



Visit By The Adult Education Foreign Delegates



Princess Caroline of Monaco on the top table during the ECICW General Assembly



NCW Christmas Celebrations



Mrs Jane Wang with members and friends at NCW Centre



ECICW Autumn General Assembly in Monaco



Gozo Outing

Members of


**International Council
of Women**

Founded 1888

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


**European Centre of the
International Council of
Women**

Founded 1961

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

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Founded 1964

Il-Mara

NEWSLETTER OF THE NATIONAL COUNCIL OF WOMEN - MALTA

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EDITORIAL

Commemorating 50 years of Achievements 2014

A Happy New Year to all our members and friends. This year is a very exciting year for the National Council of Women. We shall celebrate the 50th anniversary since a group of able women got together to form an organisation which promotes the establishment of human rights for the people of Malta especially for women. The Motto "Do unto others as ye would that they should do unto you" has burnt in the heart of many members past and present since 1964. This issue of Il-Mara is not only reporting what has been done in the last three months but the middle pages give the reader an insight on the ability of the female candidates for the forthcoming MEPs elections in May. Reports from the European Economic and Social Committee, the Commonwealth and ECICW keep the readers up dated on international fora. This issue of Il-Mara includes NCW press releases and reports of the many activities that were organised by NCW, especially the presentation given by Mrs Jane Wang on, "The Role of Women in China today". The Annual General Meeting Agenda is also included in this issue for the benefit of our members. The AGM is being held on the last Saturday of January at the Victoria Hotel in Sliema. We hope to have the participation of many members to discuss the 2014 resolutions. Being an NCW member means that you can shape the history and progress of our Country by your constructive criticism and cooperation through the Council of Women.

NCW Editorial Board

NCW Christmas Celebrations



President's Message



Dear Colleagues and friends,

What a busy time these last months have been, always on the go, we were in demand to participate in a number of seminars and conferences, consultation meetings as well as radio programmes, dealing with various topics as well as family friendly measures as a prospect to encourage women to enter the labour force. This drive by the government through the setting up of free childcare centres, tax incentives and other benefits, it is hoped will encourage women to be more participative in the local economy. Women however still seem to prefer to raise their children, at least until they reach their early teens and this is clear in the statistics, where the smallest percentage of women in employment are those between 30 and 45 years of age. Employing a 45 year old is seen by many employers as not advantageous, due to the limited number of years the person will be employed until pension age. As an employer myself this way of thinking is short sighted, as today more than even employees move on from one company to another seeking greener grass. This is applicable to both men and women. It is for this reason that a person must always seek to improve himself/herself so as to keep the employment or work in case of self employment. Women must be encouraged to benefit from the multitude of courses that are available even if they are not seeking to be employed but for their own personal growth. This brings me to another topic that has been in discussion recently – that of pensions and who and who is not entitled to the widow's pension, the right to the pension after separation etc. NCW is preparing resolutions for the Annual General meeting which will be held in January. I ask you all, to please contact the Council if there are any issues that you feel require attention, pensions amongst them, pressing

issues where women are concerned. We are planning a talk on pensions and discuss in this regard, more details will be given in the near future.

The government has recently launched the Consultation Document on the Waste Management Plan. I was part of this consultation representing Civil Society, apart from others. The proposed changes should bring about a cultural, in line of Malta's stepping up its act in order to reach the EU targets in recycling and minimisation of waste. Malta has no land to spare and any waste related infrastructure should be beneficial to our island, not an eyesore. Our country always shows the smallest line of the graph when showing recycling figures of all the EU member states. At least we top the chart by 50% when it comes to female representation of MEPs!

This document was not the only one that raised debates, so did the Civil Union Bill and the Individual Investor Programme (IIP), which has created discussions especially with the Opposition in Parliament. Their contents one has a right to agree with or not. What's important though is that we do not impose our thoughts on others and not be judgemental and brash, but cautious and yet sincere. Let's leave space for negotiations for agreement to be reached, we all have the country's benefit at heart.

It will be NCW's 50th Anniversary in 2014 and plans are already underway for this year long celebration. There are several events in the pipeline which we shall launch soon, hoping that you will be there to participate and share the success of the Council, that for the last 50 years has worked with you and for you. I, together with all the Executive Committee wish you God's blessings for the New Year. May the New Year bring better days than those of 2013, to you and your loved ones.

Showers of happiness to all
Mary Gaerty
President

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Gozo Outing



The Environment Committee organised the annual autumn Gozo outing on Friday 8th November. Members and friends of the council enjoyed a day full of activities. Our first visit was to the Ghajnsielem Parish Church dedicated to our Lady of Loreto, from there we proceeded to the studio of Mr Joe Xuereb, a stone sculpture. Mr Xuereb welcomed the group and explained the techniques that he uses

to create the works of art. His works are found in public gardens and private houses both in Malta and abroad. Our next stop was the Experimental Government Farm in Xewkija. Mr Aldo Formosa Assistant Director at the Ministry for Gozo gave a power point presentation about the objectives of the Gozo Ministry in creating an Eco-Gozo, a model of sustainable development. The presentation gave an overview of the eco-Gozo vision mainly on:

- Quality investment for more sustainable jobs
- A better quality of life
- A society exerting less pressure on the environment
- A wholesome natural and cultural environment
- A caring society for all
- Sustaining the island's identity.

After the presentation, we were given a tour of the farm seeing the local sheep, the Maltese bull and cow, goats,

hens, rabbits etc. and also the aviary section where we could observe protected migratory birds. The visit to the Farm and the presentation by Mr Formosa was indeed enlightening and interesting. During the afternoon we went to Ta' Soppu Tower courtesy of the Nadur Local Council. A spectacular view of rocky land covered in a feast of diverse flora, to the west of the tower lies St Blaise Bay and on the east Dahlet Qorrot Bay and Qala Point. The tower is set on high grounds, 120 metres above sea level. It is unreachable from the because of a labyrinth of rocks and high cliffs. The tower was built in 1667 and in 1997 the Nadur Local Council decided to restore the tower its original state.

Everyone enjoyed the day because we returned with a wealth of information from every place that we had on our agenda.

Marie Demicoli

Chairperson Environment Committee

The Role of Chinese Women Today



Mrs Jane Wang

Mrs Jane Wang wife of the Chinese Ambassador to Malta gave a presentation entitled, "The Role of Women in China Today" on Wednesday 4th December at the National Council of Women Centre

in Blata l-Bajda

Mrs Wang spoke about the fast changes that occurred after the founding of the People's Republic of China in 1949. These changes offered girls and women equal opportunities to education and work. Chinese women were freed from feudal

shackle where women were placed at the bottom of society.

The Chinese government strengthened the legal system in order to protect women's rights and interests.

China formulated and implemented a National Action Plan to comprehensively promote Women's development and integrate goals and tasks into the nation's overall economic and social development.

The All-China Women's Federation, is the largest women's organisation in the world which has a strong influence with branches all over the country serving 640 million women in urban and rural China. China has 27,000 organisations for the protection of women and children's rights and interests. Almost every entity, government or non-government, has an organisation to protect women and children's rights Chinese women have become a major force for the national development and social stability. The role of the woman in China today is manifested in the following:

- More women are now in full-time employment
- More women are on board of the national policy-making
- More girls and women are now at schools and universities
- Women enjoy a longer life

Moreover women business entrepreneurs are given

subsidy for small loans. There are special programmes for girls and women, who are in urgent need of education in health care.

The success of women in China is important not only in their career, but also in their family and personal life. The status of women in the family has improved tremendously although there is still more room for improvement in the role of women in China. Some serious problems and challenges are:

- The idea that men are the breadwinners and women are in charge of domestic affairs
- The widening income gap between men and women
- Regional disparity for the improvement to women's well being
- The men-dominated tradition is still strong in some rural areas

All these are listed as problems of major priorities so policy measures and law enforcement activities are being carried out to address these problems and difficulties confronting women in China Today.

All those present including the American Ambassador H.E. Mrs Gina Abercrombie-Winstanley and the Ambassador for the Kingdom of the Netherlands H.E. Mrs Rita Dulci Rahman congratulated Mrs Wang for sharing with us a very enlightening presentation about the women in China today.

Marie Demicoli Environment Committee Coordinator



Domestic Violence: Is All that Can Be Done, Being Done? (International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women)

Year after year a day is dedicated to eliminate violence against women, but year after year more women are being brutally murdered as a result of violence against them, generally by men. This phenomena has not seen any abatement in recent years but an increase has been registered across several countries. The reasons are said to be several, including the classical right of possession and obsession by the man over the woman, but other reasons such as financial jealousy, lack of finances and job losses, alcohol and drug abuse as well as mental health problems, have been attributed to this increase. The list of causes keeps getting longer and longer as does the number of women victims. News briefs report only violence that has resulted in deaths but these are only the tip of the iceberg.

Violence has many forms which all are devastating to the victim, violence such as psychological abuse, that although its action leaves no physical mark on the woman, it leaves her mentally wasted, broken and with no hope unless she is given the care and support required to lift her out of her situation and start believing in herself. The National Council of Women recognises the valid work of the Commission on Domestic Violence

and the work and support that is given to the victims and their families through sheltering them and offering all the necessary assistance and psychological help, to assist them to emerge from their trauma. Victims of violence are not from any particular age group or strata of society, as reports of abuse have been recorded from all. Teenage abuse and dating violence on young women has also increased, and this is cause for concern, as this means that although now more victims are reporting their abuse, more people are aware of gender violence, yet still there seems to be lack of detection amongst the younger generation at the early dating stage. Unheeded and unaddressed this problem will escalate until the victim comes face to face with a perpetrator. There is the need for stronger legislation that ensures better protection to victims of violence. Parents and relatives of women who are at risk need to be informed on what action to take as preventive measures. Malta needs to ensure that national legislation is in line with the Council of Europe Convention on Violence Against women in its entirety also where immigrant women are concerned.

The victims do not only suffer physically and psychologically but they lose out on possible career advancement due to loss of

work days having to stay at home or in hospital nursing inflicted wounds or being psychologically incapable of attending to work. This also causes financial costs and burdens the health, social services and the justice sector through loss of productivity and direct and indirect costs, in many countries around the world.

NCW recommends that young persons are made aware through education about early detection, so that this phenomena will be eradicated. Men and boys must themselves be part of this education and themselves serve as examples for a relationship without any form of abuse or violence. 'Justice delayed is justice denied' and victims must have redress soonest after their ordeal and not left for years awaiting justice, and the possibility of repeats by the perpetrator. Education is the root in eliminating this problem and NCW urges the authorities to give this problem the required attention. It is the whole society that must participate to eliminate violence, especially violence against women and girls. Women should be able to live in a violence free society, able to work and in so doing eradicate poverty.

Mary Gaerty, NCW President.

Men Against Violence (L-Irgiel Kontra il-Vjolenza).

The National Council of Women with the support of the United States Ambassador, HE Mrs Gina Abercrombie-Winstanley organised workshops on how to involve men to raise awareness and change the situation facing society with regard to violence. The speaker was Rus Funk who flew over from America specially to lecture on how men can help eliminate violence. After this introduction by Rus Funk, a Coalition consisting of a number of NGO's and Government agencies, was formed to empower men and women to end all forms of violence by educating ourselves and the community, raising awareness and creating social change.

The Coalition was made up of the Commission on Domestic Violence, Agenzija Appogg, Department of Parole and Probation, National Council of Women Malta, The Malta

Confederation of Women Organisations, SOAR, Women's Rights Foundation and Kellimni.com.

The 'Men Against Violence' concept was launched on 25th November, the International Day Against Violence. The primary aim was to engage men and boys to end violence against women. Many men have shown great interest and joined the group which is intent on contributing towards a society which is more respectful of gender differences. To achieve this, men are joining as Ambassadors to spread the word that violence is not acceptable. By having men holding other men accountable, the creation of a climate of mutual respect between the sexes may be achieved and our aim realised. This will only come about when men and boys take an active stand in the prevention of violence against women, thereby promoting

healthy and equal relationships.

Men Against Violence (L-Irgiel Kontra il-Vjolenza) - engaging men and boys to stand up to end violence particularly against women and girls is now active. We want all involved to break the silence and break the cycle of violence.

NCW Malta has been at the forefront of this campaign. The national Council of Women was the first to bring the issue of violence in the public sphere. In the past women suffered in silence. It was taboo to mention the issue in public. Since then much progress has been achieved with legislation in place and the setting up of a Commission but we need to do much more to eliminate all violence.

**Doris Bingley
Hon General Secretary**



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ECICW – CECIF Autumn General Assembly in Monaco



Princess Caroline together with our host Nicole Manzone President NCW Monaco

The Autumn General Assembly was held in Monaco on the kind invitation of the Union des Femmes Monegasques from the 17th – 20th October 2013.

The Union des Femmes Monegasques organised a seminar under the patronage of Princess Caroline, Princess of Hanover on “Women in Politics”. Her Highness stated that the UMF has been working to better the position of women in the country for many years in eradicating all forms of discrimination against women and ensuring equal gender representation in all walks of life. ECICW has supported this and worked on female representation in politics, rights of women and awareness of women’s difficulties in Europe.

Nicole Manzone President of the Union des Femmes Monegasques then presented The Monegasques Government Officials who agreed that Monaco’s policy for women representation in politics reflects the Council’s wishes while the chairperson of the national commission of Monaco for the rights of the family stated that since 2003 the women’s voice in politics has been stronger and the number in the communal councils has increased.

ICW President Cosima Schenk, ECICW President Doris Bingley, ICW Vice-President & NCW Korea President Junk Sook Kim and Ex Tourism Minister of Turkey and now President of NCW Turkey, Ms Isilay Saygin made presentation and all agreed that to improve the position of humanity we need to improve the participation of women in decision-making positions.

ECICW Councils contributed by presenting “Women in Politics in Their Country”. This gave a vivid picture of what is happening in many European Countries which made the seminar interesting and informative.

The next two days were dedicated to ECICW General Assembly presided by Doris Bingley. Apart from the usual business three workshops were held: a) Healthcare & Healthy Ageing, facilitated by Well Being of Women Coordinator Nadyanne Mangion b) Social Cohesion & Digital Citizenship – Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women facilitated by ECICW Vice-President Marie-Jeanne Vidaillet-Peretti, c) Formal Education & Life Long Learning –Eradicating Poverty facilitated by ECICW Vice-President Annamaria Castelfranchi,. Reports were sent out by ECICW Secretariat.

ECICW was fortunate to have ICW representatives at this meeting.

During the ECICW GA, Elisabeth Newman presented the work of ICW Standing Committees and introduced the ICW Committee Coordinators present while explaining how the committees enhance the work of ICW. There was also a presentation from Great Britain about the NCWGB Project “NCW for Young Women”. The presentation by Barbara Maddison and Monica Tolman was

received with great enthusiasm by all the participants.

Reports from National Councils are circulated electronically, and are full of valuable information about projects and achievements. Councils dedicate their time to advocate and lobby for parity in Parliament, Boardrooms and Commissions, improving the effectiveness of social protection, preventing and combating gender violence and trafficking in human beings, the commercial exploitation and manipulation of young girls and the effects of the financial crisis on women whether in employment, part-time work, pensions or the pay gap.



ECICW work with the Council of Europe, the Fundamental Rights Platform, the UN Commission for the Status of Women, the European Women’s Lobby and the European Institute for Gender Equality continues as well as the 2013 European Year of Citizens Alliance.

On the last day ECICW Monaco Statement was unanimously endorsed and was sent to all relevant authorities.

**Doris Bingley
ECICW President**

MONACO STATEMENT “WOMEN IN POLITICS”

The member Countries of the European Centre of the International Council of Women (ECICW – CECIF), a pan - European umbrella organisation working within the framework of the International Council of Women (ICW – CIF), with participative Status at the Council of Europe, met in Monaco between 17 – 20th October 2013, to consider issues of concern to women across Europe.

A major Seminar on the subject of “Women in Politics” was organised with the participation of Her Royal Highness, Princess Caroline, Princess of Hanover, Parliamentarians and delegates from member Councils. Reports have been

presented on the percentage of women MP members and other elected or appointed women all over Europe.

The General Assembly of ECICW expressed concern and disappointment that so little had been achieved, regarding representation of women in Politics, National Assemblies and other decision making bodies at all levels.

The hopes and expectations aroused during the Millennium period, when it was confidently expected that Governments would take action to facilitate wider representation of the female members of society in governing bodies, have not been realised.

ECICW calls upon all European Governments:

1. to extend their efforts towards increased representation of women in all coming elections in their countries and
2. to ensure the full representation of women in Government and all decision making bodies.

**Doris Bingley
President of ECICW – CECIF**

ECICW– CECIF is the regional Centre of the International Council of Women. The International Council of Women is the oldest international women’s organisation founded in 1888, with members worldwide.

Parliamentary Exchange and Dialogue Project “The Symposium on Gender Equality” 6-7 November 2013 | Paris



Doris Bingley during the Paris Symposium

Doris Bingley, President of the European Centre of the International Council of Women was invited to present a speech on “Women in Decision Making Mechanisms” at the third and last event of the Parliamentary

Exchange and Dialogue Project which is a project jointly carried out by the Grand National Assembly of Turkey (GNAT) and the EU. The project aims to maximise the role of the GNAT in the process of EU membership negotiations by promoting dialogue among the members of the parliaments in EU Member States and Turkey.

The project covers parliamentarians and political parties represented in the European Parliament and aims to contribute to a better knowledge and understanding between Turkey and the European Union through the establishment of

better structured and well informed political channels for powerful civil society participation in Turkey's political life.

The Symposium on Gender Equality brought together members of the national parliaments, youth and women branches of political parties, academics, policy makers, media specialists and civil society representatives in order to contribute to a structured dialogue concerning Gender Equality, share experiences at both a National and European level, exchange good practices, highlight future prospects and stimulate informed public debate on issues of gender equality and women in decision making.

Yes to 40% quota of women on boards of directors.

Strasbourg, 20/11/2013 (Agence Europe) - The European Parliament has given a boost to meritocracy in businesses with its approval, by very large majority (459 votes to 148, with 81 abstentions) of the introduction of a quota of 40% of women on the boards of directors of large European companies quoted on the stock exchange, of which there are around 5,000, in 2020.

The moment was described as historic by Viviane Reding, Commissioner for Fundamental Rights, who was behind the proposed directive. She has started to see “cracks” in the glass ceiling, which prevents women from reaching positions of high responsibility. Just 16% of the seats on the boards of directors of European companies are occupied by women. In the view of the co-rapporteur on the subject, Rodi Kratsa-Tsagaropoulou (PEP, Greece), it is vital that businesses quoted on the stock exchange do not overlook women's talents, and move towards a decision-making process which is in line with the principle of equality.

It is worth noting that only non-executive posts will be covered (in around 5,000 companies in Europe), with no explicit mention of women, but just of the “underrepresented sex”. This, therefore, is above all a procedural quota, not a quantitative one. This suggests that the businesses in question will not be obliged to abide by this quota in practice, but rather to have ensured that they have set in place appropriate selection procedures to guarantee that qualified women are taken into account in order to comply with this objective. If they fail to do so, businesses could be fined.

Sanctions and other terms. The MEPs tightened up the punitive plank. Sanctions were indicative and left up to the discretion of the member states in the Commission's proposal. They become obligatory following the plenary vote. But in general, the philosophy of the proposal was respected by the MEPs, who decided to keep SMEs outside the scope of application of the directive, even though the member states are urged to work for greater parity in smaller businesses as well. Family businesses and whose

staff are less than 10% women are not exempted from the quota. The directive will enter into force in 2020 for large companies (2018 for listed public companies) and will be transitional. This means that it will disappear in 2028.

Council under pressure. The member states have not yet established their position and are not ready to do so. The discussion on the subject is scheduled for the Council meeting of 9 and 10 November, but there is no date for any agreement on the quota. The agreement appears to be a tricky one, because around 10 countries (the United Kingdom, the Netherlands, Hungary, the Czech Republic, Bulgaria, the Baltic States and Malta) are opposed to the proposed directive, as they feel that the EU should not legislate on the matter. Germany was sceptical to start with, but negotiations underway on the CDU-SPD coalition feature a 30% quota for women on German boards of directors from 2017, which could change matters. Other countries, such as Italy, France and Belgium, have already adopted similar national legislation.

Fleur Vella



Give me an opportunity to:

Give a voice to the special circumstances of micro enterprises in Malta to other members of the European Union.

See that laws passed to decrease the bureaucratic burden on micro enterprises

is fully implemented locally

Advise Government on new rules which jeopardise the operation of micro enterprises

Disseminate information about opportunities offered by the European Union to micro enterprises.

Who am I?

I love all forms of art but have a particular interest in music and dance which I have practiced for a number of years. I spend my free time in Summer at Malta's unique beaches. In winter I prefer walking in the countryside or by the sea.

After I read a Bachelor of Commerce Honours in Economics and Master in Business Administration at the University of Malta, I started to work with the Government of Malta on research necessary to form Malta's pre-accession negotiation positions. I was involved in the Agriculture and Competition Chapters. During this time I also started lecturing on a part-time basis at the University of Malta as a visiting lecture. I enjoy sharing with my students my experiences as well as hearing their opinions about economic issues.

After Malta's entry into the European Union I started

working on Malta's EU budget 2007-2013 negotiations which determined the amount of funds Malta should have received during this period. These experiences taught me that when a country has arguments based on solid research, even a small country like Malta can change the way the European Union works.

In 2006 I felt the need to understand the way the private sector works as for me this sector was just a series of statistical figures. During this period I started understand the difficulties faced by micro enterprises namely:

- Problems in collecting debts due to court procedures
- Endless paperwork to apply for EU funding or a tender which is financed by EU funds.
- Tenders which are dropped capriciously after providing tender guarantees worth thousands for numerous months.
- Late payments from the public sector
- The highest water and electricity rates
- Banks which make absurd profits due to excessive charges.

These are only a few of the factors hampering the competitiveness of micro enterprises. During the previous administration, important public projects were always being adjudicated to a few contractors. These contractors subcontracted work to micro enterprises on terms which lead to micro enterprise having to face bankruptcy or huge financial difficulties or having to employ workers without respecting employment legislation. I feel that my nomination by the Labour Party for the MEP election is testimony to the trust the party gives to micro enterprises. Therefore, I want to be the voice of micro enterprise for the Labour Party.

Helga Ellul



Your voice in the European Union by Helga Ellul

For the past thirty years or so, my name has featured regularly in the business pages of local newspapers, particularly in connection with my long career at Playmobil, from where I retired as CEO in 2012. My experience leading Playmobil in Malta is one I like to refer to as a milestone in my professional life. I am very glad to say that at Playmobil we established a very positive environment, and this led to a binding relationship between

all of us at the factory. We were all pulling in the same direction, through the good times and through some uncertain days. By the time I retired from Playmobil Malta, we were employing some 1,000 people and many others were engaged by our local subcontractors. The Malta plant had become the sole producer of the renowned Playmobil figure.

However, my involvement in local affairs did not stop at Playmobil. Among others, I helped set up the Foundation

for Human Resource Development, was a member of MCAST's Board of Governors, and up to 2011 held the post of President of the Malta Chamber of Commerce and Industry. I also had roles in other local private and public entities, as well as NGOs.

Although I was born and spent the early part of my life in Germany, I have now been living in Malta for some forty years. As a result, I feel very Maltese indeed. Malta has given me a lot, not least my husband Joe and the family we have built together here. And that is why I feel the need to continue to be of service to this country and the Maltese for as long as possible.

I strongly believe that Europe is not about 'Us and Them'. For me, being European is a statement of fact - it's a way of doing business, it's who I am and how I propose to act if elected as a Member of the European Parliament. I have always been a firm believer in working relationships and negotiations - that has been a way of life for me throughout my career and within my family. That's the way it works within the European family too. It's all a matter of dedication, knowledge, and the will and knowhow to get the best out of any situation. This, I believe, is the essence of the work of a Member of the European Parliament.

THERESE COMODINI CACHIA

Since entering public life I am often asked 'who I am'. I believe the question is not after my age or employment status, but more so what do I stand for. I am the same person I have always been and am keen to remain a conscientious advocate striving for social justice, equality and empowerment. I am unable to let abuse of authority or disrespect towards the dignity of each person go by. For me, advocacy involves not only court litigation, but also awareness raising, education, empowerment and lobbying. My style is one of discussion and determined persuasion. I do all of these in my work as a lawyer, lecturer, adviser to NGOs and in politics. Rest assured that I juggle this busy schedule thanks to the support of my husband and daughter.

There have been events in life that have helped shape who I am. I was born into a loving family where gender and disability were not seen as obstacles. Raised in Birzebbugia, but I spent a lot of my childhood (70s and 80s) at Zejtun and Floriana with my extended family. My upbringing has given me a social conscience and an understanding of different social realities, providing me with values based on respect and understanding. Having at a young age lived and seen social injustice, in my teens I knew I wanted to be an advocate. In 1997 I graduated as a lawyer and in 2012 I obtained a Ph.D, but what I cherish most is those persons who have trusted me with assisting them to fulfil their rights and obtain redress for violations thereof.

They provided me with the opportunity to make society a bit more just. I will never forget pleading before the Grand Chamber of the European Court of Human Rights in Strasbourg; nor the Brussels meetings where I ensured that EU legislation and policy is such that contributes to Maltese society rather than spoil it.

It is time I am of service as a candidate for the European Parliament elections so as to strive for Maltese society at a European level. My candidacy, and also if elected, is another medium that keeps me in touch with people's realities, understand them, and represent their interest.

I would condense my wish list to say that I want to translate rights into opportunities. Whoever you are, whatever you do, whatever you aim for, you must be given the opportunity of fulfilment. As for women, I want to see structures that ensure women are able to attain self fulfilment, have a free choice on shaping their role within the family, respect at work, at home and in society, and obtain recognition as equals. Above all, I want a woman's life to be free from violence.



Miriam Dalli

Miriam Dalli is a candidate on the PL ticket for the 2014 MEP elections.

She has successfully completed her Doctorate of Law at the University of Malta. Her thesis which focuses on the financial services sector is entitled Investment Advisors: Legal Obligations towards Investors. Miriam Dalli obtained a first class degree in her LL.B. course which leads to the conferment of Bachelor of Laws. She is a Communications graduate (University of Malta, 1998) and she obtained an MA in European Studies (University of Malta, 2003) and an MBA (University of Malta, 2001).

With over 15 years of experience in the Communications sector Miriam Dalli established herself as one of the main television journalists in Malta. She worked as a journalist with ONE and was the first female news editor on the Islands heading a TV and Radio newsroom. During her tenure as Head of News, ONE TV and ONE Radio registered among the highest audience shares and her investigative journalism programmes were distinctly acclaimed on a national level.

Miriam Dalli worked intensely during every electoral campaign from 1996 onwards. During the 2013 general election campaign she was instrumental in communicating effectively the PL message as laid down in the party's electoral manifesto.

Miriam Dalli was a member of the Labour Youth Forum (Forum Żgħażaġh Laburisti) where she was appointed as Equal Opportunities Officer between 1996 and 1998 and as International Secretary between 1998 and 2001. She was also a member of IUSY (International Union of Socialist Youths) and the former ECOSY (European Community

Organisation of Socialist Youths).

As a representative of the Labour Youth Forum and as Head of News, Miriam Dalli attended a number of international conferences organized by the Council of Europe, meetings organized by the Committee of the Regions and the European Parliament and conferences organised by the OSCE.

More recently she was employed as Corporate Affairs Senior Executive by Vodafone Malta where she worked on the company's Internal and External Communications, Public Relations, Corporate Social Responsibility and Sustainability together with Stakeholder Management. Currently she is working as an advisor with the Ministry of Energy and Conservation of Water focusing on Communications, Corporate Social Responsibility and Stakeholder Management.

Miriam Dalli has always been interested in politics and in particular in EU affairs and as a matter of fact she pursued her EU studies at a Masters level. She is looking forward to this new challenge and she intends to focus on important issues for Malta, including irregular immigration, employment and youths among others, "because ultimately my main concern is to give priority to Malta and our families and the issues that our of utmost importance to all of us as a nation," she sustained.



Marlene Mizzi

The European Parliament elections are less than 6 months away. Unfortunately, in the highly charged Maltese political landscape, politicians tend to be dehumanised. We seem to care little about their back story, their competence, who they really are and what, ultimately, made them choose to offer themselves for a life of public service. So, I welcome any opportunity to let the citizens know about myself and my background.



My name in Malta is mostly associated with Sea Malta where I served as its Chairman from 1998 to 2005. However my chairmanship at Sea Malta was only a chapter (albeit an important and cherished one) - of my professional career. During my career I have in fact worked in various sectors including banking in Finland and Switzerland, manufacturing and design in Germany, retail in the UK. I have also served as a Director of Bank of Valletta and chairman of Amca Ltd - retail company owning four stores including an international franchise. From an

academic background, I am a graduate of the Universities of Malta and Maastricht with degrees in economics and management.

I firmly believe that whilst one's career is a very important part of their life it should not be the be all and end all. I consider myself to be blessed with a wonderful family whose support was always forthcoming in both my professional endeavours, as well as my political career.

Many people have asked me why I have chosen to be once again a candidate for

the European Parliament elections. The answer is a simple one. I want to serve. In my short time as a member of the European Parliament I have come to appreciate and understand the workings of this important institution. The EP is a place where the most important thing is not your gender or political allegiance but your skills, your capabilities and the ability to deliver. As the first woman MEP in Malta's history, I feel added responsibility to do my job in the best way possible.

My work in Parliament has been varied. As the Vice-President of the Economic and Monetary affairs committee, I have made sure that decisions taken in Parliament with regards to economic and financial matters do not have any negative impact on Malta. I have participated in a number of seminars, dedicated to the empowerment of women, including at a seminar where Commissioner Vivian Reding was the key note speaker. Commissioner Reding subsequently asked me to co-author with her an article to explain her stand on the need of gender balance. Her report passed with outstanding majority in the EP.

I will continue working on other important issues such as migration, education and job creation. I sit on a special committee which is studying ways and means to create more jobs in Europe and to reduce jobs/skill mismatches. I have also championed the cause of animal welfare through my participation in the Animal welfare intergroup. I will continue doing all of this and more in the coming months!

The Maltese delegation in the European Parliament has transformed itself from one with the biggest gender in-balance to one which is perfectly balanced. I augur that come May next year, the final result will once again reflect this achievement.

Roberta Metsola

Li nirrappreżenta lill-poplu Malti u Għawdx i fil-Parlament iġib miegħu sodisfazzjon u aktar minn hekk responsabbilità kbira. Meta ġejt eletta fost it-tliet membri parlamentari ewropej, urejt id-determinazzjoni tiegħi li nersaq quddiem l-elettorat b'riżultati konkreti għal għid tal-poplu u ta' pajjiżna.



Wara li fl-elezzjoni ġenerali ġew eletti għaxar nisa, saru l-elezzjoni każwali għall-Parlament Ewropew u minbarra jien, ġew eletti wkoll Claudette u Marlene. Għalhekk, wara kważi għaxar snin, ma bqajnix aktar fil-lista, li konna waħedna, bħala l-uniku pajjiż li ma kellux membri parlamentari ewropej nisa. Dan serva wkoll biex id-diskussjoni ma tibqax aktar iffukata fuq il-fatt li ma kienx hemm membri parlamentari nisa, imma fuq kif se jkollna l-aħjar rappreżentanza, irrispettivament mis-sess.

Il-Parlament Ewropew hu istituzzjoni oħra fejn nistgħu nagħmlu differenza għall-aħjar fil-hajja tan-nies, fejn niehdu deċiżjonijiet biex intejbu l-kwalità tal-hajja tan-nies. Xejn ma jiġi mix-xejn u xejn ma hu faċli. Trid il-hin, id-dedikazzjoni u trid taħdem b'mod kontinwu u b'għajnejk miftuhin.

Kemm ilni membru tal-parlament ewropew, ġejt appuntata bħala l-kelliema tal-Partit Popolari Ewropew (EPP) fuq issues li jolqtu mill-qrib lin-nies bħalma huma oqsma relatati mal-konsumatur, kontra d-diskriminazzjoni u

l-ġlieda kontra l-omofobija. Il-Parlament Ewropew jaħdem hafna bil-kumitati u jien sirt membru tal-Kumitat dwar id-drittijiet civili, il-ġustizzja u l-intern. Dan hu kumitat li jiddiskutu wkoll l-immigrazzjoni. Bħala l-uniku Maltija f'dan il-kumitat haċid id-deċiżjoni li rrid niddedika aktar enerġija għal dan il-kumitat għaliex l-immigrazzjoni għandha impatt dirett fuq pajjiżna u għalhekk kull policy li ssir tolqot lill-pajjiżna. Bil-hidma li għamilt u b'diskussjonijiet ma jispicċaw qatt, f'Ottubru

li għadda ikkonvinċejna lill-partiti kollha fil-parlament ewropew biex japprova pjan dwar l-immigrazzjoni fil-Mediterran. Ir-riżoluzzjoni li approvajna mhux biss tirrikonoxxi dak li qed jagħmlu l-Maltin imma ssemmi lista ta' inizjattiva li jridu jiġu implimentari biex ikun hemm soluzzjonijiet holistiċi. Ir-riżultat li akkwistajt, setgħu jiġu għaliex iddedikajt hafna hin għall-lobbying ma' membri parlamentari ewropew biex nispjeghalom ir-realitajiet ta' Malta. Issa wara dak li għamilna fil-Parlament Ewropew irid ikun il-Gvern Malti li jkompli jaħdem biex pajjiżi ewropej jagħtu appoġġ u jdaħħlu fis-seħh dak li ġie approvat mill-Parlament Ewropew.

Kumitat iehor li jien membru tiegħu hu dak dwar is-suq intern u l-affarijiet tal-konsumatur. Kont involuta wkoll f'negozjati dwar l-online gaming u s-servizzi finanzjarji. Bħalissa ninsabu f'nofs negozjati fuq propošta

biex jispicċaw il-kontijiet esagerati li jridu jithallsu meta persuna ssiefer f'pajjiżi differenti tal-Unjoni Ewropea.

Minbarra li jien membru f'dawn il-kumitati, hemm ukoll diversi intergroups li jien membru tagħhom fosthom dwar id-diżabbilita', LGBT u l-harsien tal-annimali.

Sar hafna xogħol iżda baqa' aktar xi jsir.

Kultant ikun hemm min jistaqsi kif omm ta' tliet itfal, tista' tkun involuta b'dan il-mod fil-politika. Hemm diffikultajiet, iżda kull rwol iġib miegħu sfidi u diffikultajiet. Għalhekk trid nippjana bil-quddiem u norganizza l-iskeda tiegħi sew. Għalhekk ma hemmx dubju, li iwa kull omm, ġenitur jistgħu jilhqqu bilanċ tajjeb bejn ix-xogħol jew xi rwol iehor li jkollhom u l-familja. L-impenji tiegħi ifissru wkoll vjaġġi fi Brussel u Strasbourg, madankollu lit-tfal tiegħi irrid nurihom ukoll li jekk jemmnu f'xi haga, minkejja li trid taħdem aktar u tagħmel ukoll xi saġrifċċji, jistgħu jaslus biex jagħmlu dak li jemmnu fih. Flimkien mar-raġel tiegħi, imexxielna nsibu bilanċ tajjeb fil-familja tagħna, madankollu nirrikonoxxi li, għal raġunijiet differenti, mhux kulhadd jista' jagħmel hekk. Għalhekk hemm numru ta' inizjattivi li rridu niehdu fil-Parlament Ewropew biex nindirizzaw dan is-suġġett biex il-ġenituri u l-familji jkunu jistgħu jiġu mgħejjuna jsibu bilanċ aħjar bejn ix-xogħol u l-familja.

Bħala pajjiż, fil-Parlament Ewropew qegħdin sitt membri. Għalhekk hu kruċjali li nevitaw il-kunsiderazzjonijiet politiċi u niġbdu habel wieħed. Għalhekk jien membru ta' pajjiżi żgħir, b'delegazzjoni żgħira, se nkompli naħdem bl-enerġija kollha tiegħi biex il-vuċi ta' pajjiżna tinstema u tkun effettiva.

Childcare Centres - Are they the only Solution?

The National Council of Women welcomes the document **EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION & CARE IN MALTA** and agrees with it as **THE WAY FORWARD**. The proposal in the electoral manifesto by the now government to offer childcare for under three year olds, free of charge, can be an incentive to women seeking employment. As per the Barcelona targets (2002) EU member states agreed to:

Remove disincentives to female labour force participation and strive, taking into account the demand for childcare facilities and in line with national patterns of provision, to provide childcare by 2010 to at least 90% of children between 3 years old and the mandatory school age and at least 33% of children under 3 years of age.

The document which is in line with a number of the recommendations of a study carried out by NCW in collaboration with Dr Valerie Sollars a few years ago also recommends that Malta should take action within the period 2013-2014 in order to continue the support to women in participating in the labour market.

NCW feels that this is not solely a woman's issue but rather a family issue and both parents should be able to avail themselves of this possibility should the need arise. Traditionally the grandparents or other family members roped in to offer free childcare to families with children under 3 years and older, so that, generally the mother, could

return to work. Childcare facilities should not be seen as 'warehousing' of children but a place where the child is well cared for, stimulated to learn and given the necessary attention. NCW believes that in line with current regulations, crucial aspects in childcare facilities are- the adult/child ratio as well as qualified staff, so that the facilities will not just offer childcare, but high quality childcare. All childcare facilities should be registered to ensure regulations are observed. All parents want to do the best they can for their children, since these children will eventually grow into responsible adults. It is for this reason that one must make sure that these facilities offer optimal care, a growth promoting environment filled with social interactions with an attentive caregiver. The introduction of child minding with specific regulations to ensure quality, can offer another form of childcare service.

NCW emphasises the absolute need for staff to be well trained, as being a carer for a child in its formative years, staff should be impeccable. Men should be encouraged to take up relevant courses, as men have excellent caring skills that we often see particularly in fathers. It has been established that childcare facilities that are stress free, offer the child a place where he or she can develop. The White Paper offers seven recommendations, all of which are equally valid and important, however one must not forget the human element. The document refers to an integrated system rather than a split system, but does not give

details of the child/adult ratio, a system that is already in place but needs to be looked into since the younger the child, the more care is required and hence the smaller the number of children in ratio to one carer. The document speaks about children or rather babies up to toddler age and discusses also older children. It is important that these fall under the auspices of one Ministry, thus avoiding hiccups as children progress from childcare to kindergarten and onto primary schools.

The focus point of the setting up of free childcare, is an initiative that makes it easier and possible for women to return to work and, although the White Paper addresses childcare facilities, it does not address the issue of matching time frames of childcare provision with working hours of both parents, precisely that of older children. Babies and toddlers grow up and women will still need to go to work when children are in kindergarten or in primary school. NCW feels that a holistic approach must be taken, including the summer months period, when schools are closed. This would require an increase in staff and adequate facilities that perhaps can be set up through private/public partnerships. Having said this, this initiative is very welcome, as long as great care is taken in ensuring high quality care for the children.

Mary Gaerty
President, National Council of Women

Visit by a delegation from Austria, Italy and Turkey

A group of 22 delegates from Austria, Italy and Turkey visited the National Council of Women to get first-hand experience of the sterling work that the council does towards social inclusion and to help improve the quality of life for disadvantaged groups.

The Directorate for Lifelong Learning is part of an EU project called "Practical Young Women at Work". The aim of the project is to discuss and share good practices on how to encourage young women (between 18 to 40) to become economically active. The directorate believes that with the right educational programmes, support for young women can become a reality to enhance socialisation, educational

and job mobility and gender equality.

The group lead by Ms Tania Agius project coordinator had the opportunity to observe a lesson in Mathematics and Information Technology. The President



Mary Gaerty gave an overview of the various classes and other activities held at NCW and how NCW has been a front runner in empowering women and men for a better quality of life through education.

The delegates showed great interest at the work carried out by the National Council of Women by asking very valid questions. Together with Ms Agius from the Directorate for Lifelong Learning, they thanked NCW President for a very fruitful visit.

Marie Demicoli
NCW Office Administrator

Citizens Dialogue in Malta



The European Commission has organised a series of citizens' dialogues around different European cities as part of its efforts to communicate more closely with its citizens, especially during this 2013 European Year of Citizens; an entire year dedicated to your rights as a European citizen. Through these dialogues, citizens were able to have their chance to discuss matters which affect them directly with a European Commissioner.

At the Malta event, the European

Commissioner Tonio Borg, responsible for health policy, replied to questions and comments from the public. Topics raised included animal rights, the selling of the Maltese passport, female chronic diseases, poverty and social exclusion, the financial crisis, GMOs amongst others. Tamara Gauci, Nadyanne Mangion and Grace Attard represented NCW.

NCW Proposals for a Framework for a National Literacy Strategy

Grace Attard has compiled recommendations and comments in response to the consultation document on the Malta National Literacy Strategy. The NCW proposals will be sent to the Permanent Secretary of the Ministry for Education

NCW Recommendations on the National Early School Leaving Strategy

Tamara Gauci and Grace Attard are working on the recommendations. The final document will bring together the recommendations of both in one document

Rights of Undocumented Migrant Children

Public Hearing on the rights of undocumented migrant children organised at the European Parliament organised by PICUM

The Platform for International Cooperation on Undocumented Migrants (PICUM) together with Nathalie Griesbeck MEP, Group of the Alliance of Liberals and Democrats for Europe (ALDE), organised a discussion on how the European Union can ensure the rights of undocumented migrant children and their families. The event A Child is a Child - How Can the EU Ensure the Rights of Undocumented Migrant Children and Families? took place at the European Parliament, Room PHS 5B001, in Brussels on Thursday, 14 November 2013

Key issues included: Ensuring Access to Services, Protection & Justice for Children in an Irregular Migration Situation and Ending the Immigration Detention of Children. The European Ombudsman for Children also addressed the Conference

Mentoring and More



Ever since I started out my business career I had always wished to mentor and coach younger persons in order to share with them my 'growing up'

experiences in the business world. Apart from having participated in various short term mentoring of young persons, never did I until recent, have the opportunity to be a Business Advisor to a group of young persons who form a JAYE team. What struck me most is the enthusiasm of the team and once the idea of their business venture was decided, I could see the real efforts of these young men and women to move forward in their venture. Working alongside them one learns as much as one gives and this gives me courage for our youngsters, that although they have exams and

studies, they still decided to dedicate a large part of their free time investing in their future through furthering their knowledge in something that is more practical in the work life. Making presentations, speaking in public, marketing the product or service and even answering a phone or calling someone, are all skills that are attained with practice and guidance and the sooner they are learnt, the sooner one is equipped to participate in the work world.

Young persons and those not so young cannot today feel comfortable in the job that they hold, they must work at first of all keeping their job and this is done not only through ethical work practice and dedication to the work but also through continual improvement. The government has recently launched the Green Economy Strategy and Green Jobs, new job creation in a sector that is forever growing and contributing to world economies. Today a job is not necessarily for life but a growth of

the individual, whether or not one remains in his/her existing workplace. The government should encourage and provide the possibility for furthering education and retraining in new sectors, green jobs being one of them.

One other important aspect that I think should be seriously tackled is apprenticeship. Many of our graduates leave university with no work experience at all, unlike the students of several other countries such as France and Germany. Academic achievement is important but putting theory to practice can take time and skill, so it is important to achieve results in both. The financial crisis that has hit several countries has taught us various lessons that hopefully will not be forgotten quickly, with one main lesson being that one must not sit on his/her laurels but continue to improve and give the highest percentage of efficiency in work.

Mary Gaerty
NCW prsiednt

EESC Study Group on A Macro Regional Strategy for the Mediterranean



Members from different member states, in particular those of the Mediterranean Region participated in a study group to discuss a Macro-Regional Strategy (EU MMRS) to help the region face challenges that cannot be satisfactorily resolved by single regions or countries through the usual means. Such a strategy would help the regions concerned to address the causes of uncertainty that dominate the Mediterranean region by increasing the value-added of the positive achievements of the initiatives already launched and the Europe 2020 goals. This was followed by a Public Hearing. Grace Attard participated in this study group highlighting the situation of Malta in proposing policies for this strategy. Stefano Mallia from Group 1 was rapporteur of this EESC Opinion.

Opening up Education: Innovative

teaching and learning for all through new Technologies and Open Educational Resources

The "Opening up Education" joint initiative led by Androulla Vassiliou, Commissioner for Education, Culture, Multilingualism and Youth, and Neelie Kroes, Commission Vice President responsible for the Digital Agenda, focuses on three main areas: creating opportunities for organisations, teachers and learners to innovate; increasing the use of Open Educational Resources (OER) to ensure that educational materials produced with public funding are available to all; and improving ICT infrastructure and connectivity in schools.

The Commission proposal is very ambitious. In implementing it there is the need to deal with the process from one step to another. It requires a massive change both in mindset and in the traditional education systems across the EU. Although a number of mechanisms are already in place including ERASMUS+ and Horizon 2020 from where the funds will be allocated, bringing together fragmented initiatives requires time, especially as member states have reached different levels of skills. Grace Attard submitted a number of recommendations on the changing dynamics of student-teacher relationships, adequate training for teachers not only in the use of ICT as a tool, but also to be able to make full use of pedagogical tools in learning/teaching situations

EESC EuroMed Summit of Economic and Social Councils and Similar Institutions

Barcelona 10-12 November 2013

In the final declaration, the participants condemned all forms of violence taking place in the Euro-Mediterranean region, in the form of state repression of civil society, religiously or ideologically motivated bloodshed, inter-ethnic and inter-tribal fighting or of outright military violence, and with regard to the latter strongly deplore the violence taking place in Syria of which the main victims are innocent civilians, including very often children, and urge the belligerents to commence transition talks. A whole chapter was dedicated to the deterioration of the situation of women in the region. They commended the courage and consistency of efforts by women's civil society organisations to safeguard their rights in the face of defamatory campaigns and legal moves by some governments, and of pressures exerted by certain religious movements, that seek to block their activities and severely reduce women's participation in public life. As member of the EESC Euromed Follow-up Committee, Grace Attard compiled a report on the current situation of women, which was presented and discussed during a panel discussion at the Summit. The report was mostly from direct evidence by Civil Society members, including women in the region, as witnesses of what is happening in their country

**Grace Attard, NCW
Vice-President, EESC member**

Commonwealth Foundation - EU Regional Consultation



Consultation on Participatory Governance for the European Region: Developing a CSO Strategy

A two-day consultation meeting was organized in Larnaca, Cyprus on the 3rd & 4th October 2013 by the UK National Council for Voluntary Organizations on behalf of the Commonwealth Foundation, with the objective to explore and draw recommendations that strengthen civil society and participatory governance. Doris Bingley participated on behalf of the National Council of Women Malta and Diane Xuereb as the Education Committee Coordinator.

Representatives from the Commonwealth

Foundation, Non-Governmental Organizations across Europe and Pan Cyprian Volunteerism Coordinative Council (PVCC) attended which made this meeting very interactive. The consultation was facilitated by Martin Farrell.

In his welcome address, Mr Yiannis Yiannaki, Commissioner for Volunteering and NGOs explained that efforts are being made so that the legal framework in Cyprus supports volunteers and that volunteerism is an important political wheel that helps push actions to promote employment in Cyprus. Reference was made to the National Declaration of Volunteerism launched by PVCC in December 2011 that is still in force.

Mrs Klelia Sourmeli Skotinou, Secretary for Public and International Relations of PVCC explained that Cyprus is currently undergoing a challenging economic situation, resulting in high unemployment. Mrs. Sourmeli Skotinou further explained that according to Eurostat, 16.9% of population in Cyprus is unemployed and that the largely impacted are young people under 25 years old. For this reason, she mentioned that participatory governance needs to focus on deepening democratic engagement through the participation of citizens in the process of governance, have a more direct

role in public decision making, be engaged in current political issues and in finding solutions on how to alleviate the difficulties being faced.

The participants agreed that there are different motivations for why people get involved, such as personality, identity, values, beliefs and world view and that whatever the motivation policy makers should acknowledge and appreciate individuals' participation. A theme arising from the presentations was that tools and mechanisms are required to promote participation within a structure and framework. Reference was also made to a needed code of good practice.

Throughout the consultation meeting, a discussion was held on the role that the Commonwealth Foundation plays or can play in order to assist its member states. Suggested areas of focus are gender empowerment, education, promoting decent work among young people, small states and vulnerabilities and non-communicable diseases.

The recommendations were sent to the Commonwealth Foundation to be part of the discussions and outcome of the Commonwealth People's Forum (CPF) held in

Hikkaduwa, Sri Lanka on the 10-14 November 2013 prior to CHOGM.

2013 EUROPEAN YEAR OF CITIZENS CLOSING CONFERENCE



The Closing Conference of the European Year of Citizens took place at the Lithuanian Parliament "Seimas" in Vilnius on 12th & 13th December. The event was organised by the European Commission

in close cooperation with the European Year of Citizens Alliance (EYCA) and the Lithuanian Presidency. It gathered together around 360 participants.

The Conference highlighted all the collective work and contributions of the organisations in the alliance. It enabled EYCA to show and to promote the scope of the mobilisation, with 62 European networks and more than 4000 individual organisations throughout 50 countries in Europe and beyond, as constantly repeated during the whole conference.

On 12th December in the morning the new EU Ombudswomen Ms Emily O'Reilly met with NGOs to discuss the issues related to the European Year of Citizens.

The Conference opened on the 12th afternoon with a mix of plenary sessions (4) and parallel working sessions (6) over one-and-a-half days; it was structured in three blocks around the following topics:

1. The Role of Civil Society in European democracy
2. EU Citizenship in action: How citizens can influence policy-making
3. Participative and representative democracy: Two sides of a same coin

The Official handover of the EYCA Policy Recommendations Document - "It's about Us, it's about Europe! Towards Democratic

European Citizenship" was done by EYCA's Chairman Jean-Marc Roirant to Vice President Viviane Reding Commissioner for Justice, Fundamental Rights and Citizenship on the morning of 13 December.

Vilnius has been an important step, since EYCA work, legitimacy and the political dimension of involvement for a more open, inclusive and participative Europe were recognised during the Conference.

Ms Reding, Commissioner for Justice, Fundamental Rights and Citizenship, committed to take into consideration EYCA recommendations in the preparation of the final report for this European Year, which will be published by the European Commission.

European Commission's President Barroso announced the pursuit of this European Year in 2014 until the next European elections, notably saying: "The 2013 European year of citizens has been a success and many actions are relevant to participation in democracy and to inclusive participation in the shaping of EU policies."

Moreover, the European Commission intends to revise the standards on consultation procedures in 2014. On this aspect, EYCA is urging for an open, transparent and regular civil dialogue, which will consolidate article 11 of the Lisbon Treaty.

EYCA is honoured, but also challenged by the success of its actions. EYCA members need to be mobilised, in order to ensure the promotion of the recommendation in their own countries and among their members, to build a Europe based on solidarity, equality and democracy, because it is about our future, it is about Europe's future!

Doris Bingley represented NCW Malta and the European Centre of the International Council of Women

2013 European Year of Citizens Closing Meeting in Malta

The final major event of the European Year organised by MEUSAC was a Citizens' Fair at the Palace in Valletta on Saturday 23rd November. The Fair was targeting families, children and youths. A number of activities were organised and stands were set up by EU national contact points and other related entities to disseminate information on EU citizens' rights. There were special activities for children and it was also possible to visit the Palace State Rooms and the Chamber of the House of Representatives.

The event included a debate in the Chamber of the House between Members of Parliament, Members of the European Parliament and representatives of Civil Society. Mary Gaerty NCW President and Doris Bingley NCW Hon General Secretary participated in the debate on the various topics related to EU citizenship

The National Council of Women has been involved and represented in Malta and Europe in various debates and activities of 2013 EYC.

MEUSAC as the national contact point in Malta for the 2013 European Year of Citizens have endeavoured, through various initiatives, to engage with the public to make them more aware of what EU citizenship actually means. Surveys of public opinion carried out in Malta constantly indicate that the Maltese are well informed and knowledgeable. The Eurobarometer survey commissioned last June by the EP to gauge Europeans' opinion of the European project, the EU and the possibilities offered by the 2014 EP elections also highlights some interesting indicators.

NCW will be publishing the full report of the Final EYC 2013 conference on the website: www.ncwmalta.com

Doris Bingley



DIARY OF EVENTS

October

- 1st Commencement of Adult Education Courses at NCW Centre
- 2nd -3rd Doris Bingley and Diane Xuereb attended a consultation on Participatory Governance for the European Region organized by the Commonwealth Foundation in Larnaca, Cyprus.
- 2nd MITA Launch of the Only Girls Allowed initiative.
- 3rd Australian High Commissioner Reception in honour of the Council for Maltese Living abroad Mary Gaerty and Doris Bingley attended
- 5th MGG National Conference at the Coastline Hotel Mary Gaerty and Judith Debono attended
- 7th Keeping your Brain Healthy Talk by Dr Carmelo Aquilina at NCW centre
- 10th Business Breakfast, "The Economic Recovery-Overcoming the Crisis together Competitiveness Report and the business sector in Malta Mary Gaerty and Doris Bingley attended
- 11th Doris Bingley participated in a EESC meeting in Malta "Lessons from the Economic Crisis"
- 11th Go Somewhere over the Rainbow.as an Effective Presenter – an interactive workshop by Kathryn Mackenzie organized by NCW
- 15th The Hilda Schembri Memorial Lecture at the Pheonicia Hotel
- 17th YAYE Malta information session for Business Mentors Mary Gaerty attended
- 17th -20th ECICW Autumn General Assembly Autumn General Assembly was held in Monaco on the kind invitation of the Union des Femmes Monegasques Doris Bingley presided over the General Assembly and Nadyanne Mangion coordinated the well being meeting.
- 17th 'Care Orders' a consultation meeting with Minister Marie Louise Coleiro Preca, Mary Gaerty attended
- 18th Monitoring Committee Meeting Marie Demicoli attended
- 22nd ICT competences for better employability and workforce adaptability Launch of Project Doris Bingley and Marie Demicoli attended
- 23rd Doris Bingley participated in the MSES Council meeting when the Minister for the Family presented "LEAP &

- Family Resource Centre Project" Meeting re: Civil Society Funding at MEUSAC Doris Bingley attended
- Meeting re: Small Initiatives Scheme by Council for the Voluntary Sector Doris Bingley attended
- Executive Committee Meeting President Mary Gaerty invited to RTK programme Wicc imb wicc
- President Mary Gaerty invited to RTK programme Mizuri favor il-Familja
- Doris Bingley attended the MEUSAC consultation
- MCESD CSC were received by the Prime Minister. Doris Bingley attended.
- Irregular immigration left alone organized by the EP office in Malta
- The Economic Recovery Research and Innovation conference Mary Gaerty attended

November

- 1st Mass for the repose of the souls of past members at NCW centre
- 1st Mary Gaerty attended the launch of Green Economy and Green Jobs
- 4th President Mary Gaerty attended a meeting re Pensions presented By MCESD
- 4th President Mary Gaerty interviewed by Net television re Budget 2014
- 6th Men against Violence Meeting Marie Demicoli attended
- 7th President Mary Gaerty represented MCESD on a consultation
- Meeting with Minister Leo Brincat re Waste Management Strategy.
- 7th Citizens' Dialogue with Commissioner Tonio Borg Grace Attard, Tamara Gauci and
- 9th The Economic Recovery: Overcoming the Crises together Third seminar Education and employment Mary Gaerty was speaker
- 10th Jum it-tifkira Mary Gaerty and Doris Bingley attended
- 12th Farewell reception of Ambassador of Sweden Ulla Gudmundson at Hotel Phoenicia. Mary Gaerty attended
- 13th Department of Lifelong Learning meeting Doris Bingley and Marie Demicoli attended
- 14th Assemblea Generali Fergha Nisa Azzjoni Kattolika Mary Gaerty attended

- 15th Monitoring Committee Doris Bingley attended
- 20th Female Business Café Mary Gaerty attended Health Committee
- 23rd Fiera tac-Cittadini. Mary Gaerty and Doris Bingley participated in the dialogue in Parliament organized by MEUSAC, National contact point for EYC 2013.
- 25th MCESD CSC were received by The President of Malta HE Dr Abela. Doris Bingley attended. Launch of Men Against Violence Campaign at Parliament The Palace Valletta Doris Bingley and Marie Demicoli attended
- 26th Doris Bingley participated in the MCWO conference on Rape & the Istanbul Convention. Forum Nazzjonali Familja, preparation for a National Strategy. Doris Bingley participated.
- 29th Domestic Violence Fact & Figures Conference
- 30th Making the Next Step MCVS training programme at Dolman Hotel

December

- 3rd -10th Gimgha tal-Perusni B'Dizabilita
- Men Against Violence Meeting at NCW
- 4th A delegation from Turkey, Italy and Austria visit NCW Learning Centre
- Mrs Jane Wang wife of the Chinese Ambassador gives a presentation entitled "the Role of Women in China today" at NCW Centre
- 5th Malta Union of Midwives and Nurses conference on Female Genital Mutilation: The Challenges it brings. Mary Gaerty speaker and Doris Bingley participated.
- 6th National Council of Women Christmas Party at Don Berto Restaurant Vittoriosa Waterfront
- 9th Executive Committee
- 10th NCPE Press Conference Developing a Culture of rights through capacity building.
- 11th - 14th Final conference of the 2013 European Year of Citizens, Vilnius Lithuania with presentation of EYCA recommendations. Doris Bingley participated
- 17th MCESD CSC meeting with Leader of the Opposition the Hon Dr Simon Busuttil. Doris Bingley attended.
- 18th Central Committee Meeting
- 19th Civil Society Funds Presentation Nadyanne Mangion and Therese Cassola attended

FORTHCOMING EVENTS:

Annual General Meeting 25 January 2014 AGENDA

The Annual General Meeting will be held on Saturday 25 January 2014 at the Shakespeare Hall, Victoria Hotel, Gorg Borg Olivier Street, Sliema, (complimentary parking at the Victoria Hotel car park) with the following agenda:

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| <p>8.30 Registration & Coffee</p> <p>9.00 Opening prayers, Welcome and Notices.
Nomination of Tellers</p> <p>9.15 Minutes of the last General Meeting.</p> <p>9.25 President's Address.</p> <p>9.35 Annual Report by General Secretary</p> <p>9.50 Financial Report by Treasurer.</p> <p>10.00 Election of Vice-Presidents, Officers and Members of the Executive</p> <p>10.15 Reports of Standing and Sectional Committees.</p> <p>11.15 Results of Election</p> <p>11.40 Reaffirmation of Policy</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Female Entrepreneurship • A framework for the development of Social Economy in Malta • The role of men in addressing domestic violence • Humanising Birth (MMA) • Increasing Initiation and Duration of Breastfeeding Rates (MMA) <p>11. 11.55 – 13.10 Adoption of Resolutions. (5 mins each)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Child Pornography on the Internet (NCW) • Addressing the EU Directive on 40% representation of Women in Non-Executive positions (NCW) • Gender-Specific Medicine Is a Major Challenge of the Future (Health Committee) • Reform of Education Systems : Opening up Education (Education Committee) • Addressing issues of Undocumented Migrant Children (NCW) • Towards an Integration Policy for Malta (NCW) • Follow-up of the European Year of Citizens 2013 (NCW) • Educating the Consumer on Waste Management (Environment Committee) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Renewable Energy Resources (Environment Committee) • Medical Justification for the Legal Banning of Female Genital Mutilation (MMA) • Zero Tolerance To FGM [campaign and Education re: FGM] (MUMN) • National Sexual Assault Clinic (MUMN) • Perinatal Mental Health Services (MUMN) • Thejjija ghaz zwieg civili (Fergha Nisa Azzjoni Kattolika) <p>13.10 Correspondence. ICW, ECICW
Other Matters</p> <p>13.20 Concluding Address by President</p> <p style="text-align: right;">End of AGM
LUNCH</p> <p>Notes:
The full text of the resolutions will be available at the AGM.
The following are the posts on the Executive Committee to be filled by elections</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • President • 3 Vice Presidents, • General Secretary • Treasurer • 3 Executive members <p>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.</p> |
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Doris Bingley
Hon. General Secretary
National Council of Women Malta
10 December 2013

National Council of Women 50th Anniversary Celebrations

**Foreign delegates from the International Council of Women and European
Centre of the International Council of Women will
join us from 27th April to 4th May 2014
Keep these dates free**

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

HSBC

