technology. One of the findings was that ICT, as a sector, is still very much considered as a "man's world". Furthermore, ICT is wrongly associated with 'nerdy' people who have no or very limited social relationships. This image prevents many people, especially women, from choosing a career in this sector, which is ironic when one considers the fact that the world's first ever programmer Ada Lovelace, was a woman.

A dynamic, flexible career:

The ICT industry is one of the fastest expanding sources of employment globally. There are many specialised areas in this sector which are constantly seeking to recruit new talent. Working in IT has several advantages for women as the industry offers attractive salaries and working conditions, flexibility and plenty of exciting challenges and opportunities.

Reach for IT:

If you would like to know more about the opportunities which exist and you are interested in getting the right qualifications and skills to work within the ICT sector, please get in touch with us at the Human Capital Department (at MITA) by calling 21234710 <tel:21234710> or via email on reachforit.mita@gov.mt.



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