



IWD Celebrations

AGM 2014



The Executive Committee 2014



Business Breakfast Meeting



NCW President Mary Gaerty and Doris Bingley invited by Jianquin Wang, wife of Chinese Ambassador Cai Jinbiao, on International Women's Day

Members of

ECICW NEWS

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 &
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Founded 1964

Il-Mara

NEWSLETTER OF THE NATIONAL COUNCIL OF WOMEN - MALTA

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EDITORIAL

Dear Readers

The National Council of Women is celebrating its 50th Anniversary this year. This goes well beyond the wildest dreams of the volunteers who gave birth to the organisation in 1964. We proudly look back on the milestones and successes of members who laid the foundations of NCW. The National Council of Women is very proud that, this year we also have a woman President of Malta -the second in Maltese history. Our heartfelt congratulations to H.E. Marie Louise Coleiro Preca, who has been a NCW member for many years.

The MEP elections are upon us and NCW has given the opportunity to all Maltese candidates to voice their inspirations during the successful Press Conference.

This issue of Il-Mara covers NCW's special annual event which is the backbone of our organisation – The Annual General Meeting and other interesting reports.

We are in full throttle, towards the 50th anniversary celebrations. Special events call for special actions – in our case a week full of activities. As a concession to nostalgia we thought of having an exhibition to acknowledge women's contribution to society.

Our back page features the list of forthcoming events, we hope you will be fully involved in the celebrations to mark the Council's 50th Anniversary, together with our distinguished speakers and foreign guests who are coming from different parts of the world.

We are very grateful to all those who contributed to all our initiatives, all the media outlets who are covering our events and dedicated publishers, but most of all a warm thank you to all our members and readers.

Marie Demicoli
NCW Editorial Board

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President's Message



Dear Colleagues and Friends,
Yes I am again here for another term of office! Thank you for the trust you have showed in me by electing me to be the president once more.

Since the last time I wrote my message, the Council, has been inundated with work, in preparation for the International Council of Women and European Centre of the International Council of Women meeting in Malta. No easy task especially since we desire that this would be a memorable meeting in Malta for the foreign visitors and the Maltese participants alike, both at the meetings but also at the several events that we have been preparing. The celebration of a 50th Anniversary is of significant value as this encompasses the hard work and travails of the persons who initiated the project, the dreams that eventually evolved into the Council as we know it today. Whenever anyone embarks on a project such as one that will be beneficial to so many women and consequently to society in general, one hopes that it will continue beyond his or her lifetime, but certainly this depends on the numerous milestones achieved year after year, as these can be compared to the sound and strong base of building blocks. The more robust the base, the longer the survival of the undertaking and for this we can only thank all the men and women who supported the Council throughout these years.

Speaking to a few young women during the various events that were organised both by the council but also by others,

including the government, I could not but be content at how fortunate these young women are today and how often everyday activities that were so burdensome in the not too distant past, have now become a right in our daily lives. Yet there is still a great deal that requires our attention and the young women that are now also part of the Council and the committees will ensure that the Council will maintain its steady work and contributions, and its survival for many more years. The Council has always been dynamic and continually refreshing itself and must continue to do so in the future. One aspect that the Council must strive for, is to never ignore its foundation and its principles and it must never avoid speaking up to uphold these moral ethics and values.

Soon after Women's Day, this year, the news that a woman was to occupy the country's highest position, was welcomed with great joy. H.E. Marie Louise Coleiro is not new to politics, nor a woman of words only but a person who acts and the Council augurs that there shall be future collaboration with the President regarding important projects.

I hope to see many of you at the forthcoming events to celebrate our anniversary. An all female composers concert will set the ball rolling for the eight day long activities, followed by the much awaited exhibition on women in the Maltese society but most important shall be the time spent in dialogue and discussion. It is through dialogue and discussion that ideas are shared and projects initiated, good practices assimilated and this for the benefit of the woman and society in general.

Wishing you all a bright spring!

**Mary Gaerty
President**



The National Council of Women Malta would like to express heartfelt congratulations to H.E. Marie Louise Coleiro Preca on becoming President of Malta. The people of Malta are sad to miss her dedication to the Ministry for the Family and Social Solidarity but being entrusted with the Presidency is sure to be a future success. In particular, we know that Her Excellency will exercise her office to pursue the common good, especially in care of the most vulnerable among us.

Free Childcare - A Welcome Initiative

The National Council of Women (NCW) welcomes the announcement by Education Minister Evarist Bartolo, that free childcare shall start being offered as of April this year. This will enable mothers and (fathers) who are working or studying, to avail themselves of free childcare. The aim behind this initiative has always been to offer a solution to women (and men) who are caring for their children, the possibility of entering or continuing their participation in

the labour market. Free childcare is an important factor to those parents who are in the lower income bracket, since otherwise most of the wage would have to be forked out to pay for the childcare. NCW however stresses that free childcare should be available throughout the year so that those parents in employment may continue working without any hiccups.

As NCW has already intimated, quality childcare is of utmost importance and as the Minister

mentioned, the children should be given an educational experience during the period of attendance. Childcare centres should be a place where a child is given the necessary attention by a trained caregiver, thus promoting optimal care that will enhance the child's development and making the time spent at the centre a beneficial one to both the parent and the child.

Mary Gaerty, President

The National Council of Women

Malta's EU membership process was an exciting time - a time of involvement and commitment for NCW. The accession process which in its last phase dates back to early 2000 required our full participation and careful study of a wide range of topics of the *acquis communautaire* and of the implications of EU membership from different perspectives.

At that time, with the setting up of MEUSAC as a consultation forum for all stakeholders, including civil society representatives, NCW participated in the consultation sessions regularly, submitting strong proposals not only on gender equality but on many other themes including the development of the Maltese economy, employment, social welfare, the environment, energy, consumer rights, education, and the role of NGOs in 'participative democracy' among others.

During this time, NCW organised a number of familiarisation visits for groups of women from all walks of life, in collaboration with Dr Leonard Mizzi, the then head of the Malta Business Bureau in Brussels. The visits gave us an excellent opportunity to meet representatives of the EU Commission to discuss the different roles of the EU Institutions and most important of all to discuss Malta's compliance with EU legislation and the relevant measures to be put in place and the impact of the changes on Maltese society.

One of our most outstanding experiences was our regular meetings with women's organizations in different EU and the nine other candidate countries seeking EU



membership. NCW organised these meetings in collaboration with the European Women's Lobby (EWL) and were a source of networking and sharing of experience on issues regarding gender equality legislation, violence against women, family friendly measures, non-discrimination at the workplace, the negative stereotype representation of women in the media and in advertising and work-life balance among others, which NCW had, since its been advocating for many years.

NCW is still working with the EWL and has widened its experience reaching out to women in the Euromed region, and putting in place the necessary measures to ensure equal participation between men and women in political and economic decision-making, according to relevant directives that over the years were introduced. The issue of domestic violence was and still is one of the most crucial topics to be discussed, with the latest developments culminating in the Council of Europe Convention on Violence against Women and the subsequent European Agency for Fundamental Rights (FRA) Survey which was the first of its kind to present indicators on violence against women in Europe. In fact, it was NCW who way back in 1973 created public awareness of this issue, making it no longer a private family matter but a societal matter that paved the way for Malta's Domestic Violence legislation and the recognition of shelters for women suffering from violence.

The years 2003-2004 were very active, as we approached the Referendum date on EU Membership. NCW knew from first hand experience the importance of EU membership and Malta's a crucial decision to join the

EU. NCW again took a leading role in bringing together NGOs working in the field of gender equality to study the draft legislation on gender equality and violence against women to ensure the protection of women, prevention measures and the eliminate of violence in the home, at the workplace and in society, including the setting up of a national Commission for the elimination of Violence against Women. However, there is still more that needs to be done.

Over the years, NCW developed its own public relations not only through its quarterly newsletter and its regular column in the Sunday Times 'News and Views' as well as articles and press releases in the media, discussion participation in programs on radio and TV, public conferences and seminars, but also in more recent times setting up its own website and making full use of social media, facebook etc. At its Annual General Assembly members voted for resolutions which were then submitted to different authorities including government, the Police Force and members of the judiciary, employers representatives and Trade Unions.

NCW's commitment to set up a Centre for the education of women and the public has always been a priority. However, this was only possible if we had adequate premises to carry out our work efficiently. The acquisition of the vacated apartment next to our Centre at Blata l-Bajda was an immense opportunity to make our 'dream' come true; but it required all our efforts to raise the necessary funds to purchase it and equip the Centre with the necessary



Vania Ivanova, EU commission, EESC President Henri Malosse and Grace Attard EESC member recalling their first meeting together in Malta in 2003



NCW Delegation with The Hon. Astrid Lulling

10 years of Malta's EU Membership

infrastructure including a children's play area. For a number of years, NCW has become a Centre of learning, a hub for empowerment courses for women, for women who want to improve their qualifications and skills to enter the labour market. Through Lifelong Learning Programmes, NCW has reached so many adults, the second important pillar of the Council - running courses for the development of IT skills at all levels, for both men and women and for basic English, Maltese and Mathematics courses in line with the Malta Qualifications Framework

One of the major contributions of our Council was a research study in collaboration with the Department of Early education, University of Malta on childcare, followed by proposals to introduce childcare facilities, through a legal framework and implementation measures that would provide for the necessary training for carers and standards of centres to ensure a holistic approach to the development of children up to compulsory school age. The next steps were the extending afterschool services to match the working time of both parents, still in the process today.

More recently NCW has been working with the Commission by participating in a number of projects - one of the most important being female entrepreneurship and ensuring

that the Malta Small Business Act reflects the gender dimension, so that women can have the necessary technical assistance, mentoring programs and access to funds to start their own business. Other areas we have been working on with our EU counterparts are pension systems, precarious work, the contribution of women to the economy and more recently the impact of the financial crisis

The recognition of the value of civil society though structured consultation, one of the areas that NCW has been working on for over 12 years was confirmed with the MCESD Civil Society Legislation and the Voluntary Organisations legislation - for NCW these were crucial for participative democracy, a core concept of the EU Treaties to become a reality. With EU membership, Civil Society was able to participate at EU level in the European Economic and Social Committee (EESC) and for NCW it was indeed another milestone as one of its Presidents was elected to this Committee. NCW had been working closely with the EESC back in 2000 ; in fact it was NCW that in 2003 had invited representatives of the EESC to a Conference for the general public to better understand how participative democracy works. The EESC is an EU Committee set up by European Treaties, that brings together

representatives of employers, Trade Unions and NGOs from all EU member states. It paves the way for decisions to be taken in Parliament and in the Council. Today NCW still represents civil society on this EU committee. Together with the two Maltese representatives of Employers and two representatives of Trade Unions, the Maltese delegation contribute to the shaping of EU legislation and practical implementation, ensuring the Maltese perspective is incorporated through collaboration with our counterparts in Europe who together provide the necessary strength to ensure that Malta's voice is taken on board

This month NCW is celebrating its 50th anniversary (1964) - a month full of events and activities together with the International Council of Women (ICW) and the European Centre of the International Council of Women (ECICW). NCW has been involved in organising public hearings and seminars to create awareness of the importance National and EU Parliamentary elections to ensure that citizens will be in a position to make informed choices, to share their expectations and ideas with Maltese candidates and to ensure that elected MEPs will safeguard European values and at the same time work in the interest of Malta, an island on the periphery of the EU with its own specific needs. Working with European and Mediterranean countries and strengthening our position within a strong group of countries can result in better outcomes to the advantage of our island

NCW's commitment to society has always been strong. Over the years, different NCW Presidents, Executive Committee members and sub-committee members together with representatives of the affiliated organisations (38 in all) have moved on with the times, understanding and addressing the changing needs of society, not only as an EU member state, but indeed within the global context that is continually shaping the life of Maltese citizens

Grace Attard, NCW Vice-President, EESC member

AMIE Project - Increasing Women Entrepreneurs



The National Council of Women launches its 50th Anniversary Celebrations

The NCW Annual General Meeting was held on Saturday 25th January, 2014 at the Victoria Hotel, Sliema which officially launched the year of activities for 2014, celebrating the Council's 50th Anniversary. In her opening address, NCW President Mary Gaerty spoke about the Council's involvement and the ever increasing work of the past year, highlighting the various well attended seminars organised by the Council throughout the year. She emphasised the need for more women to support women, in political posts, with special reference to those contesting the coming MEP elections in May 2014. Over 50% of the Maltese population are women and this should also be reflected in National Parliament and in the forthcoming EP Elections.

The President also stressed the importance of Lifelong Learning for women, who are seeking to enter the labour market, as it is becoming increasingly difficult for women over 45 years of age. Distance learning could be an option to assist women and men who are at home caring for children, those with special needs and the elderly. Education is an essential tool both for personal growth and for acquiring employability.

In its reaffirmation of previous resolutions, NCW highlighted: Policies on Female Entrepreneurship; The development

of Social Economy in Malta, The Role of Men in Addressing Domestic Violence, Humanising Birth and Increasing Initiation and Duration of Breastfeeding Rates. The Council also adopted a number of resolutions relating to National and Regional Challenges. These include The Situation of Women in the Euromed; Child Pornography on the Internet; Addressing the EU Directive on 40% representation of Women in Non-Executive Positions; Gender Specific Medicine - a Major Challenge of the Future; Reform of Education Systems : Opening up Education; Addressing issues of Undocumented Migrant Children; Irregular Migration in the Euromed Region; Follow-up of the European Year of Citizens 2013; Educating the Consumer on Waste Management and Renewable Energy Resources; Eliminating Female Genital Mutilation; Campaign - Zero Tolerance to Female Genital Mutilation, A more sensitive National Sexual Assault Clinic and Perinatal Mental Health Services.

NCW also officially opened the year of activities to celebrate its 50th Anniversary. Finally the assembly approved to bestow Honourary Life Membership on Mrs Margaret Abela, wife of His Excellency, President George Abela.

The members of the 2014 Executive Committee are President Mary Gaerty,



Vice-presidents Grace Attard, Lara Tonna, Pauline Azzopardi, Hon General Secretary Doris Bingley, Hon Treasurer Nadyanne Mangion, Legal Advisor Dr Claudine Zarb and members Vivien Cassar, Dr Roselyn Knight, Mary Rose Zahra, Tamara Gauci, Therese Cassola, Isabelle Camilleri, Doreen Micallef, Mercedes Schembri Wismayer and Judith Debono.

NCW was very pleased to welcome Ms. Wendy Richardson at the AGM. Ms. Richardson is NCW Hon Life Member and has been responsible for the organization and programme of the summer courses held in the Lake District for talented young Maltese musicians, winners of the NCW Bice Mizzi Vassallo Music Competition for many years.

Mary Gaerty
NCW President

WOMEN'S ART

An all female art exhibition focusing on bringing women together in celebration of their art for Women's Day was held at the Cavalieri Art Hotel St Julians. Six female artists took part and their work varied from paintings to ceramics. The artists were Adele Borg, Anna Verbenets, Dorianne Camillieri, Madeleine Vella, Nadyanne Mangion and Naomi Gatt.

Nadya Anne Mangion who is an Executive Member of the National Council of Women was one of the artists that took part in this exhibition. She was born in Mtarfa in January 1967, Nadya studied drawing and painting from a very young age, later going on to the School of Art, Valletta where she was tutored by the late Joseph Casha for a number of years.

In 2005 Nadya attended a pottery throwing and turning course at the Institute of Art and Design Mosta under George Muscat. It was through George Muscat that she was introduced to Raku

pottery and firing.

Raku is a Japanese word which may be freely interpreted as enjoyment. This type of pottery was first produced in 1580 in Japan to produce tea bowls for the tea drinking ceremonies. Raku tea bowls are never thrown on a wheel and are always handmade. This is extremely important when it comes to tea ceremonies as the spirit and personality of the potter are more intimately conveyed to and shared with the person who drinks from these bowls.

"Pots are some of the very earliest artefacts created, and the span of our cultures can be traced through bowls and vases, dishes and beakers; made, glazed and decorated with expression and vigour. These pots show the movement of clay, where markings into the surface when it was still wet reveal the hand of the potter who created them. The Raku technique allows me to create pieces which reflect the mood of the moment - organic in form, even abstract at times. The pieces are not perfect or symmetrical, making them unique."

Raku is a low-fired glazed pottery which involves putting the pots into and taking them out of the red-hot kiln. Raku is a perfect combination of the four elements earth, fire, air and water. Earth

is the provider of clay which after moulding is fired. The firing process, together with the immersion into combustible material, allow control of the air and oxygen reaching the glazes used. By manipulating the cooling cycle, the process of chemical reduction of the metals in the glazes creates effects in the variation of colour. A final quenching of the hot pieces with water produces a crackled effect to the surface.

Collective exhibition "The Spirit of Raku" Gallery Last Touch, Mosta - Nov/Dec 2011.

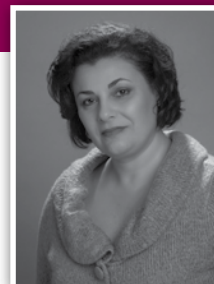
Collective exhibition: Il-Bottegin ta' San Martin, Valletta - Apr 2012

Collective exhibition: "Ir-Rotta ta' l-Arti", Blata l-Bajda - Sept 2012

Collective exhibition: "Awareness through Art" Victoria Gozo - Oct 2013

Collective exhibition: "Women's Art" Cavalieri Art - March 2014

Nadyanne reveals her unique talent in ceramics in creative art that is sensitive and colourful, bringing to life her work in an extraordinary manner



The 58th session of the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW58) 10-21 March 2014



The 58th session of the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW58) – the annual gathering of States to address critical issues related to gender equality and women's rights focused on **“Challenges and achievements in the implementation of the Millennium Development Goals for women and girls”**.

More than 6000 representatives from 860 civil society organizations were registered for CSW58. Nearly 135 events have been organized by UN agencies at UN Headquarters in New York, alongside the official meetings of the Commission, as well as more than 300 parallel events hosted by the NGO community close to the UN premises.

The International Council of Women (ICW-CIF) had an event on Friday 14th March 10.30 a.m. at the Boss Room, 8th Floor, UN Church Centre with the theme: **“Caring for Women is Caring for the World: The challenges pre and post 2015.”**

The event focused on the CSW58 main Topic using the ICW-CIF 2012-15 Theme, “Caring for Women is Caring for the World,” as the framework. The presentations focused on the Millennium Development Goals – the challenges and what has been achieved and on post 2015 including the Sustainable Development Goals. Keynote presenters were, Lopa Bangere and Celine Paramundayil with Moderator, Monica Tolman. ICW-CIF also co-sponsored and was

involved in a number of parallel events among them: NCW Taiwan on “Good Practices of Achieving MDGs”, NCW USA on “Innovation: Global Solutions for millennium Development Goals to “Improve and empower the lives of women and girls” and the Korean NCW on “Gender Equality and Empowerment of Women in the Asia- Pacific Region”,

The Millennium Development Goals have sought to: eradicate extreme poverty and hunger (Goal 1); achieve universal primary education (Goal 2); promote gender equality and empower women (Goal 3); reduce child mortality (Goal 4); improve maternal health (Goal 5); combat HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases (Goal 6); ensure environmental sustainability (Goal 7); and develop a global partnership for development (Goal 8). They include 21 targets with 60 indicators.

Though improvements have been made towards gender equality and women's empowerment, overall progress for women and girls has fallen short of expectations as not all countries managed to achieve gender equality objectives.

According to the Secretary-General's report for CSW on the issue, while the Millennium Development Goals capture some important aspects of gender equality, the targets are narrow and misaligned from the full spectrum of women's and girls' rights set out in key global agreements.

Important dimensions of gender inequality were omitted in the Goals, such as unpaid care work, violence against women and girls, sexual and reproductive health and rights, women's access to assets, the gender wage gap and women's equal participation at all levels of decision-making.

We all know that investments in women's health and education would lead to economic development. Do women enjoy economic and political power equal to men in all Countries?

We know that in many nations a new generation of women are exercising greater control over their social and economic lives. Unfortunately, however, such progress toward gender equality is not universal. We have seen reports that one in three women worldwide have experienced physical and/or sexual abuse.

Also contributing to gender inequality is the number of child marriages in certain societies and cultures as these girls will miss opportunities for education and personal growth that would open doors for them in both society and the workforce. We know that nations who have gender equality policies show great progress in their economies and quality of life for their people. Opportunities must be offered to the poorest groups and marginalised people. Offering equal opportunities, embracing gender equality in all policies would enhance the role of women in our societies.

NCW MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL

We would like to thank all our members for their support throughout these past 50 years and without whom NCW would not have been so fruitful in its contribution towards civil society. Therefore, we would like to remind our members who have inadvertently forgotten to pay their yearly membership to kindly do so as soon as possible.

Membership fee: €12 p.a. Life Membership fee: €95

Your MEP: The Voice of



NCW President Mary Gaerty welcomed the Maltese candidates for the forthcoming European Parliament elections, members of the press and guests for accepting the invitation by the National Council of Women in collaboration with the European Economic and Social Committee (EESC) to share their views and aspirations for the forthcoming EP elections.

Just over a year ago, NCW was showcasing female candidates for the General Elections. However, NCW believes in equality as well as in gender balance so both male and female candidates were invited for this conference. The President remarked that the Council would be happy to have a 50-50 male-female representation in the national parliament as the newly elected Prime Minister Matteo Renzi, has opted for the Italian government.

In addressing the candidates, the President pointed out that guests would like to hear about the different fields of expertise, the particular sectors that Maltese candidates would wish to contribute to, their aspirations and objectives as to why they believe that their presence in such an institution as the European Parliament, can make a difference for Europe and for Malta, as the voice of civil society, the voice of all citizens and that their presence there will reassure Maltese citizens that they are well represented.

The President referred to the financial crisis that has made us all realise the value of work, the need to create new jobs. 'We would like to hear your opinion on job creation, the mobility of workers from one country to another seeking better pay or just a different way of

life, how people look at these job take ups and third country immigrants as workers'

In conclusion, NCW President stated that all look forward to a United Europe, in the hope that together we will be able to build a Europe of values, a Europe that can address the needs of the most vulnerable; a Europe that the next five years and beyond will lead us into a global playing field where we, Maltese, although a small island can reach our aspirations

EESC member Grace Attard spoke about the role of the European Economic and Social Committee (EESC), established over 50 years ago, by the Treaty, through which it is mandatory for the EU Commission to consult the EESC on matters that the EU Commission issues – whether they are communications, directives or regulations. The work of the EESC brings together employers representatives, workers representatives and groups of varied interests representing the various sectors of society, youth, the elderly, professionals, farmers, women, SMEs, the social economy, environmentalists,



consumers' representatives and many others from all Member States. It also prepares own-initiative opinions or exploratory opinions on matters that have not received enough attention or no attention at all. It is not surprising that the EESC is **'The bridge between the EU Institutions and Civil Society'**.

Grace Attard spoke about the spirit of 'consensus' that underlines decision-making through the different study groups, although this is not always easy. What is most important is that the opinions and reports of the EESC pave the way for decisions to be taken by Parliament or Council, as they offer positions that have been agreed upon by all sectors of society and this makes it clearer and easier in which direction decisions need to be taken. She finally appealed to Parliament to reconsider the number of Maltese EESC members which is currently five, to be extended to six as a minimum number, which will allow the Maltese members to cope better with all their duties as members of the EESC.

In all, 17 candidates, Prof Arnold Cassola, Mr Carmel Cacopardo, Prof Lino Bianco, Mr Mario Farrugia Borg, Mr Peter Cordina, Dr Miriam Dalli,



Civil Society in Europe

Mr Cyrus Engerer, Mrs Marlene Mizzi, Dr Alfred Sant, Dr Theresa Comodini Cachia, Mr Kevin Cutajar, Mrs Helga Ellul, Mr Stefano Mallia, Mr Kevin Plumptre, Mr Joanthan Shaw, Mr Norman Vella and Dr Francis Zammit Dimech, from all three political parties participated in the Press Conference, which was coordinated by Malcolm J. Naudi, Managing Director, Malcolm J. Naudi Communications and FranklinCovey (Malta) Limited. The following questions served as the basis for the first part of the Conference:

- Why did you decide to contest these elections?
- In which sectors do you think you can contribute most?
- What will be the added value for Maltese citizens and Malta if you are elected?

Each candidate made a brief intervention about their aims focusing on the following wide range of areas - from migration, foreign affairs, quality of work, the creation of jobs, human rights, the value of sports, the growing importance of civil society in



Maltese national and a European citizen and how this can work. Interventions from the floor asked about representation of foreigners living in Malta, the right of elderly persons to work and to remain active and intergenerational cooperation, adequate pensions; the introduction of a minimum wage among others

'A Europe of Nations' was the theme that took up the end part of the discussion, including European values such as accepting diversity, gender, minorities, the disabled, respecting the views of others and reaching consensus in highly contentious matters

Grace Attard concluded by referring to the initiatives of the EESC to encourage citizens to make use of their right to vote; in fact this event was part of the 'Going Local' events that the EESC Communication Group has launched to further inform citizens in all member states of 'A Europe we all wish to see'

In conclusion, Dr Peter Agius, Head of the European Parliamentary Office in Malta gave an overview of the initiatives the Office is taking during this very important period before the forthcoming EP elections praising all the different sectors of Maltese society, who are taking the initiative to make use of Ewropa House by organising different events to ensure there is an informed debate about the European Union – which we all look at as a Europe of values in the near future

NCW President augured success to all candidates and thanked all those present for a lively and mature debate

Grace Attard

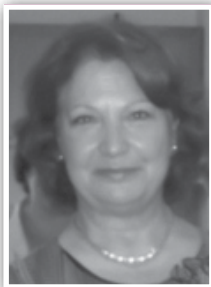
NCW Vice President EESC Bureau Member

a structured consultation process and decision-making at all levels, addressing the needs of vulnerable groups, the importance of a macro regional strategy for the Mediterranean region and not least the social dimension in addressing the financial crisis. Emphasis was given to the importance that all MEPs of different parties should work as a team, focusing on solutions, accountability and transparency and the strengthening value

During the lively interactive discussion and questions from the floor a number of issues and questions were addressed. One of the most important issues which kept coming up again and again in the course of the discussion related to situations where a decision needs to be taken reflecting the national interest versus overall EU position and how the future MEPs would deal with it. In the course of the cross interventions most of the candidates tried to come up with an adequate definition of 'national interest' which however was quite controversial, in particular when it came to positions such as the financial transactions tax, increase in maternity leave among others

Other issues raised were the question of being a





Women - building block of society

It was on March 8th, 1975 that the United Nations (UN) began celebrating International Women's Day, each year with a theme relevant to the situation of women in the world and to the respective country. This year the theme chosen by the UN is 'Equality for Women is Progress for All'

For The National Council of Women, this year is a special one, as it celebrates its 50th Anniversary of work for the advancement of women. The Women's Council was set up 50 years ago by formidable women who understood that women had more worth and more capabilities, as well as more rights than were attributed to them. The theme for NCW's anniversary year is **'Women - Building Blocks of Society'**. Each year women gain more rights and therefore more responsibilities, in the family, at the workplace and in society.

One cannot say however that all has been achieved, and although for many countries women have achieved more rights, violence against women is still present in many forms. Domestic violence seems to have increased in recent years, perhaps due to the crisis that families and individuals are facing, but violence can never be an answer to solve a problem or as a means of venting one's anger and frustration especially on the more

vulnerable. New forms of violence seem to appear from time to time and a more recent one that is causing concern in Malta and in Europe, is Female Genital Mutilation, a barbaric act performed on young girls who are then scarred for life.

Rape, murders, sexual abuse, child marriages, forced marriages are in the news every day and not only in developing or third world countries but also in Europe. Violence and abuse can no longer be a woman's issue, it is a man's issue too because men have mothers, partners, wives, daughters, sisters and granddaughters. All of them could be possible victims, therefore men must be roped in this fight against all form of violence, men must speak up as well and condone the perpetrators.

Although abortion is seen to be in many countries, as a woman's right, it can also be deemed to be a violence against herself, a lifelong pain of having destroyed a potential human being, that was even a part of herself even if for a short time. Women have obtained many rights but this so-called right is definitely not their own.

Women are indeed the building blocks of society and governments around the world have realised this especially during difficult times, such as wars and more recently during the financial crisis. Women rose to meet the challenges through work creation for themselves and others and this can be seen through the increased number of women entrepreneurs throughout

Europe. Women are also finally starting to break the glass ceiling and achieve posts in management, albeit at a slow pace. This could also be due to the 40% gender balance directive proposed by Commissioner Reding.

Female entrepreneurship must be given more prominence, as there are many women who just need the right support to kickstart a business. Young women need role models and families need a culture change in order to realise that women also need the support to embark on a political, business or professional career. Women should also be given every opportunity to work, if they wish to follow a career and NCW is certain that the introduction of free childcare centers will be an incentive for more women to join the labour market or to study. Sharing of responsibilities between men and women will provide so many opportunities for a strong and dynamic relationship which will result in building meaningful family relationships, that we all wish for in our society. Education on the other hand not only educates the woman herself but it is known that educating the woman is educating the family and a nation, in turn opening up opportunities not only for work but also as a contributor to society.

Gender equality is more than a goal in itself. It is a precondition for meeting the challenge of reducing poverty, promoting sustainable development and building good governance (Kofi Annan)

Inqas Drittijiet u Ġudizzju Aħjar?

Il-Kunsill Nazzjonali tan-Nisa (KNN) qed josserva mill-qrib l-iżviluppi tal-abbozz ta' liġi li l-Gvern Spanjol ippreżenta fl-20 ta' Diċembru 2013, li tirristringi d-dritt għall-abort għal każijiet ta' stupru u każijiet fejn it-tqala tista' tikkawża riskju serju għas-saħħa fiżika u dik mentali tal-omm. Protesti kontra dan l-abbozz tal-liġi huma ppjanati tul il-ġimgħa kollha, u li se jibdw mis-27 ta' Jannar, bl-organizzazzjoni

EWL tgħid li din ir-restrizzjoni tefgħet id-drittijiet tan-nisa tletin sena lura.

Il-Kunsill Nazzjonali tan-Nisa ta' Malta ġie ukoll mistieden biex jagħti appoġġ lin-nisa Spanjoli li huma favur dan l-abbozz, imma għalkemm il-KNN huwa fuq quddiem fil-promozzjoni tal-ugwaljanza bejn is-sessi, ma temminx li l-abort huwa dritt ta' għażla tal-mara imma dritt tat-tarbija fil-ġuf li tgħix u li ma tiġix abortita. Tappoġġja bis-siġħ lin-nisa li

huma favur il-ħajja u kontra l-abort, u temmen illi dan l-appoġġ ġdid li qed jintwera favur it-tarbija fil-ġuf qed ikompli jikber u jissahħaħ. Il-KNN ihegġeġ lin-nisa u irġiel Maltin biex jiddefendu il-ħajja. In-nisa Maltin ma jhossux li huma għandhom drittijiet inqas min-nisa ewropej għaliex l-abort ma huwiex permess skond il-liġi, f'Malta, imma jhossuhom fiċ-ċert li huma għamlu ġudizzju aħjar.



ALERT COMMUNICATIONS IS A ONE-STOP-SHOP OFFERING
WEB DESIGN & MULTIMEDIA DEVELOPMENT,
SOFTWARE DEVELOPMENT, SERVER CO-LOCATION
& HOSTING, SEARCH ENGINE OPTIMISATION & MARKETING
AND ONLINE PAYMENT MANAGEMENT.

Gender equality: EU action triggers steady progress

In 2013 the European Commission continued taking action to improve equality between women and men, including steps to close the gender gaps in employment, pay and pensions discrepancies, to combat violence and to promote equality in decision-making. Efforts are paying off: concrete progress has been made in the area of addressing the gender pay gap – notably through an initiative by the Commission to improve pay transparency (IP/14/222) – or increasing the number of women on company boards (see Annex). These are the main findings of the Commission's annual gender equality report published today along with the annual report on fundamental rights (see IP/14/422). But challenges remain: under current rates of progress, it will take almost 30 years to reach the EU's target of 75% of women in employment, 70 years to make equal pay a reality and 20 years to achieve parity in national parliaments (at least 40% of each gender).

"Europe has been promoting gender equality since 1957 – it is part of the European Union's 'DNA'. And the economic crisis has not changed our DNA," said Vice-President Viviane Reding, the EU's Justice Commissioner. "For us Europeans gender equality is not an option, it is not a luxury, it is an imperative. We can be proud of what Europe has achieved in recent years. Gender equality is not a distant dream but increasingly a European reality. I am convinced that together we can close the remaining gaps in pay, employment and decision-making jobs."

The annual gender equality report reveals that gender gaps have significantly shrunk in recent years but that progress is uneven among the Member States and discrepancies continue to exist in different areas – to the detriment of Europe's economy.

EU action accelerates progress towards gender equality

Increasing the employment rate of women: women's employment rate in the EU has increased to 63% from 58% in 2002. EU funding has helped: in the 2007-2013 financing period, an estimated EUR 3.2 billion from the Structural Funds was allocated to invest in childcare facilities and promote women's participation in the labour market, which had a significant leverage effect (see Annex).

Reducing the pay gap which still stagnates at 16.4% Europe-wide: the European Commission stepped up its efforts by raising awareness about the remaining gender pay gap, marking a European Equal Pay Day (IP/14/190) and monitoring the application of legislation on equal treatment of women and men (IP/13/1227). The Commission also pushed for further progress in March 2014 recommending to Member States to improve pay transparency and thus tackle the pay gap (IP/14/222).

Cracking the glass ceiling: the Commission's proposal for a Directive to have 40% of the under-represented sex among non-executive board directors by 2020 made good progress in the legislative process and received strong endorsement by the European Parliament in November 2013 (IP/13/1118). As a result, there has been a continuous increase in the number of women on boards ever since the Commission announced the possibility of legislative action in October 2010: from 11% in 2010 to 17.8% in 2014; the rate of progress has been 4 times higher than between 2003 and 2010 (see Annex).

In 2013, the EU took action to **protect women and girls from gender-based violence** through legislation, practical measures on victims' rights and a comprehensive policy package against female-genital mutilation (IP/13/1153). It also co-funded 14 national government campaigns against gender-based violence (with EUR 3.7 million), as well as projects led by non-governmental organisations (with EUR 11.4 million).

Childcare: Since 2007, the proportion of children cared for in formal childcare facilities significantly increased (from 26% in 2007 to 30% in 2011 for children under three years old, and from 81% to 86% for children between three and compulsory school age (IP/13/495). The Commission adopted a comprehensive report in 2013 on the attainment of the "Barcelona targets" on **provision of childcare**.

What challenges remain?

Despite having 60% of university graduates being women, **they are still paid 16% less than men per hour of work**. In addition, they are more likely to work part-time (32% vs 8.2% of men who work part-time) and

to interrupt their careers to care for others. **As a result, the gender gap in pensions stands at 39%.** Widows and single parents — mainly mothers — are a particularly vulnerable group, and **more than a third of single parents have insufficient income**.

Although women's **employment rate has increased, it still stands at 63% against 75% for men**. This is mainly the result of the economic crisis which has seen men's employment situation worsening.

Women still bear the brunt of unpaid work within the household and family. **Women spend on average 26 hours a week on care and household activities, compared with 9 hours for men.**

Women are still less likely to hold senior positions. They account for an average of **17.8% of the members of boards of directors in the largest publicly-listed companies**, 2.8% of the Chief Executive Officers, 27% of senior government ministers, and 27% of members of national parliaments.

The results of the first EU wide survey on violence against women, carried out by the European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights (FRA) and based on interviews with 42,000 women show that **one in three women (33%) has experienced physical and/or sexual violence** since the age of 15.

Background

The report published today provides an overview of the main EU policy and legal developments in gender equality during the last year, as well as examples of policies and actions in Member States. It also analyses recent trends, on the basis of scientific evidence and key indicators that shape the debate on gender equality, and includes a statistical annex with more details on national performances.

The report is structured around the five priorities of the European Commission's Strategy for equality between women and men 2010-2015: equal economic independence; equal pay for equal work and work of equal value; equality in decision-making; dignity, integrity and ending gender-based violence, gender equality in external action policy, and horizontal issues.

Violence against women across the EU Abuse at home, work, in public and online European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights (FRA)



The survey is based on interviews with 42,000 women from across the 28 Member States of the EU. It reveals that violence against women and more particularly gender-based violence disproportionately affects women, families, friends and society as a whole.

The survey asked women about their experiences of physical, sexual and psychological violence, including incidents of intimate partner violence (domestic violence) and also asked about stalking, including through internet and mobile messages, sexual harassment, violence in childhood and fear of victimisation

The survey findings reveal that violence against women is an extensive but widely under-reported human rights abuse across the EU.

Overall extent and nature of violence against women including intimate partner violence.

About 8% of women have experienced physical and /or sexual violence in the last 12 months before the survey interview and one in three women has experienced some form of physical and /or sexual assault since the age of 15

One in 10 women has experienced some form of sexual violence since the age of 15, and one in 20 women have been raped since the age of 15. Of those women in the survey who say they have experienced sexual violence

since the age of 15, almost one in 10 indicate that more than one perpetrator was involved in the most serious incident

Of women who have been in a relationship with a man, 22% have experienced physical and/or sexual violence

Of women in the survey who indicate they have been raped by their current partner, about one third (31%) say they have experienced six or more incidents of rape by their partner. Many have experienced several incidents of marital rape. Evidence shows that a significant number of women continue to be vulnerable in the aftermath of violent relationships. The survey results also show a relationship between a woman's partner's heavy alcohol abuse and increased violence. The findings show that repeat victimisation on many women's lives is a particular characteristic of intimate partner violence

Consequences of physical and sexual violence against women including intimate partner violence

reporting rates of incidents of violence against women to the police and other services are low (between one in three and one in four). Women experience several incidents of abuse by a partner before they decide to report, whereas non-partner violence reporting is more likely. In particular the findings reveal the victim's lack of satisfaction with the police. The survey indicates that pregnant women are vulnerable to violence. The survey shows that 87% of women would find it acceptable if doctors routinely ask about violence if patients exhibit certain injuries

Compared to the number of women who contacted healthcare services as a result of violence, few women contacted victim support organisations or women's shelters. About one in four victims of sexual

assault by either a partner or a non-partner did not contact the police or any other organisation after a most serious incident because of feelings of shame and embarrassment

Psychological partner violence against women

Psychological violence by partner is widespread. The survey results show that two in five women (43%) have experienced some form of psychological violence, either by a current or a previous partner. 25% have been belittled, 14% whose partner has threatened to hurt them physically and 5% whose partner has forbidden them to leave the house or locked them up or taken away their car keys. Employers and Trade Unions should consider adopting awareness raising and related training activities for responsible personnel to help them identify and respond to the needs of employees suffering from psychologically controlling behaviour by partner

Experience of stalking

The findings show that one in five women have experienced some form of stalking since the age of 15. However one in four stalking cases reported in the survey never came to the attention of the police.

Internet and the social media

Of victims of stalking 23% indicate in the survey that they had to change their email address or phone number in response to the most serious incidents. The police need to investigate where cyberstalking plays a role

Vulnerabilities of professional women alongside other women

Between 64% and 75% of women in a professional capacity or in top management jobs have experienced sexual harassment in their lifetime. One in 10 women have experienced inappropriate advances on social websites or have been subjected to emails or text

messages (SMS), young women in particular.

Experiences of violence in childhood

The scale of childhood abuse and under-reporting

Just over one in 10 women (12%) has experienced some form of sexual abuse or incident by an adult before the age of 15. Some 27% of women have experienced some form of physical abuse in childhood before the age of 15 at the hands of an adult. In 97% of cases of sexual violence in childhood the perpetrator was male whereas in cases of physical violence only slightly more cases were attributed to men than to women

Ways forward

The study presents the EU and Member states with the most comprehensive EU-wide dataset on violence against women which can serve to inform policy responses and action based on the evidence of the findings themselves.

The **European Parliamentary Research Service (EPRS)** provided the most recent studies carried out, following an earlier publication in June 2013. A summary of the key points of the **CoE Convention on preventing and combating violence**

against women and domestic violence (Istanbul Convention) was also highlighted during the Conference. So far only 4 Member States have ratified the Convention. It requires the ratification of at least 10 member states before it can come into force, after the necessary amendments are made in national laws in harmony with the Convention. However, reservations on the most sensitive aspects of the Convention by Member States can reduce the overall impact of the Convention.

The CoE Convention is the first European legally-binding instrument devoted to violence against women. The Istanbul Convention recognises female genital mutilation (FGM) as a form of violence. Sanctions need to be effective, proportionate and dissuasive. Justification of the basis of culture, religion or tradition may not be used in order to lessen the punishment.

Although the EU has several directives and has carried out vast research studies on violence against women, so far it has no binding instrument designed specifically to protect women from violence. The topic falls under the competence of National Governments. Parliament has repeatedly called for a European

Strategy to counter violence against women including a legally binding instrument.

Recently, in its resolution of the 6 February 2013, Parliament called once again on the Commission to devise an EU strategy for tackling violence against women, which would include the drafting of a directive laying down minimum standards. Finally in January 2014 the FEMM Committee adopted a legislative initiative report with recommendations to the Commission on combating violence against women (rapporteur Antonia Parvanova, ALDE, Bulgaria).

The Conference was attended by representatives of governments of Member States, a vast number of leading women and men working on gender equality in the EU and representatives of national governments and organisations of countries outside the EU.



Civil Society Day

Doris Bingley represented the European Centre of the International Council of Women (EICW) at the 2014 edition of the EESC's – Civil Society Day.

Civil Society Day is a yearly initiative organised by the European Economic and Social Committee and the EESC Liaison Group with European civil society networks. It brings together key players from European and national civil society organisations, business leaders and entrepreneurs, academics, EU policy- and decision-makers and the media. It provides a forum for dialogue on issues that concern civil society stakeholders. It is also an opportunity to consider the role of organised civil society in a more participatory set-up and to discuss how civil society can help transform the European Union into an alliance

of 28 countries whose nationals are able and willing to play a more active part in shaping EU policies.

The theme for 2014 was **"Beyond agendas and manifestos: WHAT EUROPE FOR US?"**

The economic, social and civic aspects of European citizenship, was at the centre of discussions, which focused mainly on the expectations of Europeans. The major question was how to meet these expectations while reflecting European values and objectives such as freedom, security, equality, or sustainability.

Three workshops examined this question in more detail:

- An economy for Europe, not a Europe for the economy
 - A social Europe for the citizens
 - An active European Citizenship
- Since 2014 is the year when

Europeans will go to the polls to elect the European Parliament, it is a particularly important time to remember how crucial it is to involve European citizens in policy-making processes through participatory democracy and civil society organisations.

The Alliance is deeply convinced that there are many ways to address issues linked to citizens' participation in the decision-making process and that the 62 European networks and 21 national alliances of EYCA will cover a wide range of issues and can and shall play a motor role in raising awareness about the objectives of the European elections to be held in May 2014.



Report on the Union for the Mediterranean Project Conference on Women's socio-economic empowerment 26 - 27 March 2014 - Barcelona

BACKGROUND

Ministers in charge of gender issues from the Union for the Mediterranean Member States adopted at the Third Ministerial Conference on Strengthening the Role of Women in Society, held on 11-12 September 2013 in Paris, conclusions related to the economic, social and political rights of the women of the Euro-Mediterranean

OBJECTIVES

The major goal of the Project Conference is to create a strong momentum for the women socio-economic empowerment in the region, by interlinking policy decisions as provided by the Ministerial declaration, mainstreamed development programs and projects on the ground. The Conference aimed at establishing a lasting cooperation platform as an effective contribution of the Union for the Mediterranean to the region's women empowerment agenda and to the mainstreaming of gender issues in the development of inclusive and sustainable economies.

PARTICIPANTS

The two-day conference gathered representatives of major public and private stakeholders involved in women socio-economic empowerment issues and project promoters interested and capable of delivering concrete projects on the ground for the benefit of the region's girls and women. The EESC was represented by Brenda King, Group I, An Le Nouail, Group II and Grace Attard Group III. As EESC members this was an opportunity to network and to strengthen the role of the EESC in its Observer Status with the UfM

Prior to the Conference, a series of three preparatory meetings were held to ensure that the Project Conference will reach maximum success in reaching its aims. The first was held in Brussels at the EEAS Centre, and the other two meetings were held at the UfM Palacio de Pedralbes Centre in Barcelona.

The preparatory meetings brought together a wide range of stakeholders. During the preparatory meetings, the EESC was represented by Grace Attard, whose proposals and contribution to the organization of the conference throughout were very much appreciated. The preparatory work aimed at an all-inclusive stakeholder conference, with the aim of addressing the particular needs of the different countries and to make use of projects to be mainstreamed according to the policy and practices for equality and development in each member state and across the region

The Deputy Secretary General Delphine Borione played a key role in bringing all the stakeholders together with the excellent cooperation and expertise of an enthusiastic secretariat throughout all the phases of the preparations leading to the Conference and not least through their active involvement during the conference itself

Wednesday 26 March 2014

The following were the themes discussed on the first day:

Session 1: major needs and challenges for advancing women agenda in the euro-mediterranean region

Session 2: priority initiatives, programmes and funding: fostering synergies and support - lessons learned and way forward

Session 3: public policies and programmes for women empowerment

Thursday 27 March 2014

Three workshops were held simultaneously

CONCLUSIONS:

Workshop A

IMPROVING THE VALUE CHAIN (Handicraft, sustainable tourism and income-generating activities)

Conclusions and recommendations

- Gender analysis and key issues – to ensure quality, quantity and sustainability
- Key factors for economic development
- Market access – diversified market strategy; village, supermarkets etc
- From fragmentation to integration redesigning how to market products
- Sustainability, health and safety and environment
- Branding
- Stimulating interest
- Addressing consumers

Workshop B

TRANSITION FROM EDUCATION TO EMPLOYMENT (Vocational training, education)

Conclusions and recommendations

- progress in the region should be seen in the context of global issues
- female education participation rates are increasing, but not matching employment rates
- eliminating stereotyping – freedom to choose careers
- negative perception of women in the labour market
- double discrimination persons with disability
- negative perception of vocational education and training
- concrete proposals to address the impact of violence on women at school, at the workplace and in society
- the importance of professional career guidance
- education and involvement of parents
- Setting up employment offices to offer training etc
- the use of official channels for job search, besides the channels
- employability skills and job adaptation and mobility
- collaboration between education systems and business at all levels – drafting, planning and implementation
- better use of the media to impact, influence and change attitudes regarding women

Workshop C

IMPROVING WOMEN'S ACCESS TO DECISION-MAKING POSITIONS (Entrepreneurship, leadership and mentoring)

Conclusions and recommendations

- the need to highlight the importance and impact of education,
- the need to change mentalities, starting with early education upwards
- how to move to a higher level to influence societies
- the difficulties in rural areas
- involving both women and men in strategies
- public sector intervention in training including at municipal level
- increasing the female participation rates in parliament
- gender sensitive budgeting
- monitoring
- capitalizing on the purchasing power of women

Concluding comments

The Project Conference was well organized and successful with keen interest among all the participants throughout. However the success of this conference can be really measured by the number of projects that will be submitted and their quality in reaching the objectives of the conference ufmsecretariat.org/women-empowerment-conference

#ufmwomenconf

A full report can be obtained on request

Grace Attard, NCW Vice-President, EESC Bureau member



DIARY OF EVENTS

January

- 09th MCESD CSC meets Leader of the Opposition
- 14th Meeting at Malta Tourism Authority Forum Nazzjonali Familja, Consultation Meeting at Dar l-Ewropa. Mary Gaerty, Doris Bingley and Marie Demicoli attended
- 15th Domestic Violence Men against Women Meeting
- 15th Meeting at the American Embassy ad hoc meeting for 50th Anniversary Celebrations
- 15th Executive Committee Meeting
- 15th Nationalist Party New Year Reception. NCW President Mary Gaerty attended
- 16th Cross Border Business Seminar at the Hotel Phoenicia, Mary Gaerty attended
- 16th Mary Gaerty and Cecilia Xuereb meeting with Rebecca Hall at Saint James
- 16th Malta Communications Authority Meeting at Inspire. Doris Bingley and Marie Demicoli attended
- 17th Public Dialogue Europe Our Common Quest Aula Magna. Doris Bingley attended
- 21st Department of Gender Studies Meeting
- Chinese Reception to celebrate the Spring Festival. Mary Gaerty and Doris Bingley attended
- 22nd Consultation Brief on Plastic Bags at Europe House
- 24th MEUSAC Energy Seminar at the Waterfront. Doris Bingley and Marie Demicoli attended
- 25th NCW Annual General Meeting at the Victoria Hotel. Special Guest - Wendy Richardson
- The Baby Factor Photographic Exhibition by Malta Girl Guides
- 27th Australian H. C. Reception Australia Day. Mary Gaerty and Doris Bingley attended
- 29th Launch of Poverty Strategy Paper by MFSS at the Millennium Chapel

February

- 2nd Nationalist Party General Council Conference Mary Gaerty attended
- 4th Men against Violence Meeting Doris Bingley and Marie Demicoli attended
- 5th Meeting with HE Jane Lambert at the Australian High Commission
- 9th Labour Party Annual General Conference Mary Gaerty attended

- 12th MITA launch a new website Doris Bingley and Marie Demicoli attended
- 17th Executive Committee Meeting
- 18th Public consultation: Vicin in-nies Gvern li Jisma at Mosta Techno Park
- Helga Ellul launch MEP Campaign at the Excelsior. Mary Gaerty, Doris Bingley and Marie Demicoli attended
- 19th EYCA post 2013 meeting in Brussels. Doris Bingley attended
- 20th VO Meeting on the Environment and Animal Welfare at Dar l-Ewropa
- 22nd Legislazzjoni dwar Kapacita Mentali f'Malta
- 24th Consultation Meeting with Helena Dalli at St. Paul's Bay Mary Gaerty, Doris Bingley and Marie Demicoli attended
- 25th Men Against Violence Group Meeting
- 26th Vicin in-Nies - Gvern li Jisma with Marie Louise Coleiro and Francis Mercieca
- 27th Malta Communications Authority meeting on logistics of the training at MCA Doris Bingley and Marie Demicoli attended
- VO meeting on Social Humanitarianism and Health at Dar l-Ewropa
- 28th NCW Central Committee Meeting

March

- 1st Sexual Assault Response Team Project Launch. Doris Bingley and Marie Demicoli attended
- 3rd NCPE International Women's Day Conference at Dar l-Ewropa. Mary Gaerty attended
- 4th Junior Chamber International meeting with Jonathan Borg at NCW
- 5th Enterprise Consultation Council Meeting. Mary Gaerty attended
- Speed Mentoring at US Embassy Seminar: In-Nanniet Tal-lum at Cavallieri Hotel Mary Gaerty gave a presentation.
- 6th V. O. Meeting on Culture, Art and Sport at Dar l-Ewropa
- 7th Women's Business Breakfast to commemorate Commonwealth Day and International Women's Day at the Corinthia Hotel. Members of NCW attended
- Chinese Embassy Lunch to

commemorate International Women's Day by Mme Jianqun Wang. Mary Gaerty and Doris Bingley attended

Screening of "Six Days" film & discussion European organized by the Commission Representation to commemorate IWD. Doris Bingley and Marie Demicoli Attended.

8th Launch of Nisa Laburisti group at Limestone Heritage Mary Gaerty and Doris Bingley attended.

12th Politics, Health, Business and Enterprise. Creating a level playing field for men and women by Therese Comodini at Dar l-Ewropa

Presentation of Certificates to Adult Learners at the Lifelong Learning Centre Msida Doris Bingley and Marie Demicoli attended.

13th Mary Gaerty and Doris Bingley meet Mr M.Azzopardi, Director LLL

14th Reception organized by the Ambassador for Ireland to commemorate St. Patrick's Day Mary Gaerty attended

17th Your MEP: The Voice of Civil Society in Europe NCW Press Conference

18th European Citizens Meeting (EYCA members) organized by EESC in Brussels. Doris Bingley participated. Men against Violence Meeting Marie Demicoli attended

20th Explore is a series of information sessions 2014-2020 organised by MEUSAC at the Waterfront Hotel Doris Bingley and Marie Demicoli attended

V. O. Meeting on Youth and Education at Dar l-Ewropa

22nd Association of Pensioners Annual General Meeting

24th Launch of Digital Malta - Doris Bingley and Marie Demicoli attended

27th The Role of Women in Today's Society Gender Issues Committee, University of Malta, Mary Gaerty attended

28th NCPE Conference: Enhancing Equal Rights Mary Gaerty attended

Executive Committee Meeting

29th Association for Consumer Rights Annual General Meeting ACR Members attended

Zewg Nisa Zewg Presidenti organized by Nisa Laburisti Mary Gaerty attended.

FORTHCOMING EVENTS:

50th Anniversary Celebrations

Sunday 27th April, 2014 - Multi Faith & Valletta Tour

NCW members and International Colleagues will gather at the Palace Hotel Sliema for a Multi faith ceremony at 9.30am followed by a tour of Valletta

Sunday 27th April, 2014 - In Her Own Voice – Celebrating Women Composers

Camerata Galatea in Concert Music by: Hildegard of Bingen, Fanny Mendelssohn, Veronique Vella and Elizabeth – Claude Jacquet de la Guerre on Sunday 27th April 2014 at 7.00pm at Robert Samut Hall, Floriana

Monday 28th April, 2014 - Opening of ICW Executive Committee Meeting

NCW Members are invited for the Opening of the International Council of Women Executive Committee Meeting as observers. From 9.30am onwards. The Hon Prime Minister will address the meeting at 3.00pm

Monday 28th April, 2014 - 50th Anniversary Exhibition The Maltese Women: Then and Now

The Exhibition launch will take place at The Palace Hotel Sliema at 7.00pm (**Special Invitation for Members & Spouses**)

Wednesday 30th April, 2014 - Women – Building Blocks of our Society Conference

NCW Members and friends are invited to participate at this very important conference on Wednesday 30th April 2014 Agenda attached

Thursday 01st May, 2014 - Tour of Malta

A guided tour of Malta visiting Hagar Qim, Mnajdra Temples, Domus Roman with light lunch at Xara Palace.

Thursday 01st May, 2014 - 50th Anniversary Gala Dinner

NCW Members, spouses and friends are invited to the Gala Dinner commemorating NCW Foundation Day at the Westin Dragonara Hotel at 7.30pm. NCW bestows on Mrs Margaret Abela Honorary Life Membership in recognition of her valid work during the Presidency.

Friday 2nd May, 2014 - Fashion Show in aid of Breast Cancer Support Group Europa Donna

The fashion show will take place at SAS Radisson Golden Sands on Friday 2nd May 2014 at 8.00pm (**Tickets from Gertrude Abela President Europa Donna**)

Saturday 3rd May, 2014 - Gozo Trip

NCW Members, spouses and friends can join our international guest to a guided tour of Gozo visiting Savina Creations, Pjazza t-Tokk/Citadell, Dwejra, Ta' Dbiegi, Ggantija, Calypso Cave with lunch at Xlendi and tea at the GWU Centre, which includes a craft exhibition. We meet either at The Palace Hotel or Cirkewwa in time for the 9.00am ferry boat.

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

