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NEWSLETTER OF THE NATIONAL COUNCIL OF WOMEN - MALTA

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NCW Delegation with the Hon. Astrid Lulling



Grace Attard, Doris Bingley & Marie Demicoli with Sergey Medvedev, Head of Russian Centre for Science and Culture and Dr Bodishtlenu Snezhana, Principal, Russian Boarding School



ECICW members at Gaasbeek Castle, Belgium



Doreen Micallef, Grace Attard & Doris Bingley at the European Parliament Brussels



EESC Maltese members, Edwin Calleja, Michael Parnis and Grace Attard together with Executive Secretary of MCESD Joe Montebello at the Euromed Summit, Rabat, Morocco

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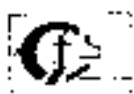
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International Council of Women

Founded 1888

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



European Centre of the International Council of Women

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EDITORIAL

Dear Members,

As my first year as editor and active member of NCW comes to an end, I would like to share some thoughts.

I found out about NCW when I interviewed Doreen Micallef, the President. I can't believe that I thought NCW was merely a group of ladies who lunch! I learnt that NCW has a very active role in society playing an important part in decision making at many levels.

When I got to know the committee and the members of NCW, I met women who juggle careers, family life and voluntary work. Their commitment to NCW never ceases to amaze me.

With the launch of the NCW website in the near future, I hope that NCW's work reaches a bigger audience.

I wish you all my best wishes for the New Year.

Thank you all for allowing me to learn so much,



Maria Giuliana Fenech

The National Council of Women congratulates NCW Vice President Helga Ellul on her appointment as the First President of the Malta Chamber of Commerce, Enterprise and Industry.

NCW congratulates the Republic Day recipients who distinguished themselves for various endeavours, among them: Dr. Katrine Camilleri MOM; Mrs Tanya Bayona MQR; Mrs Doris Cusens MQR; Mrs Myriam England MQR; Ms Ira Losco MQR; Ms Patricia Troubridge MQR

NCW welcomes the following new members:

Monica Serpina from Zejtun
Evelyn Vella from Zejtun
Maria Lourdes Bonello from Dingli
Jane Balami from Kappara
Joan Spiteri from Luqa
Catherine Spiteri from Hamrun

Lilian Grech from Zabbar
Mrs Antonia Aquilina from Zejtun
Mrs Marcelle Camilleri from Swieqi
Dr Nadine Delicata from Siggiewi
Ms Dorianne Vella from Tarxien
Ms Miriam Chetcuti from Zejtun

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It is distributed to all its members and affiliated organisations and sent to other NCWs all over the world. Correspondence and contributions are to be sent to:

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



Dear Members and friends,

Nowadays, Christmas is celebrated all over the world; in most cases, this is done with wild shopping sprees, big dinners and binge drinking. But do all these people, indulging in these activities, know what they are revelling for?

Christmas, to those who embrace a Christian faith, is meant to celebrate the birth of a special child in the poorest and meekest of conditions. It is the time of the year to stop and consider the suffering Mary went through, physically, emotionally and psychologically, to give birth to her son with no medical aid, in the cold, with no comfortable amenities like a bed to give birth in and with animals instead of family members to surround her at a time which should be one of the happiest of her life.

If we turn to the child Jesus then, we cannot help but think of all those who are suffering in our world today. How many children are born under the same conditions Jesus was born in, if not even worse but in the third millennium? How many children will remain homeless for the rest of their lives? How many will be parentless due to war, AIDS, etc? How many will never know

what a decent meal means let alone a Christmas lunch with endless gifts (many of which will probably be forgotten within the month) and family members to spoil them with warmth and affection? How many children are actually denied the chance of life due to an illness they may succumb to early on in their life or even earlier on by being aborted?

None of these children will be remembered for more than a generation or two, none of these will have millions of followers to celebrate their birth annually or to consider their sufferings.

It is to these children that I will be dedicating my Christmas thoughts and prayers.

A Merry Christmas and a happy New Year to you and all your families and friends. 🌸

Doreen Micallef

Sustaining Family Values in a Changing World (The National Council of Women and the Russian Centre for Science and Culture)

The Russian Boarding School in Bugibba was the venue of a Conference organised by NCW and the RCSC entitled 'Sustaining Family Values in a Changing World'. NCW representatives Grace Attard, Doris Bingley and Marie Demicoli received a warm welcome, followed by a tour of the Boarding School. We were impressed by the high level of technology used in the delivery of the lessons, which also offers facilities for parents to actually see the performance of their children during lessons from their home.

In Russia 2008 has been dedicated to the Family while in Europe 2008 is the Year of Intercultural Dialogue. These two concepts inspired us to work together on Family Values in our respective countries, while giving an EU perspective. The aim was to share ideas and good practices for the benefit of our society.

Dr Snezhana, Principal of the Boarding School spoke about the situation in Russia where society is facing problems similar to the rest of Europe. She stated that we need to start at school inculcating values such as responsibility and a sense of altruism. The Russian School offers opportunities to students



to learn independence, self-control and preparation for serious relationships. In Malta, these students learn several languages: multilingualism is key to intercultural dialogue. Dr Snezhana augured that Malta will continue to promote these values in its role in Europe as member of the EU.

Mr Sergei Medvedev, Head of the Russian Centre for Science and Culture made a presentation on the importance of the family as a social and moral value. He also spoke about a number of initiatives that have been carried out to celebrate Intercultural Dialogue.

NCW Gen Sec Doris Bingley made a presentation on Family-Friendly Measures in Malta. She spoke about proposal that NCW submitted to Government for measures to create the

necessary balance between work and family life. Most of NCW proposals have been included in the National Budget for successive years, many of which have also been implemented.

EESC member, Grace Attard spoke about the concerns of the European Commission and the European Economic and Social Committee on the Family and Demographic Change. She highlighted the changes that we are witnessing now and in the next few years that will affect all members of the family: parents, children, youth and the elderly and how these challenges can be addressed.

NCW was honoured with a personal message sent purposely for the Conference by H.E. Dr Svetlana Medvedeva, spouse of the President of the Russian Federation. H. E. expressed her wishes for the success of this initiative which she hoped would be an opportunity to offer ideas and possible solutions to related problems.

NCW hopes that our initiative together in celebrating the European Year of Intercultural Dialogue is only a first step to strengthen Maltese/Russian relationships in the field of Education and Social Affairs 🌸

Grace Attard, NCW EESC member



The Maltese Delegation who participated in the Euromed Morocco Summit: Joe Montebello, MCESD Executive Secretary, Grace Attard, NCW EESC, Edwin Calleja, EESC and Michael Parnis GWU, EESC

EXTRACTS FROM EUROMEDITERRANEAN SUMMIT OF ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCILS AND SIMILAR INSTITUTIONS

Rabat, 14 – 16 October 2008

FINAL DECLARATION

The representatives of the Economic and Social Councils (ESCs) and similar institutions, together with the representatives of civil society organisations in the Euro-Mediterranean partner countries which do not have an ESC or similar institution, meeting in accordance with the mandate conferred by the Barcelona Declaration of 1995, warmly thank His Majesty King Mohamed VI of Morocco for the high patronage he has kindly granted to the Euro-Mediterranean Summit of Economic and Social Councils and Similar Institutions. They wish to take this opportunity to thank His Majesty for the royal message delivered to the participants at the Summit, highlighting Morocco's interest in the role played by the Economic and Social Councils, who play a major part in strengthening a network of exchange and cooperation between actors in our respective civil societies, working in the fields of economic, social, cultural, ecological and human development.

During the summit, delegations from all the partner countries, the European Economic and Social Committee, and most EU Member States discussed issues relating to the participation of civil society in the Barcelona Process: Union for the Mediterranean, to freedom of association and strengthening of participatory structures in the partner countries, to the social dimension of relations between the European Union and the partner countries, to access by women to economic and social life, and to the creation of a free trade area in the Euromed region.

The participants adopted the following recommendations:

On civil society participation in the "Barcelona Process: Union for the Mediterranean"

- take note of the launch of the Barcelona Process: Union for the Mediterranean at the Paris Summit for the Mediterranean of 13 July 2008, with a view to giving new impetus to Euro-Mediterranean relations. They urge EU Member States and Euromed partners to ensure that this new initiative will be founded on the achievements of the Euro-Mediterranean partnership, giving it more practical content, especially by implementing projects;
- support the determination to give greater visibility to relations between the European Union and the Mediterranean partner countries and to promote reforms intended to boost governance and participatory democracy;
- recall that the 1995 Barcelona Declaration invited the European Economic and Social Committee to take the initiative in establishing links with its counterparts and equivalent bodies in the Mediterranean partner countries, which prompted it to set up a network for cooperation of Economic and Social Councils and similar institutions. This network meets for a Summit each year;
- regret that the Economic and Social Councils and similar institutions were not involved in the consultation process on the establishment of the Barcelona Process: Union for the Mediterranean, especially since

the success of this initiative will depend on the active participation of civil society and in particular of the private sector;

- declare that the network for cooperation of Economic and Social Councils and similar institutions is ready to work closely with the Barcelona Process: Union for the Mediterranean bodies and play an active part in proposing, promoting and following up projects at both national and regional level;
- propose that the network for cooperation of Economic and Social Councils and similar institutions, with the European Economic and Social Committee, should be effectively represented on the bodies of the Barcelona Process: Union for the Mediterranean, enabling civil society organisations to be kept informed and participate in the decisions that concern them;

On access by women to economic and social life

- fully support the 2006 Istanbul Ministerial Conference which established a number of priorities to improve the condition of women in the Euro-Mediterranean region, and applaud the fact that the network for cooperation of Economic and Social Councils and similar institutions, with the European Economic and Social Committee, has been involved in following up the implementation of the work programme. In this connection, they reiterate the recommendations adopted at the last Euro-Mediterranean Summit of Economic and Social Councils and similar organisations held in Athens in 2007, and particularly the need to ensure that the commitments set out in the work programme are honoured;
- propose to draw up an action plan to ensure the participation of women of the partner countries in social, cultural, economic and environmental areas. This action plan will comprise practical measures, including positive discrimination, in order to develop women's education and participation in the labour market, especially by promoting women's entrepreneurship and facilitating women's access to research, innovation and funding. Such actions would recognise women as a valuable and crucial resource in the face of global challenges;
- recommend fuller representation of women in Economic and Social Councils and similar institutions and in the economic and social partners' organisations;
- regret that gender equality has not been clearly restated under the Barcelona Process: Union for the Mediterranean. They stress that this aspect must be explicitly stated and systematically and strategically applied when policies are implemented;
- intend to continue the activity of the study group on the factors facilitating the access of women to economic and social life, with the aim of deepening other aspects of the condition of women in the Euromed area; 🌸

Grace Attard

EESC, Euromed Follow-up Committee

The Family and Demographic Change

A European Perspective

Vladimir Spidla, Commissioner for employment, social affairs and equal opportunities, stated that demographic ageing is the result of fundamentally positive developments. Europeans are living longer and healthier lives

Life expectancy at birth has increased by an average of eight years since 1960. A recent projection estimated that children born today in the EU25 can expect to live, on average, to the age of 82 if they are girls and 76 if they are boys. On the other hand, we are facing a declining fertility rate which will be at around 1.5 children per woman by 2050.

In March 2005, the Commission launched a Green Paper "Confronting demographic change: a new solidarity between the generations" The consultation period lasting till September 2005 resulted in many reactions to this document, which together with the advice of many experts helped to identify five key areas where action is required to be able to face the future with confidence.

The areas identified in this new Communication concern in particular:

- * The need to create the right conditions for Europe's demographic renewal by giving more support to families and potential parents and by promoting greater equality between men and women;
- * The need to make full use of Europe's human resources potential notably through active ageing;
- * The need to boost productivity and facilitate the adaptation of our economy to the changing needs of an ageing society;
- * The need to integrate migrants into our labour market and society;
- * And the need to safeguard sound public finances and the long-term sustainability of our social protection systems.

During the same year, the EU Commission organised a Conference entitled 'The Family and Demographic Change', which was addressed by: Ministers for Families, Senior Citizens, Women, Youth, academics from Europe, representatives of the European Commission and social partners and politicians.

The themes discussed during the conference were:

- gender equality as a precondition for work-life balance;
- active ageing in a life course perspective;
- successful migration and integration;
- family policies: a way for society to invest in children;
- preventive health measures,
- assisted by living and long term care; and
- regional opportunities for managing demographic change.

The Conference also included presentations of research on the family, protection of childhood, fertility and ageing and demographic impact studies that were financed by the EU.

The Family and Parents

The Conference highlighted the importance of families which although varying in structure still constitute an essential part of society. We are witnessing an increase in extramarital births, single parenthood, disruption of couples and late childbearing.

Families today are not in an environment that is conducive to child-rearing. We need to provide an environment that will enable families to have children at any age, and address the needs of all types of families.

Studies have revealed differences between the desirability to have children and current birth rates. The cost of child rearing, the dual work household and having children are seen as an impediment to work

Child care and early childhood education

The cost and availability of childcare and matching working schedules of parents were also seen as issues that need to be addressed. The Union needs

to find out more about families in the Member States in particular with regard to employment and income in single parent families, access to housing and social benefits.

Early Childhood Education

The State needs to see the importance of early and preschool childcare as a complement to formal education and therefore as a productive factor for the future. Childcare provision should be addressed in the context of family policy and the State needs to be financially responsible to provide access to quality childcare especially for families at risk of poverty. All children should have equal opportunities to early childhood education, which we know is vital to the holistic development of the individual.

Parents, Children and Childhood

Addressing the needs of the family cannot exclude empowering children to take charge of their future. Both parents need to be aware of the way both girls and boys are brought up to be active in their contribution to the family from a very young age. The state, the family and education systems need to work together to provide an environment where children can grow.

The gap between children and parents is widening. Children in poverty are ending up in adoption or fostering or in institutions. This is often resulting in lack of dignity which can lead to delinquency and violence. Parents who are extremely poor live in fear of having their children taken away and therefore do not seek help.

Child protection measures can sometimes have a negative impact on

children if they do not address the entire family network, listening to the aspirations of all members of the family and offering them the opportunity to take decisions. Families are becoming more fragile lacking work/life balance policies and structures that can be actually put in practice. Men need to be made more aware that sharing in home responsibilities is an opportunity for 'partnership' which can enhance their family life.

Better integration of young people

The level of education and training of young people is markedly higher. However young people are becoming an undervalued resource. Young people are finding it hard to integrate in economic life and they are sometimes faced with discrimination on the grounds of their age and lack of occupational experience. The skills learnt at school are not always in line with the requirements of the knowledge society and the level of school failure is still a source of concern.

Family life, work and worked-linked training

The education system has to meet this significant challenge: it needs to raise the level of initial training and to offer more flexible pathways in which young people would be more able to alternate education, work and work-linked training in order to meet the needs of the economy.

Young employed people may want to spend more time with their children and work more at another time in their life. These demographic changes may lead to new and more flexible organisation of working time.

A new place for the elderly people

The number of elderly people aged 65-79 will increase significantly after 2010. They will be more active and in better health if current trends continue. They will also be better off, having been more likely to build up a full pension. Elderly people are consuming more goods and services and want to participate more actively in social life.

Retirement schemes should promote more flexible bridges between work and retirement to retain older workers longer in the labour market. The transfer of knowledge to young workers and vice-versa can offer possibilities to improve intergenerational relationships. Flexible gradual retirement and a combination of wages and pensions and new forms of employment (part-time, temporary) are measures to be considered replacing a statutory retirement age



Meeting of the Anna Lindh Foundation Network in Malta

The Head of Anna Lindh Foundation (ALF) Network, Malta, Dr. Simon Mercieca organised a meeting for its members in Malta. The meeting took the form of a day seminar which was held on the 22nd October at the Conference Centre in Student House at the University of Malta. Dr Mercieca gave an overview of the past three years, during which the Anna Lindh Foundation experienced a continuous evolution in its structure. The aim of the Mediterranean Institute, as the Head of the Malta network of this Euro-Mediterranean Foundation, was to focus on the work of the Maltese Network within the local as well as international level.

The Mediterranean Institute believes that each one of us can contribute towards the development of the local network. Furthermore, the meeting served to assess the functioning of network on a national level, not only to allow us to identify new ethical values for the local network but also to create an active and dynamic entity. Any network needs to have mutual cooperation and assistance to function properly. As Head of the Network, Dr Mercieca stressed the importance of promoting the local actions at a European administrative level, while contributing towards the development of good practices in the management of the local network.

Ms. Vanessa Ficarra was appointed by the Head of Network to organise this activity. The seminar was not just an informative session but an occasion where the member organisations of the Anna Lindh Foundation met each other, presented their work and were given the opportunity to make proposals for the future, which the Head of Network will voice to the ALF headquarters.

Furthermore, the Head of Network expressed his view that the member organisations need to work towards the creation of a charter which would establish on one hand the role of the members and

of the head of network and on the other hand the criteria of recruitment of new members (ethical, work method, involvement). In addition the meeting created the ground for partnerships on projects as well as for future co-operations.

A number of members made a presentation of their projects which had been partially financed by the Foundation. Others made a presentation about future projects related to intercultural dialogue. The discussion focused also on how the ALF can be further developed.



NCW Gen Secretary Doris Bingley spoke about the Council's involvement in the Euro Mediterranean Process and EuroMed Countries. She represented NCW Malta in EuroMed fora on many occasions among them meetings on the Barcelona Process in Valencia, Ljubljana and Brussels. As 2008 was designated "European Year of Intercultural Dialogue" The National Council of Women of Malta kept this theme alive by organizing events which included discussions and presentations working closely with the Emigrant's Commission. She then spoke about initiatives of NCW with the Anna Lindh Foundation in Malta. Since NCW joined ALF, the Council participated in three training programmes: In Barcelona's Euro- Mediterranean Youth Forum "The Euro Mediterranean Partnership

and the Young Alliance of Civilisation"; In Budapest "Human Rights Education for enhancing Intercultural Dialogue with young people" and in Amsterdam "Conflict Resolution through Cultural Cooperation in the Euro-Mediterranean". NCW representatives came from NCW Youth Committee. She also mentioned how NCW welcomed the Paris Declaration of the Union of the Mediterranean, and how in the preparatory days leading up to the Summit, NCW Malta submitted its recommendations to the Maltese Government to ensure that Euro Mediterranean Partner Countries of the Union for the Mediterranean will renew their commitment to the full participation of women in the economic, political, civil, social and cultural life as a priority of the Union of the Mediterranean. She declared that NCW Malta continues to be involved in the EuroMed process and its development is among NCW's priorities and commitments.

Grace Attard, member of the European Economic and Social Committee (EESC) made a presentation on the initiatives the EESC and the EU Commission are carrying out which include the contribution of the Anna Lindh Foundation, in particular in the fields of research and projects. She also spoke about the importance of involving Civil Society in the Barcelona Process: Union of the Mediterranean, which has been highlighted by the EESC. The EESC REX (External Relations) is currently working on issues regarding the Euromed region through the Euromed Follow-up Committee in collaboration with Mediterranean partner countries. Currently it is assisting the setting up of Economic and Social Councils with Jordan, Egypt and Morocco. The Anna Lindh Foundation participates in the Yearly Euromed Summit of the Economic and Social Councils of the Euromed partners. Through its expertise, it also contributes to opinions of the EESC advisory documents for the EU Council, Commission and Parliament. ♥

Rape Crisis Centre - Conspicuous by its absence

In 2001, the National Council of Women and Agenzija Appogg proposed a Rape Crisis Centre. Eight years have passed and the crisis centre has not yet been set up.

Maria Camilleri, an NCW member, speaking on "Dirett Parlament" confirmed that this centre has not yet been set up, even though its need is deeply felt. "We are sure that there is still a need for a Rape Crisis Centre. However this has not been set up yet. After the National Council of Women had made that suggestion there had been some talks but nothing has been done yet. When someone is raped, he/she is taken to the Gynae Ward."

Maria Camilleri explained how this centre would ideally operate. "The National Council of Women is not calling for a clinic that is on stand by just in case a rape happens, because these are not that frequent and one cannot waste resources in this way. But there have to be at least two rooms where victims of rape can be examined by a multi-disciplinary team. This team will be on call whenever there is a rape."

Maria Camilleri also called for more sensitive services. "I am informed that, for instance, the Vice Squad treat rape victims with sensitivity. However, unfortunately one cannot say the same for the police in local police stations. It is very important to train people who come across such cases, in order to be able to treat victims with sensitivity. Victims should be given the choice as to whether they prefer to work with a same sex expert, for instance.

Rape statistics not realistic

In Parliament, in response to a parliamentary question by Labour MP Carmelo Abela, Carmelo Mifsud Bonnici, Minister for Justice and home affairs, said that in 2005 there were 7 reported cases of rape. In 2006 there were 13 and in 2007 there were 11 cases. Maria Camilleri and Josanne Abela, Service Area Leader at Agenzija Appogg, both added that these statistics do not give a realistic picture as there

are many cases that go unreported.

Maria Camilleri added "We know for a fact that many cases go unreported. Some victims of rape simply go to a social worker for help, without reporting the case to the police. Thus these cases are not included in the records."

Josanne Abela gave some reasons as to why some people choose not to report a case of rape. Since rape is a criminal charge, the victim may be unwilling to face her aggressor in court. During the proceedings, the victim will be questioned a number of times about the assault and thus she would be forced to re-live the trauma. She also explained how many victims fear that by reporting the case they would be exposing what happened to them to society, and thus they experience feelings of shame. Most of the time the victim simply wants to forget what has happened.

Rape victims go through a big psychological trauma. Josanne Abela said that the effects of rape can be both immediate and long-term. Immediate consequences include a sense of shame and guilt, fear, and refusal to leave one's home. In the long term rape can lead to depression and a lack of trust in people. Rape victims also face problems in society, especially when people show lack of empathy and understanding towards the victim and instead adopt a judgmental attitude. Maria Camilleri mentioned that a victim of rape can also get pregnant, with this having major repercussions.

Agenzija Appogg provides support for victims of rape, whilst encouraging them to report the case to the police, so that the aggressor can be stopped from committing the same offence. ♥

Maria Camilleri, NCW Social Issues Co-ordinator



The Autumn 2008 session of the General Assembly of the European Centre of the International Council of Women (ECICW)

The Autumn 2008 session of the General Assembly of the European Centre of the International Council of Women (ECICW) was held in Brussels, Belgium between the 7th and the 9th November and was organised by the Nederlandstalige Vrouwenraad. The meeting was attended by Doreen Micallef, NCW President and ECICW vice-president, and Doris Bingley, NCW Honorary General Secretary.

The meeting commenced officially with a seminar entitled 'The EU policies in a gender perspective' and was held at the Spinelli Building with the European Parliament and was organised in collaboration with the European Parliament Information Office, Brussels. The audience was greeted with a welcoming speech from Mrs Francy Van der Wildt, president, Nederlandstalige Vrouwenraad and Grace Wedekind, president, ECICW. Amongst the speakers at this seminar were:

A. De Munter, acting head of the EP Brussels Information Office.

Anne Van Lancker, MEP, member Commission Women's rights and gender equality & Commission Committee on Employment and Social Affairs.

Esther de Lange, MEP for CDA and member of the EP committee on civil liberties, justice and home affairs and of the Committee on Budgetary Control.

Annemie Pernot, vice-president of the Council for equal opportunities for men and women and counsel for employment and social dialogue, permanent representation of Belgium to the European Union.

Agnès Hubert, European Commission, societal adviser, Bureau of European Policy Advisers.

Belinda Pyke, European Commission, director DG/G Equality between men and women.

Some of the highlights from the speeches were the following:

31% of all MEPS are women and the percentages vary from one country to another, e.g. the Netherlands have 14 female and 13 male MEPs. More than 50% of the staff within the European Parliament are women, but their numbers decrease as one progresses up the hierarchical system. Since the last enlargement within the European Union, there has, however, been an increase in the number of women in the higher-ranking positions. Out of the latest 12 countries which joined the Union, 880 women have found employment within the European Parliament. The average age of these women employees is 34 years for the new member countries and 48 years for the older member states. Out of the 11 Director Generals, only 3 are women. Hopefully, the percentage of female directors will be increased in 2009 but a lot more has to be done in middle management, where female participation is as low as 21%.

From an EC report on equality between men and women issued in 2008, it was found that female employment was the main reason for employment growth. Women are nowadays better educated, with 80.7% of young women completing upper secondary education and 59% of women are university graduates. However, the gender employment gap was still 14.4% in 2006 and grows wider with age (e.g. 17.8% for the +55 year-olds).

Only 65.5% of women are currently in employment when compared to 91.7% of men. This has been mainly attributed to problems encountered with reconciliation of work and family life. Women usually look for jobs that help them reconcile their work and family life but usually the wages in these jobs do not give them independence. For this reason, women seek part-time work (76.5% of part-time workers are women), and temping work (15.1%) more than men. The pay gap is still at a steady 15% and has only



decreased by 1% since 2000. Hence, adequate gender policies are required for work-family reconciliation. Mainstreaming is needed but mainstreaming alone is not enough.

It has also been found out that when women and men apply for the same jobs, the men's qualifications are over-estimated while those of the women are under-estimated. This is one form of indirect discrimination which is unfortunately still happening in our society.

Does flexitime lead to gender equality? Flexitime is not a purpose in itself; it is a means to create quality jobs and must remain a tool to reinforce the Lisbon strategy, guaranteeing an upward mobility. It rests on four pillars:

clearer contractual agreement, life-long learning, active policies from social partners and the government and a revised social security system. Flexitime should support gender equality since both men and women should have access to quality jobs and help in reconciling work and family life. We should have a win-win situation where both employers and employees see the advantages.

The second seminar was entitled 'Good practices for gender mainstreaming' and was held at the Amazone women's centre. Speakers at this session included:

Vera Claes, General Secretary of *zij-kant*, a women's movement and president of the Board of Directors of the Institute for the Equality of Women and Men.

Petra Meier, assistant professor at the Politics Department of the University of Antwerp, Belgium.

Cécile Gréboval, policy director of the European Women's Lobby.

Amongst the topics discussed by Ms Claes and Ms Meier were gender quotas and whether these are a 'best practice' of gender mainstreaming, the gender mainstreaming law which was adopted in Belgium in January 2007 while Ms Gréboval spoke about the structure of EWL and their 50/50 campaign.

Members of the ECICW, namely the representatives of Greece, Denmark and Israel also presented some examples of best practices of gender mainstreaming in their respective countries while Grace Attard, member of NCW Malta, gave a presentation on the EESC and how it helps in gender mainstreaming.

On the following days, the General Assembly of the ECICW was held at the Amazone centre. During these sessions, members were, amongst other items on the agenda, updated on the participation of ECICW representations at the 60th Anniversary of the Universal Declaration on Human Rights, Council of Europe, International Day on Ageing / Rights of Older Women, the RECON project and the International Council of Women.

Doreen Micallef, NCW President, ECICW Vice-President



NCW Member Roberta Metsola Te

The National Council of Women is currently campaigning for more Maltese women in the candidate for the forthcoming elections in June 2009. Roberta has spared some of her busy

Interview with NCW member Roberta Tedesco Triccas candidate for MEP

1. Who is Roberta? How do you describe yourself?

I am 29 years old, a mother of 2 and a wife. I can describe myself as a very energetic person, who is constantly juggling between multiple causes and projects. I live by two main values: sincerity and loyalty. I believe that politics is a tool by means of which persons can be of service to others.

2. You have a wonderful family. Can you describe your husband and children to us?

As a Finn, my husband comes from a much less temperamental culture and is therefore the 'calming element' in our family. He is also politically active and thankfully he understands well the challenge of balancing our family needs with our professions.

My children, both boys, are Luca who is twenty months old and Alec who is just six months old. Luca looks like his father, but has my temperament. Alec is much calmer. Our family is multilingual and we speak Maltese, English and Finnish at home.

3. We know that you have been an NCW member since your late teenage years. What were you like as a teenager? How did you spend your youth?

In my early teenage years, I was very involved in voluntary work particularly with orphans and with the elderly. Later on I decided to venture into politics and I joined the Sliema branch of MŻPN (Moviment Żgħażaġh Partit Nazzjonalista). As a University student, I spent six years in SDM (Studenti Demokristjani Maltin) as well as in KNŻ (Kunsill Nazzjonali taż-Żgħażaġh) serving in both as International Secretary.

I believe that these experiences helped to make me become what I am today - they helped me become very aware of the difficulties

that members of our society are faced with. On a personal note, I was very lucky that my parents were always very supportive of my decisions, even when this meant that I would sacrifice my studies to organise some event or other!

4. I have heard you voice your views in discussions in a very strong and convincing manner. How have you developed these qualities? What motivates you to be so committed?



I have always managed to find meaning in whatever I do - both in my private and in my professional life. With determination, I work at something until I am happy with the outcome. Everything I do I find exciting and interesting - whether it is a new law that I am working on or a family with a problem that I am trying to solve. I believe that if I work hard enough at a person's case I can be successful, not just personally but in helping others. Of course, everything requires thorough preparation and research. Adequate preparation can make anyone transmit his or her message in a convincing manner.

5. From studies to career or I should say careers.....

During my student life I had many different jobs - I started out as an ice-cream vendor during the summer months and spent many Christmases wrapping gifts at a local perfumery. I also taught English to be able to finance my political student trips abroad. I cannot say that I had chosen my career path early on. In fact I debated between becoming a medical doctor or a lawyer. I decided to take the legal road simply because I believed I would have more time to be involved in politics as a student. (I'm sure my Professors will not be too pleased when they read this part). I ran for the European Parliament in 2004 and as I obtained a Masters degree in European Law from the College of Europe in Bruges, I was employed as a lawyer for the Government of Malta within the Permanent Representation in Brussels. My portfolio includes family law and immigration among other subjects that are of immediate interest to us Maltese.

6. Society – people – how important are they to you in your work?

I believe that as soon as you take up political work – no matter at what level - you are at the service of the people. Being elected is not

Roberta Triccas candidate for MEP

The European Parliament. The Council is pleased to note that one of its members will be a young woman. It is a good time to meet us to get to know more about her and her future role in politics at EU level



about personal gratification but it is about working with others for a cause that is common to us all. This is why I value the ability to work in a team with other individuals that may not be of the same political mindset, as the most important aspect in politics.

7. As a person moving more deeply into the political world, how do you reconcile your personal values with the role of a member of the European Parliament? Do you believe this is possible?

I live by a number of personal values and I base all my political work on them. As a Christian Democrat I believe in solidarity and in the fact that the individual should be at the very centre of political thought. It is these values that I will uphold throughout my political career - values that resonate with those of the European People's Party (EPP) - a Group composed of centre-right representatives from all twenty-seven Member States within which, if elected, I will sit in the European Parliament.



8. If you are elected as MEP (we definitely hope so!) what will your priority areas be? Do you think they will reflect the expectations of Maltese men and women?

I believe that the expectations of us Maltese citizens, are rooted in our daily needs: our jobs, our families, our homes. I think that the priorities of the European Parliament should be better access to the labour market, better employment conditions, finding concrete solutions



to our problems related to illegal immigration, a cleaner environment, better respect for the right of individuals as consumers and proper, across-the-board equality for all men and women.

I feel that my work in the EP should be to ensure that these goals are put at the very top of the EP's agenda. As an MEP, I would have a direct political role to put into effect what I have been working on for a number of years now.

9. You are still quite young yourself - what message would you give to young men and women to encourage them not to be so sceptical about politics whether local or European?

Being a sceptic will get a person nowhere. Youth gives us the best opportunity to put our energy to a good cause. Wait until we're older and it might be too late. I would encourage all young Maltese men and women to join myself and others in trying to improve those things we most believe in order to bring about the changes we want to the world we live in.

10. If you were given just 60 seconds on the National TV Station what would your message be to the Maltese society?

The EU is not just about the grey buildings and the thousands of bureaucrats sitting at their desks dishing out laws, regulations and targets. The EU is all about us. **As your MEP, I will** take up any matter of concern, even if that matter affects just you. No door will be left unopened For it is not only the bigger picture that counts - the difficulties and inconveniences which we all face on a daily basis as citizens, workers or consumers have to be addressed. And with your vote I would ensure that this is done. Thank you. 🇲🇹

From all NCW members Good Luck Roberta!!

Children as Indirect Victims of Domestic Violence

Domestic violence by men against women, whether physical or psychological, is one of the gravest violations of human rights: the right to life and to physical and psychological integrity. Although action at EU level in the past few years on the issue of domestic violence against women has been taken, it is still recognised as a problem in all the EU Member States.

Domestic violence affects not only the victims themselves, but also other family members, especially children. Children who become witnesses of domestic violence are always victims of psychological violence too. However, awareness of children as indirect victims of domestic violence is still limited.

The effects on children, growing up in a climate of physical and psychological violence and who witness violence against the partner can have serious consequences. The majority of the women affected are mothers. When these women experience violence at the hands of their partners, the children are in most cases either present or within earshot. Moreover, men who abuse their partners often also perpetrate violence against children. Because they live in a climate where it is routine, women who suffer violence may sometimes also be violent in turn towards their children.

Often battered women are under such strain that they are unable to care properly for their children. Exposure to long-term abuse by their partners robs many women of the ability to do anything to protect their children. Children – even young children – feel very helpless and vulnerable. They also sometimes feel responsible for what is happening. They often believe that the violence is their fault, or they try to intervene and protect the mother, and are then themselves abused.

This often involves living in a threatening atmosphere; not knowing when an attack will happen next; fear for the mother's survival; the feeling of helplessness in the situations in question; the feeling of isolation, because such children are often warned not to tell outsiders; conflicts of loyalties towards the parents; and impairment of the parent-child relationship. Children can also develop massive problems and behavioural disorders, including psychosomatic symptoms and psychological problems such as low self-esteem, restlessness, sleep disorders, difficulties at school, anxiety, aggression, and even suicidal thoughts.

Domestic violence can also have



an impact on the children's attitude to violence and to their own violent behaviour. The cycle of violence can lead boys to learn the role of perpetrator and girls to learn that of victim, and can mean that they themselves become perpetrators or victims of domestic violence.

Whilst the main responsibility for combating domestic violence lies with the Member States, the importance of children's rights and the different responses in different countries clearly indicate that a Europe-wide Strategy is necessary. The basis for this strategy must be an initial Europe-wide study on the prevalence and consequences of growing up in the context of domestic violence, which also looks into what can be and is being done to protect and support children indirectly affected by such violence

Safeguarding children at risk of indirect victims of domestic violence in Malta

Addressing children's needs in situations of family violence is given a lot of importance in Malta, not least through the Office for the Commissioner for Children. Children indirectly affected by domestic violence should be considered as victims in their own right, for whom specific support must be developed and made available. Greater consideration needs to be given in family court proceedings to the risks associated with domestic violence than has been the case hitherto, in particular the high probability that the risk of violence will not end once the couple has separated.

Particular consideration should be given in situations of the children of abused women migrants, who are especially vulnerable when they come from societies and cultures where gender inequality is greatest and gender-specific roles are most entrenched and cultural

norms exist that support the rights of men over women.

The existing Protocol between the Child Protection Services (CPS), the Education Department and the Police aims to ensure timely intervention and co-ordination to safeguard the interests of the children in such situations.

The CPS also works with shelters for women, providing services for children, including psychological support programmes. Such shelters are in dire need of better resources to help women take up a decent life, that ultimately should lead to financial independence for the family also. Court Orders and supervised access visits in cases where children are at risk, prior to and during Court proceedings as well as follow-up services after separation also aim to protect children. However more police protection is needed in particular when social workers and members of the family leave the shelter or are on their way from the shelters to the Law Courts

Besides addressing the needs of women, the Domestic Violence Social Work Services offer two programmes for perpetrators: the perpetrators programme and the support programme, which are being utilised even when not court mandated. Although, so far, few individuals are making use of these services, corrective and preventive measures can reduce much of the physical, emotional and psychological effects that can last throughout a child's lifetime

Domestic violence thrives on secrecy. Therefore more educational and awareness raising campaigns not only round 25 November to encourage all members of the family and not just women to come forward. Young people are becoming more violent in their relationships not least as a result of exposure to violence on the media. This phenomenon also needs to be addressed. Neighbours and relatives need to be sensitised to take the responsibility of reporting as early as possible. Members of the Police Force also need to be trained – they have an important role to play; they are not self-appointed 'social workers' in such situations.

A co-ordinated multi-disciplinary approach to early detection, sharing of resources, continuous specialised professional training are key elements to eliminating this degrading behaviour. Help Line 179 is always one second away! 🍷

Grace Attard, NCW EESC member

Harga Kulturali Go Bormla

Konna grupp ta' xi tuzzana w nofs (stajna konna izjed) għall-harga kulturali ta' Bormla jew Cospicua li hi wahda mill-bliet tal-Cottonera. Kollha jixirqulha dawn l-ismijiet lil din il-belt antika kif spjegalna sew l-istoriku Charles Galea Scannura. It-temp sabih iffavorina. Minn subborg zghir tal-barklori, sajjeda u nies isewwu ix-xwieni, dan il-post gibed l-attenzjoni tal-Kavallieri ta' San Gwann kif ukoll tal-Inglizi. Bormla giet imdawwra bis-swar tal-Firenzuola (jew ta' Santa Margerita) u tal-Kottonera. L-ismijiet tat-toroq u l-monumenti kollha jfakkru l-istorja ta' din il-belt. Il-Mina ta' Santa Liena hi l-bieb principali tagħha. Wara li l-bombi tat-Tieni Gwerra kienu ghamlu herba f'dawn l-inhaw, kien inkixef il-fdal ta' kappella qadima li kienu jsejnhulha ta' Santa Liena. Imma propjament din kienet iddedikata lil Santa Maria de Nativitate u kienet fi gnien propjeta' tal-Kavallier Pierre de la Fontaine, Kommendatur ta' *Chanteraine* li l-Kavallieri dawwruha f'Santarena u l-Bormlizi f'Santa Liena! Dawn l-inhaw jissemmew fil-grajja tal-Assedju l-Kbir: il-Gran Mastru La Valette kien ordna li jitwaqqghu il-ftit djar li kien hemm biex ma jservux ta' kenn għat-Torok. Fit-telgħa int u sejjer lejn l-Isla kienet inbniet knisja zghira ddedikata lil San Pawl fl-1590 u nbnet mill-gdid fil-1735.

Kull monument sar bi hsieb. Il-Madonna f'nofs il-Pjazza Gavino Gulia tirraprezenta l-Monument tac-Centinarju tal-Inkronazzjoni tal-1905 u gie inawgurat fid-19 ta' Gunju 2005. Fost l-ohrajn hadmu fih il-marmista Ronald Pisani u l-iskultur Joe Chetcuti. Il-monument hu mimli tifsiriet: it-tliet targiet ifakkru t-tielet millennju, il-pedestal ifakkar l-istorja tal-inkronazzjoni u tifikret tagħha, l-erba' qsari bil-qoton ifakkru l-arma ta' Bormla gejjja mill-kunjom tal-Granmastru Cotoner, il-blokka tfakkar il-Papiet Piju IX u Piju X kif ukoll il-Kardinali Ferrata u Tedeschini, l-obelisk hu simbolu tat-tluġ fis-sema, u l-istatwa fil-bronz indurate hi kopja tal-Madonna fit-titular tal-parrocca. Il-Pjazza Gavino Gulia hi msemmija għat-tabib filantropu li hadem hafna għan-nies tal-belt tiegħu. Kellu spizerija tiegħu stess fil-qrib fi Pjazza Marina. Baqa' magħruf għall-kitbiet xjentifici tiegħu kif ukoll għall-istudji fil-Botanika.

F'nofs it-tarag imponenti quddiem il-parrocca hemm il-Monument tal-Gwerra. Dan ifakkar ukoll il-Pellegrinagg tad-19 ta' Novembru 1944 li kien sar minn Birkirkara sa' Bormla meta gabu lura l-kwadru titolari u l-vara tal-Kuncizzjoni. Dan sar mill-iskultur Michael Camilleri Cauchi u hallas għalih s-Sur Willie Galea li meqjus bhala benefattur kbir tal-parrocca. Il-monument gie inawgurat f'għeluq il-hamsin sena tal-pellegrinagg fi zmien l-Arcipriet Dun Victor Cilia.

It-toroq ukoll għandhom l-istorja tagħhom. Triq l-Iljun suppost hija Triq Leone għall-Papa Leone XIII, Triq Nelson tfakkar zmien l-Inglizi, Triq San Gorg kienet twassal għall-Birgu fejn kien hemm knisja tal-Griegi ddedikata lill-San Gorg. Triq Matty Grima issemmiet għal attivista laburist fis-snin tmenin li kien attiv f'diversi għaqdiet Bormlizi. Qabel it-triq kien jisimha Triq Buongiorno, Fiha hemm id-Domus Piju IX fejn issir il-Wirja tal-Mejda tal-Appostli fil-Gimgha l-Kbira.

Zorna wkoll il-knisja parrokkjali li tiehu xi gimgha biex tifliha sewwa. L-ewwel knisja tmur lura lejn is-Seklu



Hmistax. Bormla saret parrocca dwar il-1586 u minn dejjem kienet iddedikata lill-Marija Immakulata Kuncizzjoni tas-Sokkors. Kienet inbniet mill-gdid fl-ewwel snin tas-Seklu Sbatax u bdiet tinbena mill-gdid għal kif inhi illum wara l-1686 u damet biex tlestiet minhabba diversi diffikultajiet. F'dil-knisja hemm diversi xoghlijiet artistici u sbieh: il-Krucifiss ta' Kreta f'kappellun ddedikat għalih, l-istatwi li johorgu fil-Gimgha l-Kbira u l-Oratorju tal-Fratellanza tal-Krucifiss, il-linef, il-ventaltari u fided ohra, id-damaskijiet, kollox għadu f'postu.. u dejjem isibu voluntiera biex jiehdu hsiebhom u jghinu fl-organizzazzjoni tasl-parrocca. F'dil-knisja insibu xogħol ta' skultura ta' diversi artisti fosthom Abram Gatt, Karlu Darmanin, Marjanu Gerada u P.Paolo Azzopardi. L-istatwa tal-Kuncizzjoni kienet attribwita lis-Soru Maria De Domenicis, izda meta ghamluha tal-fidda fil-1905 f'Milan x-xogħol kien ta' Abram Gatt. Fil-knisja hemm ukoll xoghlijiet ta' diversi pitturi fosthom Virgilio Monti u Guzeppi Cali'. Il-kwadru titolari hu ta' P.Paolo Caruana. Ix-xbieha tal-Madonna kienet inkurunata mill-Kardinal Ferrata fil-1905. Dil-knisja hi tassew muzew ta' tezori artistici!

Wara harsa hafifa lejn l-istorja tat-Tarzna, il-Pjazza Paolino Vassallo u l-Kazin tal-Banda San Gorg, tlajna għall-pjazza Santa Margerita. Għaddejna hdejn il-Knisja ta' Santa Tereza fejn il-Patrijiet Karmelitani Skalzi li fethu l-kunvent fil-1646. Bosta kienu skulari u kellhom influwenza kbira f'din il-Belt. Il-Konservatorju ta' San Guzepp li kien f'idejn is-Sorijiet ta' San Guzepp tal-Apparizzjoni, illum inbidel f'dar għall-anzjani immexxija b'efficenza. Ir-"Rest" kien bħal centru rikreattiv tal-Methodisti Inglizi li wkoll kellhom knisja fil-qrib tal-pjazza magħrufa bhala x-Xghajra. Illum iservi bhala c-centru tal-Kunsill Lokali. Id-djar f'dawn l-inhaw huma mizmumin veru tajjeb u jfakkar f'familji li għexu hemm. Dawk il-gradi b'hadid ohxon u r-ramm ileqq juri li min joqghod fihom illum għadu jgħozz dawn id-djar. Innutajna wkoll il-knisja u l-monasteru ta' Santa Margerita li twaqqaf fil-1725. Hemm jinsabu s-sorijiet tal-klawura. Iz-zjara tagħna waqfet hawn. Hemm hafna aktar x'tara u x'tapprezza. It-tagħrif li tana l-istoriku kien interessanti u ahna kollha wrejna interess genwin.

Hija haga sabiha li l-Kunsill jorganizza hargiet u laqgħat bħal dawn għax b'hekk insiru nafu aktar dwar wirt artna u nsiru konxji ta' dak li hemm f'kull belt u rahal. 🌸

Maureen German, NCW member

News from the European Economic and Social Committee (EESC)

Barroso presents the Economic Recovery Plan at the EESC December Plenary



The present situation requires a 'qualitative leap' a change, a new way of doing things to get out of the financial crisis, stated Barroso in his opening statement during the debate at the European Economic and Social Committee (EESC) December Plenary Session. "The crisis should serve for a new role that would strengthen co-operation between EU member states"

In presenting the Commission's legislative programme for 2009 and the Economic Recovery Plan, Barroso stated that the European Social model is proving its worth as it has helped to withstand the crisis. He reiterated that an 'exceptional response' is required for an 'exceptional economic crisis'. It is a "situation that requires a speedy decision" in which careful attention needs to be given to the most vulnerable

The recovery plan which is equivalent to 1.5% of the EU GDP is made up of 170 bn euros, from national stimulus budgets and 30 bn euros from the EU budget and the European Investment Bank. It is a time when national governments need to share concerns. The objective is that of breaking the vicious circle of loss of jobs, the economic slow down and bringing back confidence in consumers and in the business sector. Community policy, structural reform, monetary policy and budget reform all need to be addressed to immediately stimulate economic growth in a co-ordinated manner

Barroso also spoke about the importance of the euro zone in this crisis, emphasizing the need to avoid rise in taxes in the short and medium term. The Plan will be evaluated after 2009, however the Commission will keep on monitoring state aid to guarantee the smooth functioning of the single market and to guarantee a level playing field. This needs to be accompanied with new investment, through structural reform. Environment and the economy go together – it is the economy of the future and the creation of new jobs. Governments need to think carefully where to invest – modernising industry to fit with the new demands of a 'green' policy. Although each member state is affected differently by the crisis, Barroso appealed to all EU member states to work together, to ensure that one country's plans will not have negative effects on others. He called for a revision of the convergence plans across political parties and the involvement of the social partners to reduce the effects on society;

As part of the debate, an explanatory opinion on 'Lisbon, Growth and Jobs Strategy', was presented by general rapporteur, Susanna Florio (Employers Group, Italy). She

stated that the full impact of the financial crisis is not yet known although figures up to 25 million unemployed have been estimated. This emphasizes the importance of the renewed Lisbon strategy. She also called for a new strategy of governance in view of the current situation that requires a quick recovery. Governments have the obligation for reform with the co-operation of the social partners. Co-responsibility at different levels is needed aiming at creating new jobs, support for research and university teaching systems amongst others.

The newly elected EESC President Mario Sepi referred to his programme for 2008-2010 entitled *Rights and Solidarity to Guide Globalization*, the key theme of his presidency. He gave a clear signal that he intends to focus his presidency on reinvigorating the European Union, starting by remodelling the role of the Committee. He stressed the need to encourage Civil Society to identify with the values underpinning the Treaty. "We need to identify realistic ways of providing tangible responses to best overcome the economic crisis"

Staffan Nillson, President of Group III Varied Interests Groups (NGOs) spoke about the reduction of CO2 emissions in construction works, the negative effects of the crisis on SMEs and the need for more rapid action in the use of structural funds, increasing financial assistance for infrastructure projects and more public/private partnerships

"Europe is looking up to us for solutions, acting together, investing in knowledge society and a 'green' society stated Henri Malosse, President of Group I representing employers. He called on Commissioner Barroso and the EESC President to take the initiative together – through a conference as early as possible to address the present situation

Goerge Dassis representing Group II workers spoke about the needs of the most vulnerable: pensioners, retired people, SMEs, giving jobs to the unemployed. We cannot live in a 'green' Europe where there is nothing to eat and no jobs.

In replying to the issues raised from the floor, Barroso highlighted the importance of reinforced mechanisms, for co-ordination including the involvement of social partners and a free market economy that is governed by rules. He gave priority to confidence building to avoid countries looking inward in these circumstances.

In conclusion, Barroso praised the role of the EESC acting as a bridge to co-ordinate efforts among civil society stakeholders in facing current challenges and in their efforts for the success of the Lisbon strategy. 🌸

Grace Attard, EESC member
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continues from page 5

Conclusion

There is the need for more indepth research on strengthening equality policies and the quality of life of the family are crucial. We are not aiming at better economic returns, we are aiming at a better quality of life of families.

The responsibility lies as much with member states as with the EU. The proposed European Family Alliance, which the German Presidency has included as one of its priorities, gives a positive note of confidence in the future.

Websites to consult

The European Economic and Social Committee (EESC)
www.eesc.europa.eu

The EU Social Protection and Social Inclusion Process

Thematic study on policy measures concerning child poverty

http://ec.europa.eu/employment_social/spsi/child_poverty_en.htm#childpoverty

Internet Watch Foundation

European Child Friendly Networks (established in the Netherlands)

www.childfriendlycities.nl

info@childfriendlycities.nl

NGO Group for the Convention on the Rights of the Child (Switzerland) 🌸

Grace Attard, member of the EESC

October EESC Plenary Session Report

Elections of President and Vice-Presidents



President Elect: Mario Sepi Group II Trade Unions (Italy) 2008-2010

- He has been concerned with social and trade union policy in Europe since 1966

- The main priorities of his presidency (2008-2010) will be

a. the new Lisbon Strategy after 2010 and

b. affirming the rules of the new Lisbon Treaty,

which proposes more rights and more participation for Civil Society

c. President's Programme for 2008-2010: *Rights and Solidarity to Guide Globalization* (photocopy available)

Vice-President: Irini Ivoni Pari Group I Employers (Greece) 2008-2010

Ms Pari has been a member of the European Economic and Social Committee (EESC) since 1998. She was Vice-President of the Employers Group from 2006 to 2008 and Vice-President of the SOC Section from 2004-2008. She has been a permanent delegate of the Hellenic Federation of Enterprises in Brussels since 1995



Vice-President: Seppo Kallio Group III (Finland) 2008-2010



Mr Kallio has been member of the EESC since 1995 and he is President of the Farmers Category. He has been a member of the Finnish Government Development Policy Committee since 2004 and also Vice-President of the European Movement in Finland

Group III (NGOs) Malta representative 2008-2010
Grace Attard - 2008-2010

Member of SOC Section: Employment, Social Affairs and Citizenship,

REX Section: External relations

INT Section: Single market, Production and Consumption

Labour Market Observatory

Euromed Follow-up Committee

Main opinions adopted during the October Plenary Session

- The ethical and social dimension of European Financial Institutions
- Policy Guidelines for Services of general interest and globalization

- CAP Health Check
- Combating fraud and counterfeiting of non-cash means of payment
- Social experimentation to develop public active inclusion policies

Forthcoming themes to be studied

- Common European Immigration Policy
- Common European Asylum Policy
- Equal treatment between men and women in an activity in a self-employed capacity/improvements in the safety and health at work of pregnant workers, workers who have recently given birth or are breastfeeding
- Education and Training needs for the carbon -free energy society
- Partnership between educational institutions and employers
- European Committee of Enterprises
- Protection of Children at risk from sex tourism

Euromed Region

Summit of the Economic and Social Councils and similar Institutions of the Euro- Mediterranean Region
Rabat, Morocco 14-16 September 2008

1. Euromed Summit for National Economic and Social Councils and similar institutions – Rabat, Morocco

- Final Declaration

Malta to participate in two initiatives

- Study with Euromed partners on

Effective participation of civil society in the Mediterranean Partner Countries in the context of demographic and cultural changes in the future of the Barcelona Process: Union for the Mediterranean

- Continuation of Study Group chaired by CNEL (Italy) on

Factors facilitating access by women to economic and social life' with the aim of deepening other aspects of the condition of women in the Euromed region

- Three Mediterranean partners are in the process of setting up Economic and Social Councils (ESCs): Jordan, Egypt and Morocco

Barcelona Process: Union for the Mediterranean: EESC declaration



Grace Attard

EESC member

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VISIT US AT HF80, INDUSTRIAL ESTATE, HAL FAR
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WWW.PLAYMOBILMALTA.COM

60th anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights

Message by Commonwealth Secretary-General Kamalesh Sharma



10th December 2008 marks 60 years since the Universal Declaration of Human Rights was adopted by the General Assembly of the United Nations. Commonwealth countries were involved in its drafting then, and they are involved in its implementation today. There has long been a close relationship between the countries of the Commonwealth and the promotion of human rights.

The Declaration champions the links between human

dignity and equal rights, and between freedom, justice and peace. It is a statement of principles, setting out ideals and aspirations for all countries. As we in the Modern Commonwealth seek to bring this vision of a life of dignity to our almost 2 billion people, there is so much of our work which sees the Declaration turned into the Deeds of the first decade of the 21st century.

The Declaration speaks ...

- to our Commonwealth work on the right to education,
- to our work on the right to freedom of opinion and

expression, and

- to our work on the right to a standard of living adequate for the health and well-being of the individual, and of the family.

The Declaration enunciates so many of the principles at the heart of our Commonwealth democracy work.

- It spells out the right to be presumed innocent until proven guilty, and to participate in the government of one's country.

- It establishes the right to work, and the principle of equal pay for equal work.

- Most fundamentally, it declares that 'All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights' – a principle at the heart of the Commonwealth.

- It's through work in schools and colleges – and in the workplace, the court, the police station and the health clinic – that the most important impacts of human rights work are felt.

- The Declaration reaches 60 years of age just as the Commonwealth approaches its own 60th anniversary.

On this day I salute the continued relevance and vision of the Declaration, and commit our collective and individual Commonwealth efforts to make real its aspirations.



HUMAN RIGHTS – a work in progress

Message by The International Council of Women's Advisor for Human Rights Jean Corbin Thomas

The Universal declaration of Human rights remains the uniquely defining document of the 20th Century and marking its anniversary is, for us all, a reminder that it is still a 'work in progress'.

On 10 December 2008 the United Nations General Assembly will mark the 60th anniversary of the signing of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR).

At the launch of the special anniversary edition of the Declaration, Louise Arbour, the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, said, "It is difficult to imagine today just what a fundamental shift the Universal Declaration of Human Rights represented when it was adopted 60 years ago. In a post-war world scarred by the Holocaust, divided by colonialism and wracked by inequality, a charter setting out the first global and solemn commitment to the inherent dignity and equality of all human beings, regardless of colour, creed origin, was a bold and daring undertaking, one that was not certain to succeed. The fact that it has led to an extensive infrastructure of protection of all fundamental freedoms we are all entitled to is a tribute to the vision of the drafters of the declaration and to the many human rights defenders who have struggled over the last decades to make that vision a reality. This struggle is far from over, and therein lies the power of the Declaration: it is a living document that will continue to inspire generations to come."

The UDHR became the seminal document providing guiding principles for all subsequently formed UN commissions and agencies, yet, it was another thirty one years before the inauguration of the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM) and other agencies with a focus on women, their development and their fundamental rights.

Whilst the challenges provided by the Declaration are still with us, it is the Convention for the Elimination of Discrimination Against women (CEDAW) 1979 that has become the recognised reporting and monitoring vehicle for supportive member states and civil society organisations.

This is the defining document for women in that the specifics of women's human rights are set down and clearly articulated in a comprehensive, normative and legal framework.

Engagement with the reporting processes, governmental or civil society, provides a unique opportunity for all women around the world to participate in vital advocacy, working for the status of women and providing a voice for those who are not able to speak for themselves.

Celebrations to signal this special anniversary have been taking place during this past year. The anniversary on 10 December is one that everyone must celebrate, individually or collectively. 🌸

DIARY OF EVENTS 2008

October

- 01st Start of the English Language Course level 5
 02nd Lunch with Slacie Zerdecki from USA Embassy
 Start of the Basic Maltese Course
 03rd Start of the English Language Course Level 4
 08th Presentation of Certificates by Hon. Minister Dolores Cristina at NCW Centre
 Konferenza Vision Nazzjonali 2015
 Consulation Meeting Budget 2009 at La Meridien
 Social Issues Committee
 09th Reception by the Ambassador of Spain Doris Bingley and Grace Attard attended Gender Issues in the 2008 US Presidential Campaign University Campus
 10th Consumer & Competition Division Information Session Mental Health Association Film 'A Beautiful Mind' St' James
 14th Forum of Civil Societies Meeting
 15th Parliament Social Affairs Committee – The Family – Doris Bingley attended
 16th Monitoring Committee Doris Bingley attended Breast Care Support Group Lecture – Doris Bingley represented NCW
 16th -18th Aretusa European Association Workshop in Bucharest Doreen Micallef participated
 22nd Eco Café
 23rd Felton Conference to discuss the 'English Language' in Malta
 24th Mass for the repose of the soul of co founder member Jane Spiteri
 28th Anna Lindh Foundation Network Seminar at the University of Malta
 29th NCW Delegation meets the Hon Minister John Dalli Say EU Take Action Project Report presented to the EU Commission in Brussels. Doris Bingley and Marie Demicoli attended
 30th Final Equal mainstreaming Conference

November

- 07th Seminar 'Nghixu ta' Nsara Illum
 Round Table on the Unknown Child at Islamic Centre
 7th – 9th ECICW General Assembly in Brussels Doreen Micallef, Doris Bingley and Grace Attard attended
 09th Jum it Tifkira Quddiesa min Monsinjur Pawl Cremona

- 13th-15th Aretusa Meeting in Poland Doreen Micallef attended
 14th Seminar 'Niskopru lill Mara bhala Don t'Alla'
 15th On the Occasion of the Belgian King's Day a reception by the Belgian Ambassador Grace Attard attended
 Talk on Health and Safety in the Home by Dr Maria Deguara -Health Committee
 17th "Sustaining family values in the changing world" Seminar organized by the Russian Cultural Centre Doris Bingley, Grace Attard Marie Demicoli attended
 19th EDRC Seminar The Evolution of the Idea of a Parliamentary Assembly of the EU Commemorating the Abbe de Sainte Pierre
 21st Executive Committee Meeting
 Doreen Micallef and Grace Attard meet the Ambassador for Spain at the Embassy
 21st -22nd Doris Bingley attends Commonwealth Secretariat Meeting
 22nd NCPE Forum Theatre Band Club of Zejtun Concert
 25th – 28th Commonwealth Foundation Executive Committee Meeting – Doris Bingley
 Commonwealth Foundation Farewell to Professor Guido De Marco
 25th 'Working together to Combat Domestic Violence' Seminar, Maria Camilleri attended
 26th ForLink Project at Intercontinental Hotel
 Eco Café organized by the Environment Committee
 28th MSA and MEUSAC Conference

December

- 02nd Urban Conservation Areas presentation Launch by Hon Chris Said, Doris Bingley attended.
 03rd MEA Business Breakfast - Family friendly measures in the private sector
 04th NCPE Forum Theatre
 12th Conference organized by MONA in Hungary on behalf of Aretusa - Dr Mariosa Vella Cardona represented NCW
 16th NCW Delegation meets PN Secretary Dr. Paul Borg Olivier
 18th Executive Committee Meeting
 Central Committee Meeting
 Author Mary Anne Zammit presents NCW President her latest publication on Rape Doris Bingley attends the Universal Periodic Review presentation by the Foreign Ministry

Health and Safety in the Home

Dr Maria Deguara M. D., M.M.C.F.D kindly accepted our invitation to deliver a talk on Health and Safety in the Home. The talk was well attended and proved both interesting and informative. It was directed at women at home and as such was divided into three sections according to age groups. The first part was addressed at women bringing up young children. The emphasis here was primarily on prevention rather than treatment and it dealt mainly with common emergencies arising at home where young children are involved. First aid measures were explained in detail to enable any mother to intervene in the first stage of frequently occurring emergencies. The second part entailed general safety measures which should be available at any one's residence. The importance

of having readily available items such as fire blankets and fire extinguishers especially in the kitchen was stressed. The concluding part of the talk dealt with particular emergencies where elderly women are concerned. Perils of falls, osteoporosis, reduced mobility, slow reaction time and senile dementia are features which render this particular age cohort more prone and more vulnerable to accidents. Once again the importance of anticipating the occurrence of falls and personal injury was highlighted. What came out strongly was the fact that using common sense most health and safety accidents can be prevented thereby avoiding pain, suffering and even fatalities. 🌸

Health Committee

NATIONAL COUNCIL of WOMEN MALTA ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING JANUARY 2009

The Annual General Meeting will be held on Saturday 31 January 2009 at The William Shakespeare Suite, Victoria Hotel, Sliema, from 8.30 a.m. to 4.30 p.m., with the following agenda:

1. Registration & Coffee
2. Opening prayers, Welcome and Notices.
3. Nomination of Tellers
3. Minutes of the last General Meeting.
5. President's Address.
6. Annual Report by General Secretary
7. Financial Report by Treasurer.
8. Election of officers and members for the Executive.
9. Adoption of Resolutions .
 - a) Participation of Maltese women in the European Parliament
 - b) A Favourable business environment for women entrepreneurs
 - c) The Gender dimension in the Lisbon Agenda
 - d) Health and Safety at the workplace
 - e) Investing in our children:-
 - Children & domestic violence; - Protection from the Internet;
 - Children's Education
 - f) The Environment: Climate Change and Energy Efficiency
 - g) Addressing the needs of irregular immigrants in the host countries
 - h) Strengthening the role of civil society in MCESD
10. Guest Speaker Mr Richard Curmi, Head, Gender Unit ETC
Presentation: *"Sharing responsibilities for more active co-operation between women and men"*

LUNCH 1.00 to 2.00 pm

11. Election results
12. Reports of Standing Committees.
13. Reports of Sectional Committees.
14. Report of Premises/Social Development Committee
15. Correspondence.
16. Other Matters
17. Concluding Address by President

T E A 4.30 pm

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 election:

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

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

Doris Bingley
Hon General Secretary
15 December 2008

For info and booking contact the office.

Tel: 21248881 / Fax: 21246982

Email: ncwmalta@camline.net.mt

Forthcoming Events

Computer Classes

Last remaining places to join the Computer Awareness, ECDL START and ECDL UPGRADE starting during the week of the 19th January. Course fee €46.59

ECO CAFÉ

The sixth session of ECO CAFÉ will be held at NCW Centre on Wednesday 25th February 2009 at 5.30p.m. Ms Catherine Muscat will discuss the problems of caring for plants and trees and Ms Helen Galea St. John will give hints about the use of herbs.

Foundation Dinner

The Foundation Day Dinner will be held on Friday 20th February 2009. More details will be announced later. Keep the date free.

Season's Greetings



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