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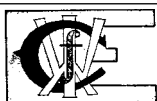
il-Mara

Newsletter of the National Council of Women - Malta



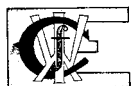
Celebrating the 100th Issue

Members of


**International Council
of Women**

Founded 1888

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


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

Founded 1961

**In Special Consultative
Status with the Economic &
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Founded 1964

Il-Mara

NEWSLETTER OF THE NATIONAL COUNCIL OF WOMEN - MALTA

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EDITORIAL

Dear Readers
A very warm welcome to all our members and friends reading this memorable No. 100 special issue of Il-Mara. The National Council of Women began to publish its newsletter in July 1990.

"Verba volant, scripta manent" meaning "spoken words fly away, written words remain" formed part of the message by the then NCW President Judge Lorraine Schembri Orland. The newsletter has always been published in highest quality containing abundant information. Il-Mara was never intended to be a woman's magazine but rather a newsletter to inform the members on issues relevant to society. Throughout these past twenty-five years it evolved from four pages to sixteen pages providing insights into National, European and International issues.

Quoting from the 1st editorial by Jean Killick, NCW Malta compares favourably with other NCWs abroad in terms of activities organised and that none of our committee members are "ladies of leisure" whatever that might mean. Indeed, we are glad to announce in this issue that Doris Bingley has been elected Vice President on the International Council of Women (ICW) Board during the June Assembly in Izmir. Congratulations to Doris Bingley, and also to



Nadyanne Mangion and Lara Tonna for being elected on ICW Sectoral Committees

The European Union has been designating 'European Years' for the last thirty years and their main purpose is to focus on specific issues of concern to EU citizens. NCW has always been engaged in EU years with specific programmes. As you may be aware, The Year 2015 is the

Year for Development, which once again has seen the involvement of NCW.

NCW as always has been at the forefront in empowering women and men through education policies and programmes carried out at our Centre at Blata l-Bajda. This year it is also participating in the Leap Project, which creates occupational opportunities for disadvantaged groups who are often at risk of poverty.

We look forward to meeting you at our wide-ranging events

We hope you will enjoy reading the newsletter in full colour to celebrate the 100th issue of Il-Mara!

Marie Demicoli
NCW Editorial Board Member

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President's Message

Dear Ladies

The editorial in this issue has given information about the 100th edition of this newsletter and twenty five years of publishing, without a break is truly remarkable. For this we thank those who before us have sustained this important contribution.

Like in other months, these last three months have been hectic, with attendance to various events, consultations and meetings in preparation for CHOGM. The Commonwealth countries are diverse in culture, living standards, education and wealth. I sincerely believe that with sincere commitment and goodwill from the leaders of these countries and the solidarity of other states to actualise the necessary changes and implement them, all commonwealth countries will enjoy the same rights and prosperity. I am looking forward to participating in both the Women's and People's Forum and encourage members to do likewise. We as the National Council of Women are able to contribute and share our experience which has led to attaining gender equality in our country. The NCWs of the Commonwealth countries are invited to gather in Malta for these events.

One of the most discussed topics at present is the pensions reform, where twenty seven recommendations have been presented by the Pensions Strategy Group, who were tasked by the Government to present a strategy and reform for sustainable pensions. NCW is finalising its report that focuses on various and actual circumstances being faced by women today vis a vis the pension. Women today face different obstacles than those faced by women of ten and twenty years ago and these new scenarios need to be addressed in order not to create any discriminations. A number of points were highlighted during a well attended talk recently held at the NCW Centre and points raised by women of all ages shall be part of the NCW's contribution regarding the proposed pensions

strategy.

The main focus in all its work, NCW aims to empower the woman through education and the last years have seen hundreds of women and men participating in educational classes both academic and skills. Following a recent visit to the NCW Centre by the Minister of Education, The Hon. Evarist Bartolo, classes are now continuing throughout the summer and despite the heat, the Center is a hub of activity, with classes in conversational English, parent and child English tuition, Mathematics, IT, etc. The success has been overwhelming, proving that there is the need and the desire to improve one's capabilities and knowledge. We thank the Minister for this opportunity and hope that it shall repeat itself in the coming years. Previously NCW only held one class which was given voluntarily by Mr Ellis and for this, we thank him immensely.

Education is the tool to combat poverty and education is neither time nor season barred but a continuous voyage throughout one's life. It is available through several sources, especially in our country and persons of all ages should be encouraged to take up one course or another. It is heart rendering to meet illiterate persons, especially those of a young age.

Summer is once more with us and what better way to relax than a swim in the clear blue sea with friends and family, the barbeques and the warm evenings, and not forgetting the mosquitoes! I wish you and your families a wonderful summer and relaxed holidays.

Mary Gaerty
President



Congratulations to Rosette Thake

Ms Thake was appointed Secretary General of the Nationalist Party. She becomes the first woman to occupy the post. Ms Thake has been involved in the Nationalist Party for the past two years. She served on the board of Azad. A graduate in communications and social studies, she had been a managing partner in a cooperative in the early education sector for the past 10 years.



In Memoriam Grace Wedekind

Grace Wedekind a great friend of NCW Malta. Grace was a renowned member on ICW, ECICW and NCWGB. Her contributions and advice were highly appreciated in many spheres. She visited Malta many times and was a great mentor to all. Our deepest condolences go to her family and members of the National Council of Women Great Britain.



Tour of St James Cavalier Centre of Creativity, Valletta

Our group consisted of nine people from my MQF1 and SEC English classes at the N.C.W. and myself. We met at 9am at the magnificent Valletta Entrance, proceeded up the grand staircase leading up to Castille Square and through the imposing back entrance to St James Cavalier. Going up this beautiful staircase, we paused to take a group photo.

We made our way to the charming, attractively-designed Atrium, where we took some time to admire a temporary exhibition of magnificent large photographs depicting exotic scenes from the American West Coast, like California, Nevada, Arizona, Chicago etc. by the versatile artistic photographer Charles Mifsud.

At about 9.30 we met our local guide, Ms Anna Portelli, who proceeded to conduct us on an unforgettable tour of St

James Cavalier, expanding on its origins and purpose under the Knights of St John, its subsequent structural and functional transformation as a NAAFI headquarters under the British, its later use as the premises of the Malta Government Printing Press, an inglorious interval when it was closed down and finally its resurgence in all its glory as the Millennium Project, a truly gorgeous Centre of Creativity and the Arts under the renowned Maltese architect Richard England. We were led through the various venues while listening to a fairly detailed commentary in English on each one: the Activity Room, the Music Room, the Main Exhibition Hall, the Atrium, the Back Staircase, the various Exhibition Rooms, the intimate Theatre and the Cinema.

After the tour we enjoyed some relaxation time socialising over some refreshments at

the local cafeteria. Subsequently, we parted, feeling culturally enriched after that morning's experience.

Mr John Ellis,
teacher of English at the N.C.W.



Leap into Job Training

One of the Europe 2020 goals is fighting poverty and social exclusion with the aim of at least 20 million fewer people in or at risk of poverty and social exclusion.

Leap project has as its mission statement: To combat social exclusion and poverty through training and mobility processes. The objective being to create occupational opportunities for vulnerable or disadvantaged groups which are, or often are, at risk of poverty. Posts within NGOs would be created to reinforce efforts for integration within society providing opportunities for these groups to benefit from work experience complimented by the necessary guidance and social mentoring support. Through this project participants can learn to manage more effectively their personal life through measures that will empower them.

NCW participated in this network to help foster social cohesion by accepting three people through this initiative at their offices. Owing to their contacts through various projects NCW could easily facilitate promotion of projects, in fact one of the personnel employed was attending one of the many courses for those adults who want to enhance their skills in ICT and basic literacy.

I interviewed the three people concerned who have been employed in this training



post over the past eight months. All expressed sadness at the ending of the scheme and said it would leave a void, since promise of work is not inevitable. They are hoping for long term employment since the experience has been so positive. Under the firm but friendly and empathic baton of the administrative secretary Marie Demicoli who orchestrated the

whole work experience, the individuals were given individual attention that helped to build confidence in themselves. They commented that Marie not only saw to the work skills training but also engaged them in reflecting on team spirit. They commented that the group was therapeutic, it enhanced their wellbeing because of the caring atmosphere that was built up. Perhaps the most important aspect that came out was the opportunity for socialising with various groups of different ages, social backgrounds and interests and the need to adapt to situations that took place at NCW in the course of their activities.

Preventing poverty by promoting social competencies is an aspect that needs to be accentuated because vulnerable people become isolated; integration through employment makes them independent as well as giving them a more participatory role in the community. Time management is a struggle for some as one of them admitted, remaining in bed for most of the morning

because he finds no point in getting up, finding nothing to do. One admitted that she came to the office even when she was not well. Most satisfying for the other was using competencies that she had learned but had no opportunity to use at home. For example using English, listening and empathising with people who needed comforting besides learning how to use the equipment such as photocopier, projector and such like.

This experience has instilled the need for work from all aspects not just the economical one. As one commented being on relief does not give the same satisfaction as working. However some fit in easily others need more time and more mentoring to come out of their shell.

Vulnerability brings about insecurity so it is important for the organisers when dealing with this group of people to provide regular payment of stipend, provision of realistic work prospects and no false hopes because what has been gained can be destroyed in a flash.

Vivien Cassar
Education committee



Contributory Pensions Talk at NCW Centre

On Wednesday 8th July, the Social Affairs Committee within the National Council of Women organised a seminar on Contributory Pensions. The guest speaker for this seminar was Mr Edward Buttigieg, Director Contributory Benefits within the Department of Social Security. The seminar was very well attended with the participants raising a number of pertinent points and questions about the topic. The event was also covered by two of the biggest media production houses in Malta pertaining to the two political parties, that is, One Tv and Net Tv. The Social Affairs Committee members were interviewed by the media about the scope of the seminar and about NCW's feedback on the Pensions Reform that was recently launched by government.



The overall scope of this event was to encourage individuals, particularly women, to start working under regular conditions, that is, to declare their income and thus enrol themselves on the national security system. Furthermore, another aim of this event was to make individuals aware of the benefits of paying national insurance contributions and thus become eligible for receiving a pension.

Mr Buttigieg gave a very thorough explanation about Social Security Benefits with particular focus on Insurability, Pensions, Credit Contributions and Other Benefits. Furthermore, during his presentation, Mr Buttigieg also made reference to a number of recommendations that were recently made by the Pensions Reform Strategy Group. One of the recommendations is in relation to the widow's pension whereby it is being suggested that the spouse's effort to keep working under regular conditions is recognised with the benefit of receiving the deceased spouse's full pension rather than 5/6ths of that pension. Another recommendation



mentioned is in relation to credits, whereby it is being suggested that persons who decide to terminate their work due to a period of studying will start receiving credits for the time they spend studying.

A number of participants present raised a number of questions about pensions, which were duly clarified by Mr Buttigieg. In view of the high attendance to this seminar, the Social Affairs Committee is thinking of organising a follow up seminar. Furthermore, the National Council of Women is currently also preparing a detailed report on the Pensions Reform recommendations.

Amy Camilleri Zahra
Coordinator Youth Committee

The Hon Minister Evarist Bartolo, Minister for Education visits NCW Centre

The National Council of Women Executive Committee invited the Hon Minister Evarist Bartolo, Minister for Education and Mr Anthony De Giovanni, Advisor Programme Implementation Directorate to visit the National Council of Women Centre on Wednesday 13th May 2015 to meet the adult students that frequent educational programmes at NCW centre.

The Minister had the opportunity to witness the sterling work that the National Council of Women does through its educational programme in collaboration with the Directorate for Lifelong Learning to empower the potential of adult learners, thus eradicating poverty and promoting an inclusive society.

The Minister met some of the students, who proposed that the department for lifelong learning should continue providing its educational programme throughout the summer months therefore giving the students an opportunity to complete their course at a shorter span.

The Hon Minister Evarist Bartolo said that he is aware of the fine work being carried out at the National Council of Women Learning Centre in providing many women and men with an opportunity to obtain qualifications to further their education or to enter the labour market. He assured NCW President

that he will do his utmost to ensure the full support of his ministry, financially or otherwise.

Marie Demicoli
Office Administration



Summer Courses at NCW



FEFI: Finding Education for Female Inmates



The Department of Criminology at the University of Malta together with the Corradino Correctional Facility are partners in a Life Long Learning programme financed by the EU entitled FEFI: Finding Education for Female Inmates. Malta is one of 10 partners, aiming at developing better opportunities for education with regards to female inmates. Dr. Sandra Scicluna coordinator of FEFI was contacted to provide feedback regarding the project. During the first phase of FEFI the partners conducted interviews with female inmates and staff working in various prison sectors. This was aimed at getting an idea of the educational and vocational problems that inmates face, with the hope of assisting them by offering appropriate programmes that will help in their re-integration. A quarter of the female inmate population in Malta were interviewed and the following is a summary of their demographic characteristics, their feelings and thoughts.

Their age was between 25 and 49 years, they are Maltese, single, have at least one child, with a low level of education being sentenced for more than 2 years, this being their first prison sentence. However, most had a job before they entered prison and they maintained themselves either through the job or with the help of their family. The inmates reported that the most important social network was their family, with the majority confirming that they were not victims of any form of violence at home. However, a third of the sample included victims of domestic violence, either as children or as adults. This seems to be a common contributing factor to criminogenic tendencies and mental health problems, which may continue to arise if these women are not provided the support they need. When they first entered prison, most of them needed mental health care or had health problems, mainly connected with substance abuse, help that they did not all receive.

There is a general lack of motivation to participate in educational or vocational programmes, with two thirds saying that they did not participate and are not interested in participating in educational programmes. This is the result of their feelings about the lack of adequate programmes that address their needs. From the questionnaires completed, we know that the major problems lie in substance abuse or mental health problems and a past history of domestic violence. These people need help to address these issues, before they can address the issue of vocational or educational

training. Unfortunately, this help may be missing with the lack of psychologists, social workers, vocational/educational trainers and other professionals. A third of the sample said that they did not get the help they needed, and all agreed that they did not have a sentence plan upon incarceration. A lack of support from the prison staff was also mentioned.

Additionally, those women participating in educational programmes do so because they have a desire to learn and they like to learn new subjects. They foster a hope for a better life. Unfortunately, these are a minority because the majority were either not interested or they feel that the educational courses are below their standard of education. Once released inmates want to reactivate family bonds and find work. The majority has had a positive experience with NGO support and they plan to go back to them for help. Most admit that they need help with their drug addiction and in getting a home.

These women, who are often vulnerable members of society, may benefit from biopsychosocial support whilst in a contained environment where they can work to address their problems and learn new skills in order to lead a better lifestyle upon release. They may require short-term or long-term intervention consisting of various therapeutic techniques such as motivational interviewing and cognitive behavioural intervention to assist them in this. Aftercare is also a fundamental aspect for most of these women to be successful in re-integrating back into their community, especially for those who do not have a supportive environment once released from prison. This is why a multidisciplinary approach is more likely to provide sufficient care to meet the needs of the individual concerned.

It is important for us as prosocial members of our community, to be aware of what could be the needs of female inmates in order for us to contribute towards their re-integration back into society in whatever way we can.

Jeanette Fava Cassar

Forensic Psychologist,
NCW Executive Committee Member;
in collaboration with Dr Sandra Scicluna,
Department of Criminology, University of Malta.



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Resolutions 2015

Cooperation in Preventing and Deterring Undeclared Work

Justification/s

- Undeclared work undermines the legality, security, solidarity, social and tax justice, free market competition and the rights of workers at national and EU level
- At National level, there is the need for a strategy that tackles undeclared work, using appropriate measures to prevent, control and combat it, through the joint cooperation of government, social partners and civil society organisations
- Undeclared or falsely declared work involves a very diverse range of people: employees not covered by social security, or without a contract or paid partly in cash; family helpers; workers who do not declare their second job; self-employed workers who choose not to follow the rules; the bogus self-employed; irregular immigrants involved in undeclared work, and workers from third countries who subcontract to Member States without minimum standards for decent work, making undeclared work difficult to tackle and calls for targeted strategies
- In line with the EESC, NCW agrees with the proposal to establish a European platform to enhance Member States cooperation in combating undeclared work through a coordinated strategy at European level to create jobs and smart, sustainable and socially inclusive growth and improve cooperation on combating undeclared work and falsely declared self-employment or bogus self-employed

while abiding by national laws and practice. (*Proposal for a Decision of the European Parliament and of the Council on establishing a European platform to enhance cooperation in the prevention and deterrence of undeclared work*)

Recommendations

- NCW supports the mandatory involvement of all Member States and believes that through joint and coordinated participation of all the EU countries, it will be possible to address cross-border matters and issues connected with the presence of undocumented undeclared workers from third countries to prevent, deter and combat, the negative consequences it entails: i) for workers' rights and safeguards; ii) for normal free market competition; and iii) for the free movement of workers in the EU; in line with the priorities and guidelines set out in the Europe 2020 strategy;
- promote and encourage the sharing of instruments, policies and best practice, addressing both economic factors and the cultural and social context.
- the appointment of a national single contact point, to ensure Member States' mandatory involvement of the social partners and civil society organisations that – having built up specific knowledge of undeclared work – can deliver added value to the strategy to tackle this issue
- Measures designed to prevent and deter undeclared work should combine a variety of tools, including controls

and sanctions with smart regulatory measures, with a view to securing a stable and predictable legal framework,

- reducing the cost of implementing rules, avoiding excessive taxation on labour, using efficient methods so as to encourage employers to declare work and comply with the law, including through tax incentives and simplified systems for the payment of tax and social security obligations
- introducing tax incentives to coax undeclared work into the open.
- raising public awareness, to step up the capacity for civil society involvement,

At EU level within the platform it is important to make use of the role that could be played by:

- Eurostat, by carrying out assessments to ascertain the scale of, and trends in, the shadow economy and undeclared work in the EU;
- Eurofound, by setting up an interactive database of best practices in tackling undeclared work at EU level; and
- The OECD, in providing technical support for understanding the phenomenon;
- maintains that it would be worth equipping the European platform with a monitoring and evaluation mechanism using a system of ad hoc indicators and independent assessors

Source: EESC Opinion SOC 511 Cooperation in Preventing and Deterring Undeclared Work

Protection of Refugee Children

Justification/s

- a. Protection of 'Children Still Unborn' - while on their way to 'seek refuge'. Such children require to be registered on arrival in country of asylum but have been refused registration if biological father was not with wife at the time, for some reason.
- b. Protection of 'Unaccompanied Minors'. Such minors may have lost parents or relatives at sea or in the desert and found themselves alone with no one to care for them on arrival in host country. Such children cannot be left "in legal uncertainty"

or in a state of "statelessness".

- c. Children 'In Search of Their Parents'. - Children who arrive 'unaccompanied' as 'b' above when fleeing from their homeland, are undergoing great pain and suffering and are anxiously yearning to trace their parents. Likewise, parents are desperate to find their lost children.

Recommendations

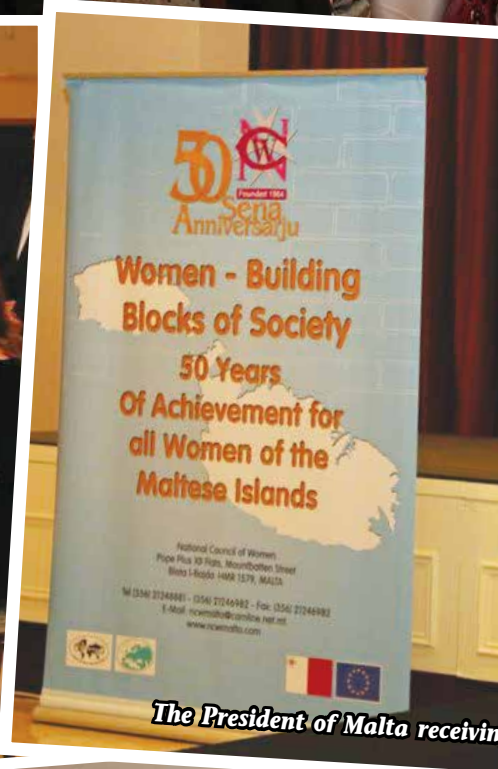
- a. Children need to have their birth registered in the host country to give them 'a civic identity'. Future of baby is prejudiced and it becomes uncertain

.The State needs to be sensitive to such situations and be more flexible in its interpretation of the law.

- b. Such children also require 'legal recognition' by the host country. "The best interest of the Child" should take precedence over all other 'national and international law'.
- c. No efforts should be spared by the host country to help children trace their lost parents and unite families together!

*Resolutions to be continued
in the next issue*

National Council of Women Foundation



Foundation Day Celebrations 2015



g her Honorary Life Membership



Digital Strategy for Health Care in Malta Implementing a Digital Strategy in Health Care Systems

Background

In 2012, the European Commission published **an action plan that set out the obstacles to the full use of digital solutions in Europe's healthcare systems**. This plan is now being implemented under the title "eHealth Action Plan 2012-2020 – Innovative healthcare for the 21st century".

The aim, of the plan is

- to **improve health care** for the benefit of patients,
- to **give patients more control** over their treatment and
- to **cut costs**.

eHealth, which includes telemedicine and **mHealth**, is defined as follows by the WHO: **eHealth is the transfer of health resources and health care by electronic means**. It encompasses three main areas:

- The **delivery of health information**, for health professionals and health consumers, through the internet and telecommunications.
- Using the **power of IT and ecommerce** to improve public health services, e.g. through the education and training of health workers.
- The use of **ecommerce and ebusiness practices** in health systems management.

Patients and healthcare professionals are using telemedicine applications with great enthusiasm and millions of Europeans have downloaded smartphone apps to **monitor their health and wellbeing**. However, **the quality of these sources of information varies greatly** and not all search engines distinguish between reliable, officially approved sources and less reliable ones.

It important to find user-centred solutions to make sure **people with lower levels of education and infrequent internet users can also have access to information**. **Information for the visually impaired** be made available in the way most appropriate, for example in larger print or as audio data and "simplified language" versions. Videos, possibly with sign language, could be produced to demonstrate the proper use of medical appliances (such as asthma sprays) to the deaf.

Additional information

Electronic distribution of product information approved by drug licensing authorities will further improve access. An electronic database of patient information leaflets (PILs) and technical information approved by health authorities (*Summary*

of Product Characteristics – SPCs) can ensure the availability of up-to-date and targeted information on medicinal products

Infrastructure and reliability of information

Even though electronic access to information is considered to be important, it should be stressed that doctors (particularly GPs) and other healthcare professionals, such as pharmacists and nurses, are the first point of contact for patients, providing them with recommendations regarding their ailments and treatment options.



Professionals, particularly GPs, play a key role in healthcare systems and **high-quality information** is essential if we want to have well-informed medical professionals who can meet the healthcare needs of the EU population

The pharmaceutical industry should be **responsible for accurate and up-to-date information on its products**. The website/portal for officially **approved information** should be developed in **close collaboration with all major stakeholders** – drug licensing authorities, the pharmaceutical industry, which should operate and finance it, as well as patient associations, organisations representing people with disabilities and healthcare professionals – in order to best meet requirements.

Technical research and technical development

The designs of national databases need to be **user-friendly and widely accessible** database, including also options for audio and video data. A technical solution that is freely available should be developed that makes the most effective use of existing sources.

Often, citizens/patients do not want to use too many scanning applications on their smartphones. The database/portal should therefore be **accessible using conventional scanner technologies**, such as Open format solutions should be sought to increase take-up. It must be possible to request and view information using any

kind of device (PC, tablet, smartphone, etc.).

Comparisons of technical solutions should be made and include matters related to parts of the healthcare system (such as Member State initiatives to reach people via television connections or ATMs and initiatives proposed by the European Commission). For example, in Italy, pharmacies are required by law to print out updated package leaflets that the pharmaceutical industry has put on a database. Such printing – either by the pharmacist or by patients (using ATM-like terminals) – is a further complementary option and could cater for those who do not use the internet.

Testing and presentation of content and research

Public receptiveness to the various options must be analysed and technical solutions tested by users to check that they work.

Content must be presented in a way that enables **adaptation to the individual needs of patients/citizens** and must comprise all the information required by the relevant licensing documents or by law.

To enable rapid feedback for all those involved, a possibility for users to evaluate the information (above all in terms of understand ability) could be incorporated. *Social media* elements for presentation, dissemination and exchange could be used for this. Internet usage varies greatly between different social groups. Many use social networks but do not make use of the information available.

A small group (an estimated 10% according to Germany's Federal Statistical Office) never use the internet at all.

Research must include structural questions about the testing of technical solutions in order to increase acceptance. Research is necessary to **identify the best means of encouraging active learning** and to encourage people to make use of existing sources of information. The various educational institutions (universities, adult education centres, lifelong learning programs etc.) play an important **role in strengthening the many skills involved** – e.g., working with new technologies, getting involved and managing one's health in a socially beneficial way, and imparting social and technical expertise

Source EESC Opinion: INT 767 Towards Digital Health, Rapporteur: Ms Heinisch

Grace Attard,

*Association for Consumer Rights, Malta
MCESD Civil Society*

ECICW IZMIR statement issued on June 5, 2015

More women in leading positions at FIFA

The ECICW (European Centre of the International Council of Women) is concerned about the unacceptable and intolerable situation at FIFA.

The powerful sport Federation, which is led by men, is rocked by scandal after a wave of arrests of football officials on corruption charges and bribery allegations. So the football world has to be at the dawn of a new era.

Therefore the ECICW appeals that women from the international sports and football world should be more

involved and take leading positions at FIFA.

The member Countries of the European Centre of the International Council of Women (ECICW - CECIF), a pan-European umbrella organization working within the framework of the International Council of Women (ICW - CIF), with participative Status at the Council of Europe, present in IZMIR were:

Germany, Great Britain, Greece, France, FYRO Macedonia, Israel, Italy, Lebanon, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Russia, Spain, Switzerland, The Netherlands Turkey, Ukraine,

With them were observers from, Australia, New Zealand, North Cyprus, South Korea and Taiwan.

Doris Bingley

ECICW-CECIF President



ICW Environment Advisor letter to Ministers and Shadow/Opposition Ministers regarding the urgent need to mitigate climate change.

ACTIONS FOR REDUCING GLOBAL CLIMATE CHANGE

In December 2015, in Paris, 194 countries' representatives are to negotiate how each country is to make meaningful cuts to greenhouse gas emissions, so as to keep global temperature rise to below 2 degrees of warming. These agreements are to follow the Kyoto Protocol, for post 2015.

In Kiev 2006, the International Council of Women Resolution 6 stated:

"The International Council of Women calls upon all its member councils to urge their national governments to:

1. Subscribe to and implement the Kyoto Protocol and its successors, as long as they seek to enact similar outcomes such as moving away from fossil fuels, and work actively for their implementation,
2. Co-operate with other developed and developing countries in measures to reduce greenhouse gas concentrations in the atmosphere with the object of mitigating catastrophic world-wide climatic changes, and
3. Support and encourage the development of renewable energy technologies such as solar and wind power, geothermal energy and the hydrogen economy."

There has been growing optimism that countries appreciate the need to cooperate, and to respect diversity. At the National level there have been

commitments from all European Union members to reduce emissions by 40%; the USA is targeting 26-28%; also Russia, Switzerland and Norway, as well as Mexico, Gabon, Andorra have made commitments. (See: <http://www4.unfccc.int/submissions/indc>)

The improvements have been helped by the technological developments in wind and solar electric energy. The solar efficiencies have increased 40%, and wind power is cheaper and more efficient. So, along with new developments in storage (eg, Tesla battery & Zen) it is possible for Renewable Energy to clean up electricity. (Ref: <http://newsroom.unfccc.int/clean-energy/new-batteries-can-boost-renewables-tesla-launch/>) The G7 (USA, UK, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, Canada) called for decarbonisation of the global economy by 2100, with deep cuts to greenhouse gases to be agreed at Paris in December.

More countries are adopting policies, in the national interest, and for energy security and health benefits for clean energy and energy efficiencies. Energy efficiencies in the built environment have been and will be important.

There is growing mass mobilisation for action. Before the Lima CoP, China and the USA agreed to act and to act jointly on 5-6 projects.

If the World is to achieve less than 2 degrees of warming, then there needs to be carbon neutrality by 2050. For



INTERNATIONAL COUNCIL OF WOMEN
CONSEIL INTERNATIONAL DES FEMMES
(Founded 1888)

the first time in a million years there have been months of emissions at 400 ppm, and globally they are continuing to rise. There will need to be increases in absorption involving forests (reafforestation and not cutting and burning forests), and improvements in land management and agricultural practices to restore carbon in the soil. (Ref. National Council of Women Australia Environment Advisor's report, 8 May 2015, on talk by Christiana Figueres, the Executive Secretary of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), at the Australian National University on 7th May, 2015.)

The International Council of Women urges each country to realise the urgency of the need to commit to reduce emissions substantially, (30-40% post Paris 2015), and adopt practices that sequester carbon. That if insufficient actions are taken, then future generations will suffer more, and changes will be much more costly. There is a moral imperative to take responsibility for making the needed changes.

The 34th International Council of Women

The Turkish National Council of Women, under the leadership of the General President, Isilay Saygin organized an inspiring and varied programme in Izmir. The 34th International Council of Women General Assembly got underway at the Kayalzmir Thermal Hotel with an opening ceremony on May 30 evening, called "Caring for Women is Caring for the World" Doris Bingley as president of ECICW organised the European Regional Centre Meeting and represented NCW Malta.

The guests who attended the opening ceremony included high officials of Izmir and female leaders of ICW member countries. Cosima Schenk, the president of ICW and Isilay Saygin the General President of NCW Turkey made the opening speeches. The key note speaker was Minister Dr Veysel Eroglu. The President of NCW Izmir Suheyly Diker and Fatos Inal Second General President of NCW Turkey welcomed the guests. Doris Bingley ECICW President made the concluding remarks. All speakers had one



Balcova Thermal organized by NCW Turkey with the theme "Health and Ageing of Women in the 21st Century"

The official business programmes of the 34th International Council of Women General Assembly started with the 1st Plenary on May 31st at the Conference Hall of Hotel Kaya.

During the morning session, members reviewed and approved the minutes of the 33rd ICW-CIF General Assembly held in Seoul, South Korea. In addition, elections for a new president who will lead the organization for the next three years and a treasurer were held. JungSook Kim from South Korea was elected President while Martine Marandel from France was elected Treasurer.

In the afternoon during the 2nd Plenary the elections for the five Vice-Presidents and Assistant Treasurer were held. The five elected Vice Presidents are Linda Liu from Taiwan, Elisabeth Newman from Australia, Christine Knock from New Zealand, Doris Bingley from Malta and Hean Bee Wee from Australia. The elected Assistant Treasurer is Anne-Elisabeth Iba Zizen.

On June 1st at the 3rd Plenary, the National Councils exchanged a wide range of good practices, knowledge and experience while presenting their reports and discussed women's rights and gender equality in their different countries. It was acknowledged that actions to promote gender equality and women's empowerment are central to a country's effective response to climate change, in order for it to meet the challenges and achieve the Post-2015 Development Agenda.

After lunch, the 4th Plenary started with ICW-CIF Standing Committees' Plans of Action and Objectives for the next three years presented to the delegates for adoption which received a unanimous approval. Then the UN

Representatives read their reports and JungSook Kim highlighted ICW's New York Seminar held at the CSW 59 meeting. These were followed by elections for ICW Board Members, Recording Secretary and Standing Committees Co-ordinators and Experts. Fatos Inal and Jamal Ghibril became Board Members and Isin Atala recording secretary.

NCW Malta apart from having Doris Bingley as Vice-President, has two members elected for the Standing Committees, Nadya Anne Mangion as Co-ordinator for General Well Being and Lara Tonna as Youth Advisor. That evening the participants were treated to a Hammam.

Cosima Schenk, Jungsook Kim and Isilay Saygin the General President of NCW Turkey



message to those present: to encourage women to participate in all spheres of public life in order to tackle global issues. They appreciated the efforts that women leaders have made by shedding light on contemporary issues which are plaguing women and finding solutions to various challenges as well as leaving a positive mark on society.

A Youth orchestra from the Academy of Music entertained the guests. The evening ended with a cocktail party and family photo.

During the day of 30th May all delegates, observers and National participants attended the very interesting and informative seminar at Hotel

ICW new board members



On June 2nd the 5th Plenary started with an Interfaith Service. Christine Knock of New Zealand organised the this Service which opened with the singing "Morning has Broken" then Christians, Anglicans, Orthodox, Islam, Hindu, Buddhist, Bahai and other faiths prayed together. It was a very moving session.

This was followed by presentation of Seven Resolutions from different Councils.



General Assembly in Izmir, Turkey

Each Resolution was read, discussed and put to the floor for approval. The approved Resolutions covered a variety of areas—the humanitarian impact of nuclear weapons; corruption; women and palliative care/lack of access to controlled medicines for relief of pain; gender equality in sanitation; gender pay gap - discrimination against women in the workplace; working for sound regulations on fracking technology; the rights of asylum seeking women and children. The full resolution will be on NCW website

Afterwards there was the LELAF Report and the LELAF Award Ceremony (The Mechta van den Bogart Award) which went to Manisa Atelier while the collection from the ICW shop sales went to the NCW Turkey funded School. Two group of delegates were formed one visited Manisa and the other the School. ICW delegates were impressed by the way both projects are being run and the results achieved.

That evening all the participants went to Balcova Thermal Hotel for the Turkish Night. It was a fantastic evening with National Costumes worn. The Turkish ladies looked fantastic, some wearing 400 years old embroidered gowns. There was also a presentation of a traditional wedding ceremony.

The Business Meeting continued on June 3rd with the presentation of ICW Projects: in Nepal – here everyone admired and congratulated Elisabeth Newman who on her way to Izmir from Australia managed to visit Kathmandu after the devastating earthquake to assess the project. The other project is in the Former Yugoslavian Republic of Macedonia, one is in Lebanon and another in UK.

Afterwards participants evaluated the triennial theme 2012-2015 and actively discussed the new triennial theme for 2015-2018 which was unanimously approved: "Transforming Society through the Empowerment of Women"

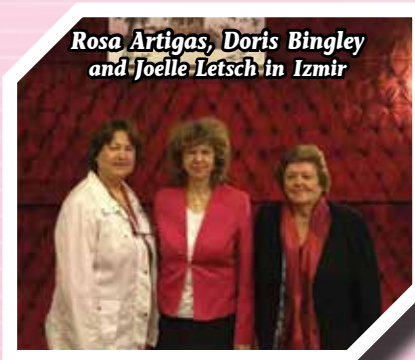
After the business session, women representatives from each country toured Izmir and enjoyed the attractions this town offers.

That evening the Gala Dinner took place, the international contingent

networked and built up a number of contacts. They enjoyed every moment of that evening especially the beautiful music and singing by an Izmir famous group. A cake in honour of the 30th anniversary of Izmir NCW was cut by the presidents of ICW, ECICW, NCW Turkey and NCW Izmir.



Thursday 4th June was dedicated to the ICW Regional Councils. Doris Bingley ECICW President organized and presided over the Spring 2015 General Assembly. ECICW had a full programme which included the approval of the minutes of the Autumn GA in Vilnius, Lithuania, the financial report presented by Treasurer Rosa Artigas while the Presidents or Representatives of the Councils presented their reports. President Doris Bingley gave a resume of the work done during these last four years which was greatly appreciated and there was particular interest in hosting future ECICW G.A.



Representatives from member countries shared their practices for enhancing women's right and empowering women while elections were held according to the statutes to form a new board. Cosima Schenk from Switzerland was elected President, Monica Tolman, from Great Britain, Rosa Artigas from Spain, and Fatos Inal from Turkey were elected Vice-Presidents,



Martine Marandel from France was elected Treasurer and Joelle Letsch from Luxembourg was elected General Secretary.

This busy session was followed by a trip to the Jockey Club for the ICW Horse Race Cup. All the representatives dressed up wearing various hats and fascinators imitating Ladies Day at Ascot, UK.

Lastly, on June 5th with all the outcomes discussed from the various forums, workshops and conference, the delegates were presented with new life members, individual members, and new members of the committee of honour.

It was time to say farewell. The outgoing President made a moving speech which was followed by a very inspiring one of the incoming President. JungSook Kim presented the New Board amid great applause.

At the Closing Ceremony, delegates and attendees expressed sincere appreciations towards the Turkish National Council of Women for the efficient preparations and organisation of all the events and programmes of the General Assembly in Izmir. The whole programme in connection to the General Assembly was a great success. Our warmest congratulations to the Turkish National Council of Women!

The Decision of the Assembly was for the next ECM to take place in Taiwan.

Saturday 6th June was an optional visit to Ephesus which was a very inspiring cultural experience and a visit to the Virgin Mary Place. This heritage sight was touching and moving, seeing people of different religions and beliefs paying homage at this humble shrine while lighting candles.

On Sunday 7th June the new ICW Board met to discuss the next three

years programme and Plan of Action which will have the theme "Transforming Society through the Empowerment of Women"

Doris Bingley
Hon President ECICW
Vice-President ICW

EESC News

Improving the Performance of National Dual Training Systems

Young Europeans have been hit hard by the crisis in several Member States, at huge human, social and economic cost. There is urgent need to address structural problems that make the transition from school to employment difficult.

Well-functioning apprenticeships and other quality forms of work-based learning (WBL) systems can help young men and women to make a smoother transition from school to employment. However there is the need to change mindsets towards WBL. Recently, The Riga conclusions have come up with "a new set of medium-term deliverables in the field of VET for 2015-2020".

To improve the image and attractiveness of WBL and apprenticeships requires a combined effort by schools and companies, the social partners and the political level. Having employers in the driving seat when it comes to the design and delivery of apprenticeships schemes can help ensure more apprenticeships.

Member States need to ensure lifelong training and development of VET teachers and trainers, with particular focus on the development of tutors and in-company trainers. The Commission – with relevant partners needs to develop tools to monitor, collect data and evaluate what works in the Member States and identify the features of well-functioning WBL. The aim is to ensure quality in apprenticeships and other forms of WBL systems.

As a contribution to the European Alliance for Apprenticeships and the EQAVET reference framework, for example, a data platform or toolkit could be set up, containing practical ideas and solutions as to what works.

Eurostat (Eurobarometer) should also carry out a more systematic study of young people who Complete vocational education and training, and have the skills that are in demand and also of how apprenticeships in firms have helped them gain these skills.

Partnerships between schools, trade unions and the business community should be enhanced as Social partners play a decisive role in all stages of well-functioning WBL systems (design, implementation, control, evaluation etc.). Strengthening and making better use of social dialogue at all levels can be an effective instrument to improve the attractiveness and quality of WBL.

Validation of non-formal and informal learning

Despite the unfavourable economic and social circumstances many EU countries are currently facing, in which even formal education does not guarantee finding a job, the EU cannot fail to validate the hidden wealth that lies in the experience and skills that people have acquired through non-formal or informal means.

This validation could provide opportunities in particular to certain disadvantaged groups (women, migrants, young people, older workers). However, it should not create false hopes that they would quickly find a place in the labour market. This requires economic and social policy aimed more at investment, creating quality jobs, and reducing poverty and the risk of social exclusion. These policies must also guide and support the strengthening of education, vocational training

and retraining systems.

The Council Recommendation on the validation of non-formal and informal learning of 20 December 2012, highlights the fact that 'the validation of learning outcomes (knowledge, skills and competences) acquired through non-formal and informal learning can play an important role in enhancing employability and mobility, as well as increasing motivation for lifelong learning, particularly in the case of the socio-economically disadvantaged or the low-qualified'.

Employer organisations, individual employers, trade unions, chambers of industry, commerce and skilled crafts, national entities involved in the process of validating professional qualifications and in assessing and certifying learning outcomes, employment services, youth organisations, youth workers, education and training providers, and civil society organisations are key stakeholders with an important role to play in facilitating opportunities for non-formal and informal learning and any subsequent validation processes



Civil Society Day 2015 a tool for better legislation in the general interest

The annual Civil Society Day is a major EESC initiative, organised in partnership with its Liaison Group with European civil society networks, bringing together key players from European and national civil society organisations, business leaders and entrepreneurs, academics, EU policy- and decision-makers and interested media. It provides a forum for dialogue on issues that matter to civil society stakeholders at European level.

With a new Commission in office, it appears even more crucial to enhance civil society involvement in a strategic way, and to develop a real civil dialogue to improve legislation at European level and respond better to citizen's needs.

This year's event, held on the 16 June at the EESC, with the title was "*Civil dialogue: a tool for better legislation in the general interest*" aims at laying down principles and guidelines for a permanent and structured civil dialogue at European level.

The works of the conference was based on the Road Map that was adopted at the NGO Forum in Riga in March 2015 and will focus on how to implement it through specific actions. The morning focused on how to engage citizens and the abovementioned Road Map, while the afternoon session discussed three topics in participatory workshops, dealing with:

- How to make civil dialogue more effective in the policy making environment
- How to contribute to the social and civic dimension of governance
- How can civil dialogue contribute to the external dimension of European politics

Participants were invited to analyse the current situation, the strengths and weaknesses, exchange best practices, identify possible synergies or bottlenecks that stand in the way of an effective dialogue which can really contribute to better legislation with a view to the general interest.

Grace Attard,
NCW Vice-President, EESC

DIARY OF EVENTS

April

- 1st Day of Reconciliation by Father Alfred Vella
- 15th Executive Meeting
- 17th Careers + Education Fair 2015 at Smart City Global College Malta
Smart City
ACR Meeting, National Council of Woman
Piano Recital hosted by the President of Malta. Doris Bingley and Marie Demicoli attended
- 20th Event organised by the Turkish Embassy at San Anton Palace under the patronage of the President of Malta, Mary Gaerty attended
- 23rd Konferenza dwar: L-Għarfien Sesswiali ġewwa l-familja
- 24th WasteServ Presentation Awards for EWWR Mary Gaerty, Doris Bingley and Marie Demicoli attended
Symposium 2015 Religion, Freedom and Peace
- 27th MITA Student Placement Programme 2015 information session Marie Demicoli and Doris Bingley attended
Ambassador of Netherlands Reception to mark the National Day, Mrs Mary Gaerty and Doris Bingley
- 29th Quddiesa Kon-Katidral ta' San Gwann, Valletta: Nisa Azzjoni Kattolika. Mary Gaerty attended
Consultation Session on 'A Global Partnership for Poverty Eradication and Sustainable Development Doris Bingley and Mary Gaerty attended

May

- 1st The Breast Cancer Support Charity Walk 2015
- 2nd Koperattiva Kummerċ Ġust, Seminar on Ethical Consumption and Fair Trade.
- 4th MCESD meeting with Leo Brincat Eco Contribution Mary Gaerty attended
- 5th NCW Foundation Day Celebrations Gala Dinner at the Corinthia Balzan
- 7th NCPE Annual Conference at Sacro Cour Hall, Dar Qalb ta' Ġesu', Sta. Venera Doris Bingley and Marie Demicoli attended
Exhibition U.S. National Travel

- & Tourism Week. Mary Gaerty, Doris Bingley and Marie Demicoli attended
- 8th Meusac 11th Anniversary of Malta in EU and the opening of New Parliament. Djalogu bit-tema "Il-Futur tad-Djalogu Soċjali fl-Unjoni Ewropea". Ms Mary Gaerty, Doris Bingley and Grace Attard attended
- 9th Reception to celebrate Europe Day. Mrs. Gaerty and Mrs. Bingley invited.
- 10th Launch of Breastfeeding Unit held at San Anton
- 11th Seminar Programme held by European Commission Representation in Malta at 'Dar l-Ewropa'.
Seminar 'Small States in the EU' held at the University Campus in Valletta.
Public Lecture "From Cultures of Violence to Cultures of Peace."
- 13th Minister for Education the Hon Evarist Bartolo visits NCW
Reception hosted by the British High Commissioner at Villa de Giorgio, San Pawl tat-Tarġa. Mary Gaerty and Doris Bingley attended
- 14th Association for Consumer Rights Malta meeting
Port Visit by the Turkish Training Ship - Reception. Ms Mary Gaerty attended.
- 14th Doris Bingley attended meeting at Marlborough House London
- 17th Tunisian Women Entrepreneurs arrive in Malta.
- 18th Meeting between Tunisian women Entrepreneurs and Maltese counterparts at the Chamber of Commerce Valletta Mary Gaerty guest speaker and Marie Demicoli and Doris Bingley attended
- 19th Exhibition and Dinner at the Residence of the Ambassador of the Republic of Tunisia. Mary Gaerty, Doris Bingley, Therese Cassola and Marie Demicoli attended
- 20th Consultation Session at Meusae E.U. Marine Strategy Framework Directive.
- 22nd Meusac event - EU Year For Development, held at the Westin, Mary Gaerty attended
- 24th Laqgħa Kunsill tal-Partit

Nazzjonalista Dar Centrali tal-PN Pieta` Mary Gaerty attended

- 25th Msida Leap Family Resource Centre. Host Organisations Training Sessions.
- 26th - 29th Izmir Turkey, Doris Bingley attends ICW Board Meeting
- 28th Consultation session at MEUSAC,
- 29th Monitoring Committee Meeting Operational Programme II - Therese Cassola attended
Fund Raising Dinner in Aid of Nepal organized by BPW Lara Tonna and Marie Demicoli attended
- 30th - 7th June ICW 34th General Assembly in IZMIR, Turkey Doris Bingley participated and elected ICW Vice-President
ECICW General Assembly, Doris Bingley Presided and attended ICW Board Meeting

June

- 2nd Reception marking Italy National Day. Ms. Mary Gaerty attended
The Msida Leap Family Resource Centre Msida Session 2 Quality Management
- 4th Closure of the 34th General Assembly in Izmir Turkey. Doris Bingley attended
Launch of the People's Forum at Mdina, Mary Gaerty attended
- 5th Sette Giugno Ceremony Hastings Garden Lara Tonna attended
- 6th Concert by Italian Female Choir Mary Gaerty attended
- 8th MUCM meeting with Hon Minister Leo Brincat at Casa Leone
- 9th Msida Leap Family Resource Centre Msida. Session 3 Networking & Joint Projects between NGOs
- 15th Leap Family Resource Centre Msida. Session 4 Diversity.
- 16th Leap Family Resource Msida. Session 5: Leading Volunteers.
- 18th Conference on Muslims and Christians: How can we live together?
- 19th Queen's Birthday Reception at British High Commissioner residence, Mrs Doris Bingley and Lara Tonna attended.
- 26th Enterprise Consultative Council meeting, Mary Gaerty attended
Social Enterprise Act White Paper Official Launch.

FORTHCOMING EVENTS:

NCW Trivia Night - Summer Barbeque

Date: Friday 28th August 2015

Venue: The Waterfront Hotel, The Strand, Sliema

Time: 7.30pm for 8.00pm

Theme: "Nostalgic History"

Price: €23 per person which includes a buffet menu, water, glass of wine or soft drink.

This is NCW's annual event, where members and friends get together to enjoy a relaxing evening amidst a beautiful environment. Transport (minimum 10 persons) is available at an extra charge.

Kindly place your bookings by Monday 24th August 2015.

Courses at NCW Learning Centre

The National Council of Women in collaboration with the Lifelong Learning Directorate would like to announce that registration for the courses to be held at NCW Learning centre for the year 2015/2016 can be made through <http://www.lifelonglearning.gov.mt/> or kindly contact the NCW office

CHOGM Malta 2015 - Women's Forum

"Women Ahead Be All that you can be"

The main aim of this Forum is to raise awareness of women's issues in Commonwealth countries and show how women's contributions can have a positive impact politically, economically and socially.

Event date: 22nd - 24th November 2015

Venue: InterContinental Hotel, St. Julian's

Objectives:

- Place women's social and economic issues on the Commonwealth agenda.
- Bring together people from across the globe to share stories of success.
- Raise awareness about matters affecting women's development so as to tackle poverty and inequality.
- Create a networking platform for building new relationships and reinforcing existing ones.
- Encourage younger generations of women to secure fulfilment in their lives and those of others.

People's Forum

"What Makes Societies Resilient?"

The Commonwealth People's Forum (CPF) is the largest gathering of civil society organizations within the commonwealth

Held in the run up to CHOGM, this event is jointly organised by the host government and the Commonwealth Foundation.

The Forum debates important issues facing the people of the Commonwealth.

Event date: 23 - 26 November 2015

Venue: Corinthia Hotel, St George's Bay, St Julian's

Youth Forum

With 60% of the Commonwealth population under the age of 30, the Commonwealth Youth Forum (CYF) is an important voice.

Organised as part of CHOGM, this Forum aims to achieve cross-cultural connection and learning between participants and consensus on policies to address the challenges and opportunities facing young people.

For registration kindly contact <https://chogm2015.mt>

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

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