

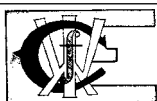


N-Mara

Newsletter of the National Council of Women - Malta



Members of


**International Council
of Women**

Founded 1888

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


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

Founded 1961

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

China Cultural Centre Fine Arts
Exhibition by Maltese artist Lida
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Commonwealth Day 2016 reception
at Marlborough House London

Office Hours

Monday to Friday: 9.00 - 13.30

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Associated Organisations	¥20.00
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Il-Mara

NEWSLETTER OF THE NATIONAL COUNCIL OF WOMEN - MALTA

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EDITORIAL

Welcome to the second issue of NCW newsletter Il-Mara for the year 2016, which covers many initiatives, events and policy documents of national interest that the Council has been working on, between January and March 2016. In this issue, we will be presenting, as it were, a kaleidoscope of the various activities involving NCW Executive members and colleagues, who voluntarily work with dedication offering their expertise for the benefit of women and society.

The Annual General Meeting held at the end of January clearly demonstrates through its Resolutions, the Council's proactive vision for current and future needs of our citizens. As a strong and resilient NGO, it acts as a forum with Government representatives, authorities, national committees, social partners, organisations and individuals who work closely with the Council, supporting NCW initiatives. We are grateful for their engagement in our projects.

These past three months have offered other enriching opportunities for our Council. Members of the Executive committee were invited to participate as speakers at various events especially during the International Women's Day, European Disability Day, Human Rights Day, Commonwealth Day amongst others. NCW believes in participating actively in discussions with government



representatives and with social partners on issues of national importance. Full reports on NCW recommendations can be found in this issue.

The serious situation of asylum seekers in Europe and more recently the sad events that took place a few days ago in Brussels are still with us with great concern. NCW

strongly believes in democracy and the role of non-governmental organisations in social and civil dialogue to build a culture of mutual recognition. In the hope of reaching out to those who still suffer injustice, violence and insecurity, may NGOs continue to work to develop tolerance towards different cultures thus creating peace and justice for all.

We augur that our Council will go on developing its role as a vibrant forum, where everyone can freely discuss matters of national importance as well as matters beyond our shores. We are confident that the NCW newsletter will remain a platform for suggestions and comments which we welcome from our members and friends and we look forward to receiving your contributions.

Enjoy reading this issue.

Marie Demicoli
NCW Editorial Board Member

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President's Message

Dear Ladies

Since I last wrote, we have had our Annual General meeting and although participation was not as numerous as last year, everyone had positive comments about the discussion and the unfolding of the whole meeting. As in previous years various resolutions were presented and reviewed. You will read about them in this newsletter. It was also agreed during the AGM that bios of female role models will start appearing one after another on our Facebook page. I urge you to have a look and LIKE as well as apart from sending your own bios, to encourage other women whom you consider should be role models for other women to do so. We have some fantastic women who seem to be invisible to the younger generation and we need to showcase them. It is important that girls and young women do not feel intimidated when starting their careers, but are comforted by the fact that other women had also taken these first steps to start a successful career or whatever venture they had chosen.

I had the opportunity some weeks ago to visit Oman together with eleven other women, all either entrepreneurs or hold an entrepreneurial position within the companies they work in. Apart from getting to know these women, it was the interesting discussions that ensued between us about how we managed to succeed and the difficulties we encountered, that I personally found fascinating. What was extremely important however, was how we networked throughout this business delegation trip. Women must network more in order to gain opportunities and friendship.

Another aspect that impressed me greatly while visiting the Middle East, was the number of female entrepreneurs especially in Dubai and the level of education of the women we met in Oman. Oman is particularly interested in supporting

female entrepreneurship. In Malta too, there are several opportunities available and I encourage anyone wishing to start their own business to look at the Malta Enterprise website for support and financial incentives.

The activities for Women's Day this year were phenomenal!

There were so many of them.

But I must say that one that struck me most was H.E The President's meeting with several men and women at St James Cavalier. I hope that what was planned at this meeting will eventually materialise. You can read about other activities in this newsletter. Please be reminded that our event which was planned to happen around International Women's Day had to be postponed. The pilgrimage as part of the Jubilee Year of Mercy will now be held on the 30th of April around 3.30pm at Mdina. H.E. The Archbishop of Malta will celebrate mass. We invite all women to participate, so please block the date. More details about logistics on our Facebook page and NCW website closer to the date. We shall also be sending flyers in the coming days as soon as we have all the logistics in place. Please inform other women too, I hope to see you all there.

Last but not least, we always need extra hands especially during events. Those of you who can spare whatever time, please contact our office.

And with this last message I bid you,

Au revoir.

Regards to all



Mary Gaerty
President

Congratulations

Three Maltese MEPs – Roberta Metsola (PN), Miriam Dalli (PL) and Therese Comodini Cachia (PN) – all won 'MEP of the Year' awards during a ceremony in Brussels.

Roberta Metsola was awarded the MEP award for her work on the EU's justice and civil liberties committee for the second year in a row. Therese Comodini Cachia and Miriam Dalli each picked up an award for the first time, in the corporate governance and energy categories respectively.

"While the work in the Parliament goes beyond awards, it is an honour for Malta and for me personally to have been given the award," Roberta Metsola said. "It is always satisfying for your work to be acknowledged and even more so when this comes from other MEPs from across Party lines. Having three MEPs win awards proves again that the geographical size of Malta need not hold anyone back from fulfilling their potential and making a difference for the people we represent."



Miriam Dalli dedicated her award to "people who believe that energy and climate change are complimentary to one another".

"This is an award for all those who believe that we can make a difference, for those who believe that we should work harder for cleaner energy so as to make sure that what was decided during the Climate Change conference in December will be implemented," she said. "We owe this not only to ourselves, but to our children and grand-children."



Therese Comodini Cachia said that the award reflects her belief that politicians must constantly dialogue with stakeholders.

"I believe that irrespective of the size of our country we can make a difference in shaping European policy," she said. "In accepting this award, I strengthen my endeavours to continue working to ensure that the interests of Maltese businesses and consumers are upheld."

The 'MEP Awards' are organised by The Parliament Magazine, a Brussels-based publication that focuses on European affairs. MEPs are nominated in different categories and are voted for by other MEPs.



NCW AGM 2016 -an interactive forum for members and affiliates

The National Council of Women Annual General Meeting 2016 held on Saturday 30 January at The Palace, Sliema was once again marked by a lively debate and exchange of experience together with representatives of NCW affiliates

In her welcome message, President Mary Gaerty stated that the collaborative spirit both with NCW members as well as the 34 affiliated organizations was remarkable; this together with the enthusiasm and expertise of young members gives NCW the energy to address future challenges not only to strengthen gender equality opportunities but also to deal with 'hidden gaps' that need to be dealt with.

The Assembly reaffirmed a number of resolutions from the previous year that still require the Council to work on further. These include: The Regularization of Gentlemen's Clubs, (Malta Girl Guides Association), Working Mothers and Breastfeeding, (MUMN) addressing gender-specific medicines, (NCW) Sustainable Pensions (NCW), and Setting up a Pre-conception Clinic (MUMN) among others.

The Assembly also approved the 2016

resolutions including: NCW: A Social Economy for Malta, Gender Equality and Sustainable Development beyond 2015, Migration and Women Asylum Seekers, Women and Disability, Addressing the Gender Gap in Pensions, Food Waste and Global Climate Change. Affiliated organizations: Women at Executive and Board level (NEXIA BT), Setting up an Alongside Midwifery-Led Unit at the New Mother and Baby Unit in Mater Dei Hospital, (Malta Midwives Association)

The approved Executive Committee 2016 is made up of Mary Gaerty President, Grace Attard, Lara Tonna and Amy Camilleri Zahra, Vice-Presidents, Doris Bingley, Hon General Secretary, Therese Cassola, Hon Treasurer and members Tamara Gauci, Nadyanne Mangion, Jeanette Borg, Fransina Abela,

Diane Xuereb, Jeanette Fava Cassar, Rebecca Wellman, Vivien Cassar, M'Rose Zahra, Claudine Zarb, Legal Advisor and Marie Demicoli, office secretary

The Assembly also voted unanimously to bestow Honorary Life Membership on General Secretary Doris Bingley, for her outstanding contribution to NCW at National, European and International Level, throughout all these years

In her concluding remarks, NCW President outlined plans for the future, thanking all the members and representatives of affiliates and augured that this spirit of collaboration and networking will keep up its momentum throughout the years

Grace Attard, PR



NCW International Women's Day Message

The International Women's Day, has created formidable awareness concerning the state of women in the different life spheres. It has become habitual to take stock of the developments that women have made in their respective countries, celebrating achievements and continuing planned work to reach targets. The UN Women message for this year is Planet 50-50 by 2030; Step It Up For Gender Equality. Achieving Parity by 2030. 2030 is only fourteen years away and according to predicted developments at the present pace, it is estimated that fifty years are required to achieve a significant growth, which may not even reach the parity stage. Why does this phenomenon continue to persist?

The National Council of Women believes in empowering women, not necessarily to be immediately equal in numbers with their male counterparts on boards and at the workplace, but more importantly to be able to understand

how the decisions being taken today are affecting them presently and what long term effect these decisions will have on them and their families, to be enough educated to make informed choices, to not having to say 'I should have resolved this issue differently had I known better'.

An empowered, informed and educated woman is a source of enlightenment to all her family and her acquaintances. This initial process will kick start and fastrack the target of 50-50 parity by 2030, a 50% representation in all spheres including parliament. Developing the female potential will bring about a positive social change, influencing and assisting others to release their full potential. It is a known fact that the woman is the first educator in the family, so it makes sense that reaching out to women will generate a better society.

Of all the hindrances a woman faces throughout her life, none has the most devastating effect as lack of education

and empowerment. What life skills are girls given today, what choices as to subject and job choices from an early age are the girls advised to take, are they still being told that some subjects are for boys, especially the STEM subjects. How can girls progress if they are directed from a young age towards the usual women jobs. Fathers have an important part to play in the development of the girl and her future achievements. The father who believes in the potential of the daughter and encourages her will see her inevitably succeed in whatever she chooses to do. Likewise partners and husbands.

It is time that the government and society consolidate their determination to exponentially increase the percentage of female representation in order to achieve these goals and stop the wastage of female contribution both in the domestic and the international level.

**Mary Gaerty
NCW President**

Gender balance on Company Boards – from words to action

In its proposal for a Directive of the European Parliament and of the Council on improving the gender balance among non-executive directors of companies listed on stock exchanges and related measures COM(2012) 614 final – 2012/0299 (COD), the European Commission proposed a directive for improving the gender balance among non-executive directors of companies listed on the stock exchange with a minimum objective of 40% by 2020.

Although ideally, there should be voluntary measures, rather than quotas, little will change as regards the gender balance in EU listed companies without legally endorsed objectives. In business leadership the situation is particularly disappointing as in October 2015 women accounted for just 22.7 % of board members of the largest publicly listed companies registered in the EU Countries.

Unfortunately Malta has fallen 20 places since 2013 in the World Economic Forum's Global

Gender Gap Index. The number of female university graduates, for instance, is higher than the number of male graduates in Malta; however, this hasn't been reflected in the workforce, and many women tend to take on jobs that allow them to take a career break or work on a reduced hours or part-time basis after having children

The recent survey entitled "*Gender Balance in Senior Management Positions*" at local level, carried out by KPMG in collaboration with The Centre for Labour Studies of the University of Malta, provides an analysis, shedding some light on the *perception* of individuals, men and women who were asked to take part in the survey. These were selected on the basis of their roles in corporate leadership of the 250 largest companies in Malta.

From words to action

Across the EU there is strong evidence that there is a supply of highly-skilled women across

Member States and therefore any argument for gender balance should be based on the "merit and preference rule" rather than positive discrimination. Nevertheless, there are still **factors that hinder women from taking the lead**, such as a lack of reconciliation measures between business and family life, limited access to networks that are important for higher positions, lack of self-confidence, etc.

The minimum standard of 40% could be adopted by all public and private decision-making bodies through self-regulation in order to avoid further legislation. This should also be applied to **executive directors, boards of listed SMEs** and all **public-sector bodies** to promote a more gender

equitable environment, as a condition of transparent application and appointment and a culture of inclusion in society as a whole.

Research on **the economic rationale** for women on boards presents a compelling argument supporting the advance of company performance. Research by Credit Suisse (2012) McKinsey (2007) and Catalyst (2004) has all independently identified a correlation between the share of women on boards and the company's financial performance. For example: Member States' measures range from legally-binding quotas with sanctions to self-regulation in specific sectors, and, as expected, the representation of women on boards is equally varied. However **countries with binding quotas generally demonstrate a 20% increase in women on boards**. Six countries that have not implemented any action have experienced a reduction in the number of women on boards.

The EU Commission recognises the need to respect the fundamental freedom of businesses to operate without interference, but believes that this freedom should not override the rule of law or fundamental rights. This directive is a minimum standard which seeks to improve the conditions for business and the internal market by creating a level playing field for companies trading in several Member States.

There are numerous reasons explaining the improved performance of companies that have diverse gender representation on their boards. One of the main arguments lies in the willingness to engage in **diverse critical thinking around business decisions**, creating a more proactive business model. Understanding diversity in the marketplace has immense financial value and is a prerequisite for corporations in an international market.

Innovation and board performance

– The strength women bring to the board lies in their diversity, their experience, how they address problems, new markets and opportunities through their own consumer expertise. Diverse thinking underpins innovation and better business performance; it challenges assumptions and encourages a greater external focus on existing and new markets.

Diversity on boards means true diversity in the widest sense, not confining board positions to a small range of women who circulate around a number of boards. It is the right for both men and women to have choice and equal access to board positions based on merit

Implementation

Achieving the quantitative targets of women on boards requires measures in place to ensure success. A combination of short and mid-term measures must be implemented to ensure that board diversity is maintained beyond 2020. The following measures should be considered:

Greater visibility of women in senior roles – profiling women across different Member States that have achieved board-level positions, raising awareness of these women in the wider business community and demonstrating the impact of board diversity on business success.

Greater transparency in recruiting – The process of recruitment on boards is largely opaque, relying on personal networks. To attract the broadest range of talent, opportunities need to be promoted and presented in a manner that encourages applications from all talented individuals.

Building and retaining a critical mass – The value of diverse thinking on a board is only realised when there is enough of a critical mass to challenge assumptions; it is therefore imperative for women to make up 40% of membership on a board. Increased transparency during the recruitment process will ensure the widest range of candidates are considered and remove the risk of the "golden skirt" rule⁴.

Challenging stereotypes around gendered roles – A lot of progress has been made regarding domestic roles constituting barriers to female economic participation. The measures are a step in the right direction and will serve to help increase participation of women on boards.

Creation of a pipeline – The sustained benefit of diverse boards requires a steady stream of highly-qualified individuals who have both the aspiration and the aptitude to take on board positions. It is imperative to create an environment that enables women to navigate their way through the labyrinth⁵ during their careers and achieve board positions. The presence of female role models, more transparent recruitment processes and clear leadership succession planning provide the foundations for gender diversity on boards.

Grace Attard, NCW Vice-President, EESC Delegate



Promoting Gender Equality in Research and Innovation



MCST Irene Mangion, Horizon 2020 National Contact Point Executive | Policy, Strategy & Projects Unit | organized a meeting on Gender Equality/Mainstreaming in Research on 1st March 9am until 12 noon at MCST, Villa Bigghi, Kalkara for a number of stakeholders

MCST is currently looking into the Gender Equality/Mainstreaming Priority (ERA Priority 4) under the ERA Roadmap. Malta is required to devise a national roadmap similar to the EU-wide roadmap

State of play and recommendations

The future of the European Union depends on research and innovation and Europe needs 1 million more researchers by 2020 to stay competitive in the world. Research could also create 3.7 million jobs and increase annual EU GDP by EUR 795 billion by 2025 if the target of investing 3% of EU GDP in R&D by 2020 is achieved.

Promoting gender equality and equal opportunities for women and men is a commitment of the EU in all its policy areas, including research and innovation (R&I). Data available at European level show a striking imbalance between women and men in the European research sector.

Gender balance is crucial for a well-functioning research system. To achieve their policy objectives for research, the Member States and the EU as a whole must use all the human capital at their disposal. The European Commission should propose a recommendation to Member States containing common guidelines on institutional change to promote gender equality in universities and research institutions, as announced in the European Research Area communication of 2012.

Government should aim to improve the legal and policy frameworks for gender equality in research, based on the recommendations set out in the ERA communication and the Horizon 2020 programme with particular focus on recruitment, retention and career progression of female researchers; address gender imbalances in decision-making processes and strengthen the gender dimension in research programmes.

It is important to continue developing and implementing awareness programmes aimed at attracting more girls into STEM fields (science, technology, engineering and mathematics) and more women into research, through Career Guidance and the National Curriculum. European Structural Funds

and other funding schemes should be available for institutional change initiatives, in accordance with the ERA communication. The evaluation, accreditation and funding of research institutions and organisations should be linked to their performance on gender equality.

Public/national research institutions and the social partners, should explore ways of ensuring a work-life balance by developing and implementing family-friendly policies for both female and male researchers.

Members States should support and strengthen the dialogue between research institutions, businesses and related social partners. There is also the need for more dialogue with publishers and editors of scientific publications in order to remove gender bias from and increase female scientists' contributions to scientific publications, editorials, reviews and survey articles.

Source: EESC SOC/502 Women in Science

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

No to the legalisation of prostitution!

The National Council of Women is very concerned with the proposal that once again is being put forward to legalise prostitution. (Times of Malta 6.4.2016). Such a law would be a confirmation that women are a commodity and that women's sexual favours are there for the taking as long as one pays! This worst form of degradation of women is totally unacceptable.

NCW believes that respecting the dignity of women as human beings and respecting their human rights, should be translated in practice through a holistic approach by NGOs, funded by the government. The programme should offer the services of professionals including social workers, psychologists, medical practitioners and legal advisors to reach out to women, taking into

account their different circumstances, providing support, social and health services, education and training, for job opportunities and to assist women to get out of the trap of the 'traditional' prostitution rings.

Both 'traditional' prostitution and trafficking of women for sexual exploitation require different legal measures, the latter also falling under the UN Palermo Protocol on Trafficking of Human Beings, which should have been signed and ratified by Malta years ago. NCW has for years been urging different governments to address these two degrading practices separately. It is a shame that in the case of the latter, so little, if anything has been done in practice. It is an embarrassment to our political parties, that the Council of

Europe has so harshly criticised Malta for the lack of the implementation of sixteen areas of the Convention on Trafficking of Women for Sexual Exploitation.

NCW fully supports the law as it stands and the positive steps taken in addressing organised crime, the criminalisation of practices of living off immoral earnings, organising prostitution in various places of entertainment or forcing or seducing anyone into prostitution. Such measures have gone a long way to protect women from this form of abuse. However, NCW insists on stronger law enforcement measures and condemns any attempt to changes in Malta's legislation to decriminalise the sale of sexual favours.

**Grace Attard
NCW Vice President**

Retirement Income and Financial Literacy Knowledge and Education Awareness and Education on Retirement Income and Financial Literacy

Comments and Recommendations

Social, environmental and economic conditions need to be addressed realistically to reach the objectives and success of the Strategy

Poverty, Vulnerable Groups

Identifying vulnerable groups and situations and action to be taken to include:

- Unemployed persons of all ages
- Workers in precarious situations and undeclared work
- Persons in situations of addiction to drugs, smoking, alcohol, food, gambling and online gambling amongst others
- Household over-indebtedness
- Removing barriers to accessibility, employment, education and training, social protection and participation for persons with different forms of disability
- Seriously addressing the issues of early school leavers within a socio-economic context
- Separated or divorced persons
- Families in situations of domestic violence prison inmates

All these sectors require highly specialised interventions through networking of different professionals and social partners

The role of stakeholders

The concept of collective responsibility, which is the underlying theme of the strategy, is to be instilled at all levels of society and throughout all ages in the following areas:

- **The economy of the country**
- **The environment**
- **Social responsibility and care**
- **Poverty**
- **Ageing**

The strategy cannot be successful unless embedded in a wider context

Ensuring **civil society** representa-

tives are consulted in all phases of the planning and implementation process of Strategy, as these organisations are closest to grassroots

Ensuring responsibility and commitment from **Financial Services Providers, Insurance Companies and Banks** etc to adequately inform clients about responsible consumption

Responsibility and commitment of the **Business sector and SMEs**, including supermarkets, retail outlets SMEs and relevant CSR policies and practices

The **Social Economy** – developing a friendly environment for the development of NGOs and SMEs in this field

The role of Trade Unions:

- To educate
- To dialogue
- To encourage critical thinking

The role of Local Councils

A consultation process should be carried out to study how best Local Councils can be involved in the strategy to be in a position to work with different stakeholders

Education

A holistic approach to education.

Through education the various aspects of the strategy can be promoted through interactive discussion and other modern means of communication

Preparing young people for a better life now for the future

- The need for a system of education that is based on critical thinking - independent thinking – dialogue between students and students, between teachers, lecturers, professors and students
- Improved personal and social development services
- Career guidance and Counseling services
- An overhaul of the B.Educ Course

to focus more on teacher-training to meet the needs of students today and not just academic qualifications

- Encouraging research as a tool from an early age and at all levels of education
- Improving IT competence both as a tool for workplace (IT skills) and as a field of specialization
- A Digital Agenda for Malta – Research and Innovation - encouraging pathways in STEM subjects for better paid jobs – the jobs of the future
- Promoting Science (STEM) among female students from an early age – Horizon 2020
- Further development of the valid contribution of MCAST

Adult Education

- Citizens should be professionally guided to be more in control of their health supported by ehealth.
- 'Lifelong learning' should be embedded in a much wider context and perspective with regards to financial education and responsible consumption
- Educating parents for better parenting – parental skills
- Childcare services – raising standards and responsible use (not abuse) of childcare services by parents

The Media

- **Responsible media:** TV, radio, social media, facebook etc to focus more on their role of educating the public
- **Entertainment:** it is crucial to encourage a healthy lifestyle of **responsible consumption and spending**

**Grace Attard, Vice-President,
National Council of Women**



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60th Commission on the Status of Women (CSW60) held on 14th – 24th March 2016

The 60th session of the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) took place in New York City from 14- 24 March 2016. The conference included a congregation of approximately 4000 international women and men, who were either representatives of Member States, UN entities or ECOSOC- accredited non-governmental organisations (NGOs).

In keeping with tradition, the conference commenced in the General Assembly Hall of the United Nations Headquarters (UNHQ). Among the array of intellectual speakers that day were UN Secretary General, Ban Ki Moon, Executive Director of UN Women, Phumzile Mlambo- Ngcuka and ECOSOC representative Jürg Lauber. Delegates of the CSW Youth Forum, that took place two days prior to CSW60, were given the opportunity to put forth the main outcomes of the Youth CSW Declaration, a document that delineates the significance of the involvement of young minds in the change- making process. The conference was also privileged to gain the attendance of Canadian Prime Minister, Justin Trudeau, at a high- level event organised by UN Women. The conversation celebrated the beauty of feminism and that the fight towards gender equality isn't to be simply considered "a women's movement but as a global movement."

After days of modification, lobbying by NGOs and input by the government delegations, the agreed conclusions of CSW60 set the outcomes of this year's conference. In crux, the document recognises the framework that previously agreed upon documents, such as the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) and the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC), set in the sphere of attaining gender equality. It particularly commends the propitious pathway the SDGs pave in relation to achieving change for the future.

It was energising to attend the NGO Briefings every morning and observe the visions of international NGO workers who make positive differences in the local communities. Furthermore, over the course of the two weeks of the conference, numerous parallel events took place alongside the creation and amendment of the agreed conclusions

by the government delegations. These parallel events are NGO sponsored, each session highlighting specific areas of gender disparity intercontinentally. The sessions that were most memorable to me personally included 'Empowering Women to be Leaders', 'Raising the Floor and Breaking the Glass', 'Men and Youth- Abolition of Prostitution', 'Violence against Women and Girls' and 'Developing a Common Feminist Faith Discourse to Achieve Gender Equality', all of which were held inside and around the UNHQ.

The meetings showcased the appalling realities that women endure in the political, economic and social arenas. Internationally a female earns at an average of 64% of her male counterpart's wage. Only 19 nations, out of the 117 democratic nations, have female leaders, a few of who are not entirely executive and others who are almost reaching the end of their terms. Worldwide, women only represent 17.7% of parliament, collectively in both the Upper and Lower Houses. As women battle against these shameful truths, the solutions can be summarised as having the fight for women's participation in leadership, guaranteed safety against violence and economic security. More quotas are needed not only to see female faces on boards but also to implement the participation of workers with feminist values. Engagement needs to be accomplished with governments who do not appreciate feminism and equality. Females have always initiated the fight for women's equality; we need to diversify the 'pusher' of the fight for global equality.

Among the myriad of parallel events that took place, many were also youth session, held and participated by the youth. It was refreshing to absorb the focus and initiative handed to young people, typically ranging from teenagers to individuals in their early 30s. The most popular session included '#GirlsVoices for Change', 'Protect our Girls- Implementing the Post 2015 Development Agenda' and Girls' Political Empowerment- the Implementation of the SDGs, among other interactive youth sessions. These meetings celebrated the views and changes young minds wished to see and



also delved deeply into the challenges the youth face. While these issues range from physical violence, female genital mutilations and sexual and gender- based violence in the African and South- East Asian subcontinent, to the vast areas of non- physical yet overt, ingrained gender bias witnessed in North America, Europe and Australia, one issue seemed constant globally- young females are constantly judged, implicitly or explicitly, based on their gender and age. The gatherings discussed the ways in which young people could get involved in the change making process- both online and in their physical communities. These youth forums certainly reaffirmed the idea that every person, young or old, is a leader of his/ her own right.

In line with empowering the youth, I was granted the opportunity to present at two forums, hence putting forth the values and ideals of young people. The first forum was the 'Women in Power and Decision- Making' session held by the International Council of Women. The second was 'An Investment in Women in the Economy Pays the Best National Dividends' held by Justice Equal Rights Access International. Both forums put into practice the initiative of helping young people, such as myself, to confidently voice the interest, hurdles and future we the youth wish to attain, both in the political and economic domains. These sessions, in keeping with the Youth CSW declaration, highlighted that today's youth form the last generation of change needed to solve gender inequality and achieve Planet 50-50 by the 2030 deadline of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Furthermore, it proved that young girls

shouldn't be encouraged to fit into the glass slipper but rather shatter the glass ceilings.

Ultimately, CSW60 was a successful one, arguably even the best CSW according to some. The commission showcased the inclusion and involvement of individuals across all forums of race and ethnicity, nationality, gender, age and social and economic backgrounds, among others. The conference justified that the 'status'

of women is still unequal worldwide, however is optimistic that the world is ready to step-up their game is the field of gender inequality, particularly with the breathe of fresh air and the new start that the SDGs provide. The time in the drawing room for talk and discussion is over; it is time to implement. Will we finally break the cycle of male leadership and potentially witness the first UN female 38th floor candidate? Can women and girls finally have the confidence in

saying that they will be valued purely on the basis of their skills and talents? Will feminism transmogrify from the dirty word it is perceived to be to a mandatory basis of all human rights? Are we that one step closer to achieving Planet 50-50? Let's hope so!

Diya John

**NCW Malta Representative in
New York**

Focus on early intervention to counter violent extremism, says Secretary-General Baroness Patricia Scotland on the 08 April 2016

If the world is to prevent the spread of violent extremism, global efforts need to focus on early intervention, supporting women and children and improving our understanding of the phenomenon, Commonwealth Secretary-General Patricia Scotland QC has said.

Addressing a major United Nations conference in Geneva, Secretary-General Scotland pledged the Commonwealth's commitment to support the United Nations Plan of Action to Prevent Violent Extremism.

"There can be no greater responsibility than ensuring the safety and security of our citizens," said the Secretary-General, as she outlined her vision for the Commonwealth's own action plan, involving the development of alternative narratives and dialogue, empowering young people, harnessing the power of education and the media, and building an environment that supports good governance, human rights and the rule of law.

"The changing nature of violence in today's world is alarming, and it affects us all. I believe this starts with women and children. That means we need to start in the home and in schools," she said, emphasising the need to gather empirical data and to break down silos.

"Education about the other, teaching that difference is something to celebrate and not to fear, this needs to start in primary schools," she stressed. The Commonwealth has a long-track record in supporting young people, she added. "But this work needs to start earlier and younger than it traditionally has."

"Such interventions enable mothers and young people to address social exclusion, ethnic or religious prejudice, and politically-motivated violence at

grassroots where they can be potent catalysts for inclusion and help avert alienation."

The Commonwealth's Plan of Action to Prevent Violent Extremism will cover four strands, including the development of alternative narratives and dialogue "so all Commonwealth citizens can be part of the solution," and helping member countries with good governance, human rights protection and the rule of law, said the Secretary-General in her speech.

The plan will also embrace the power of education and the media to promote greater respect and understanding among communities, and empower young people "to be positive agents and role models in our societies", she said.

"By promoting alternative narratives, strengthening justice institutions, and building platforms for dialogue, the Commonwealth way is always to encourage positive engagement. Violence can be defeated, but we need the widest and most inclusive alliances of government, international agencies, civil society organisations, private sector actors, legal bodies, educators, youth workers and healthcare professionals," she said.

The 'Geneva Conference on Preventing Violent Extremism – The Way Forward', co-hosted by the Government of Switzerland and the United Nations, is taking place between 7 and 8 April 2016. It was organised to help the international community to share experiences and good practices.

Day two of the conference saw interventions by government ministers, heads of international and regional organisations and heads of UN agencies, following a meeting of senior experts yesterday. The United Nations Plan of



Action to Prevent Violent Extremism was developed by the UN Secretary-General and endorsed by the UN General Assembly on 12 February 2016.

In November 2015, Commonwealth Heads of Government in Malta agreed to establish a dedicated unit within the Commonwealth Secretariat to strengthen national, regional and global action on preventing violent extremism. This builds on past work including the publication of the report, Civil Paths to Peace.

In her speech, the Secretary-General also outlined the Commonwealth Secretariat's collaboration with UN Women on supporting legal decision makers on cases of violence against women. "Because if there isn't peace in the home, there cannot be peace in our world," she said.

Notes to Readers:

Watch the Secretary-General's address to the UN conference on 8 April 2016:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JOGZ1SKzkPA>

Working lunch bit-tema 'What's Next?', fiċ-Ċentru Nazzjonali Laburista, fl-okkażjoni ta' Jum il-Mara

Il-President ta' Kunsill Nazzjonali tan-Nisa s-Sinjura Mary Gaerty attendiet il-*Working Lunch* bit-tema, 'What's Next?' fiċ-Ċentru Nazzjonali Laburista.

Il-Mexxej tal-Partit Laburista tkellem fuq il-parteeipazzjoni tan-nisa fil-politika, huwa qal kif il-Partit Laburista kien l-ewwel partit li uża diskrimazzjoni pożittiva biex iżid il-parteeipazzjoni tan-nisa u johloq ambjent aħjar, tant li l-European Institute for gender equality, uża lill-Partit Laburista bħala eżempju ta' best practice. Il-Prim Ministru tkellem ukoll fuq kif dan il-Gvern ta' sinjali b'saħħithom ta' nisa f'pożizzjonijiet ta' tmexxija u fakkar kif kien dan il-Gvern li nnomina President

mara u l-ewwel mara li qed tmexxi l-Bord tal-Awtorità tax-Xandir.

Tkellmu wkoll Claudette Abela Baldacchino, President ta' NL-Nisa Laburisti, Dr Brenda Murphy Kap tad-Dipartiment tal-Gender Studies fl-Universita ta' Malta, Victor Vella Gurnalist u genitur, is-Sinjura Marisa Galea Debono professjonista li nghaqdet f'Unjoni Civili, is-Sinjura Lisa Bezzina atleta professjonali, Mr Joseph Debono Consultant Surgeon u Chairperson Department of Surgery fl-Isptar Mater Dei, Dr Doris Cannataci li ta' 82 sena gradwat b'dottarat fit-Teologija (Church & Dogma History) minn North West University of South Africa

in conjunction with Greenwich School of Theology UK u s-Sinjorina Daniela Schembri li tmexxi l-Organizzazzjoni mhux governattiva LAND (Living Ability Not Disability).



Women Refugees and Asylum Seekers Exhibition

A European Parliament photographic exhibition "Women Refugees and Asylum Seekers" was inaugurated by Speaker Anġlu Farrugia and the EP's director-general for communication Juana Lahousse-Juarez in the presence of MEP Roberta Metsola. An account of life experiences of asylum seekers was also given by Umayma Elamin Amer (President and founder of the Migrant Women Association of

Malta) and Hourie Tafech (Volunteer and co-founders of 'Spark15') at the inauguration at Parliament in Valletta.

Speaker Anġlu Farrugia remarked that whereas the theme chosen by the United Nations for International Women's Day 2016 is "Planet 50-50 by 2030: Step It Up for Gender Equality", the European Union rightly concentrated on Women Refugees and Asylum Seekers.



Discussion organized by Il-Moviment Nisa Partit Nazzjonalista (MNPN)

The NCW was invited to participate in a discussion organized by the Moviment Nisa Partit Nazzjonalista (MNPN), at Dar Centrali on the 8th of March, with the theme 'Il mara Maltija - illum u ghada'. Vice President Amy Camilleri Zahra represented NCW on this occasion. The other panel speakers included the Leader of the Opposition Dr Simon Busuttil, the party's General Secretary Ms Rosette Thake, NCPE's Commissioner Ms Renee Laiveira and UHM's General Secretary Mr Josef Bonello. Each speaker gave their speech which were then followed by a time for questions from the audience.

Ms Amy Camilleri Zahra started her speech by saying that every year, on the occasion of Women's day, the question as to whether there is still a need for the celebration of women's day always arises. Ms Camilleri Zahra

continued by saying that according to her, we should keep celebrating women's day until the gender gap ceases to exist. According to the World Economic Forum, although women are continuing to contribute towards social, economic, cultural and political achievements, it is being predicted that the gender gap will only close entirely in 2133. Thus, we should at least still continue celebrating women's day till 2133, if only to continue reminding policy makers and politicians about the need for change.

Ms Camilleri Zahra also spoke about this year's theme, as suggested by the United Nations, #pledgeforparity where she stated that each and everyone of us can take action to encourage girls and women to be anything they wanted to be. She told the audience that if went they went home their daughter told them that she wanted to be an astronaut,

don't laugh but instead encourage her to become one. Ms Camilleri Zahra stressed on the need to instill a sense of resilience and achievement in our young girls.

Ms Camilleri Zahra ended her speech by saying that she could not let this day pass by not mentioning a very important cause, that is, the fight against domestic violence. According to a recent research by the United Nations, domestic violence cause more deaths amongst women aged between 15 and 44 than are caused by cancer, traffic accidents, malaria and war combined together. Let us not let this day pass without raising awareness about this issue. Let us not lose more innocent lives to domestic violence.



Consultation Session on: 'The Review of the European Disability Strategy 2010-2020'

Eighty million people in the EU (one-sixth of the population) have disabilities ranging from mild to severe. These people, who are often prevented by their disability from taking part in society and the economy, have a rate of poverty 70% higher than the EU average.

The EU promotes the active inclusion and full participation of disabled people in society, in line with the EU human rights approach to disability issues. Disability is a rights issue and not a matter of discretion. This approach is also at the core of the UN Convention on the Rights of People with Disabilities (UNCRPD), to which the EU is a signatory.

The European Commission's European Disability Strategy 2010-2020, adopted in 2010, builds on the UNCRPD and takes into account the experience of the Disability Action Plan (2004-2010).

Its objectives are pursued by actions in eight priority areas:

1. **Accessibility:** make goods and services accessible to people with disabilities and promote the market of assistive devices.
2. **Participation:** ensure that people with disabilities enjoy all benefits of EU citizenship; remove barriers to equal participation in public life and leisure activities; promote the provision of quality community-based services.
3. **Equality:** combat discrimination based on disability and promote equal opportunities.
4. **Employment:** raise significantly the share of persons with disabilities working in

the open labour market. They represent **one-sixth of the EU's overall working-age population**, but their employment rate is comparatively low.

5. **Education and training:** promote inclusive education and lifelong learning for students and pupils with disabilities. Equal access to quality education and lifelong learning enable disabled people to participate fully in society and improve their quality of life. The European Commission has launched several educational initiatives for disabled people. These include the European Agency for Development in Special Needs Education as well as a specific study group on disability and lifelong learning.

6. **Social protection:** promote decent living conditions, combat poverty and social exclusion.

7. **Health:** promote equal access to health services and related facilities.

8. **External action:** promote the rights of people with disabilities in the EU enlargement and international development programmes.

The European Commission is currently holding a public consultation on the European Disability Strategy 2010-2020 to gather views on the challenges faced by all persons with disabilities in the EU and on the impact so far of the strategy itself.

Malta Consultation session: European Disability Strategy 2010-2020

On February 18, 2016 MEUSAC organised a consultation session focusing on the review of the European Disability Strategy 2010-2020. The European Commission is currently holding a public consultation on the strategy to gather views on the challenges faced by all persons with

disabilities in the EU and on the impact of the strategy it has had so far.

Speakers at the consultation session included George Sultana, Director of Policy Development and Programme Implementation at the Social Solidarity Ministry and KNPD president Oliver Scicluna.

The strategy aims to make goods and services more accessible for disabled persons, enhance their participation, ensure that they enjoy all benefits of EU citizenship, promote equal opportunities, enhance access to the labour force, combat discrimination, among others.

During the consultation session, which was well-attended, ADHD Malta raised concerns over the fact that the EU has not recognised the condition as yet.

Mr Scicluna said that different organisations in the EU which represent ADHD persons have divergent views on whether this condition should be recognised as a disability, hence the EU's current stance. He said the KNPD is doing its utmost to see that the condition is in fact recognised as a disability but urged ADHD Malta to push MEPs to convey its message within the European Parliament on the matter.

He said that what is for sure is that KNPD recognised ADHD as a disability.

Other participants called for more accessibility for disabled persons in Valletta while others said that the introduction of low-floor buses has brought about a positive change for disabled persons.

Grace Attard
NCW Vice President

L-investiment li qed isir fil-qasam tal-pensjonijiet ser iwassal biex jiġu ndirizzati anomaliji li kienu ilhom jeżistu għal snin sħaħ - NL Nisa Laburisti

Il-Mizuri mhabbra fil-budget li għadda huma l-ewwel pass fi proċess kontinwu li l-gvern qed jahdem fuqu biex itejjeb il-hajja ta' dawk l-aktar vulnerabbli fis-soċjetà tagħna, filwaqt li jidher ċar li l-gvern qed jippjana wkoll għas-sostenibilità futura tal-pensjonijiet.

Qalet dan Claudette Abela Baldacchino - President ta' NL - Nisa Laburisti waqt Djalogu Pubbliku organizzat minn NL - Nisa Laburisti bit-tema 'Għal Sistema ta' Pensjoni Adegwata u Sostenibbli'.

Hija qalet li NL- Nisa Laburisti thares 'il quddiem biex ssir ġustizzja ma kulhadd fis-settur tal-pensjonijiet.

Fost l-anomaliji li qed jiġu ndirizzati permezz tal-budget li għadda, hemm l-anomalija għal dawk li ser jirtiraw u li

kienu twieldu qabel l-1962. Dawn l-individwi ma kinux ser jiġu ndirizzati, iżda permezz tal-mizuri fil-budget mis-sena d-dieħla wara 20 sena, dawn l-individwi ser jkun hemm titjib fil-pensjoni tagħhom.

Anomalija oħra qed tiġi ndirizzata permezz tal-Budget hija dik fejn giet imwarrba r-rabta bejn il-pensjoni tar-romol u l-qliġ mix-xogħol biex b'hekk ir-romol ikunu jistgħu jibbenefikaw minn pensjoni shiha tar-romol filwaqt li dawk il-pensjonanti li l-pensjoni tagħhom ma taqbiżx l-ammont tal-paga minima se jkunu eżentati mill-ħlas tat-taxxa.

Claudette Abela Baldacchino President ta' NL - Nisa Laburisti heġġet lill-gvern biex ikompli jinvesti f'aktar opportunitajiet biex aktar nisa joħorgu fid-dinja tax-xogħol bħal ma diġa' qed jagħmel b'inċentivi bħač-child care b'xejn, in work benefit u mizuri oħra speċifiċi halli hekk tkompli ssir ġustizzja anke f'dan il-qasam.



Abela Baldacchino heġġet ukoll liż-żgħażaġh biex ikunu parteċipi fid-diskussjonijiet dwar il-pensjonijiet għaliex dak li qed isehh illum ser ikun qed jaffettwa lilhom fil-futur.

Id-djalogu pubbliku kien indirizzat minn trade unions ewlenin, organizzazzjonijiet u stakeholders oħra minn setturi differenti.

Claudette Abela Baldacchino
President ta' NL-Nisa Laburisti



Could Crowd-Funding Empower Your Next Project?

Here Karl Grech, from Maltese crowd-funding site Zaar.com.mt, explains how entrepreneurs are gaining support and inspiration through crowd-funding.

"Crowd-funding could be a game-change for women entrepreneurs," Karl tells us. "According to Forbes, it allows people to raise small amounts of capital from a large number of individuals, who provide money for a project, cause or business via online platforms."

And that's no surprise – people tend to fund people just like them. Men fund men and women fund women, unlike the traditional funding models companies can raise both debt and equity financing not just from wealthy investors, but from average citizens.

Crowd-funding is typically used by organisations for research, financing and marketing. So it is up to the start-up or project initiator to decide what they want to achieve from crowd-funding, and to ensure that they can provide what they say they will do once funds are raised.

In addition, crowd-funding also helps the start-up to assess whether the proposed project is viable. "A start-up cannot expect to raise funds if their proposal does not factually show it is good enough to succeed," Karl says. "Successful crowd-funding not only provides your business with much-needed cash, but creates a base of customers who feel as though they have a stake in the business' success."

And it's interesting to note that according to financial experts American Express, several studies have shown that women outperform men on crowd-funding sites. In fact, 65% of women-led tech start-ups reached their goal versus just 30% of men-led tech start-ups.

"While women might not be raising the greatest amounts of money, or be leading the most popular campaigns, they are experiencing greater success than men," Karl says, citing research from Crowd expert that 'Women led campaigns get 1.3

more contributors than male led campaigns and raise an average at 10.75% more money.'

So how could your next project benefit from Zaar.com.mt – Malta's first local crowd-funding site?

ZAAR is a donation/reward-based crowd-funding platform that was set up by the Malta Business Bureau (MBB) and University of Malta (UoM). The platform's name, ZAAR, is a phonetic morphing of the word 'zghar' in Maltese meaning 'small'.

"At ZAAR we believe that great ideas should go far, and it is our mission to provide the space for that to happen," continues Karl. "As a crowd-funding platform we attract projects that are seeking alternative finance to secure the funding for the project to get started."

If you have a project idea, it is worth knowing that the platform accepts ideas from all economic sectors, social enterprises and NGOs, thus encouraging projects that relate to innovation, technology, entertainment, design, arts and culture.

Currently, ZAAR.com.mt has four projects, each with their own story to tell:

- The Reunited Pet Cabin – Providing in-patient dog owners at Mater Dei Hospital the opportunity to re-unite with their dogs whilst under care. That have successfully raised €14,300 (110%) from their original target of €13,000
- Xemx – Brightening futures is a trade school to be set up in Phnom Penh, with the aim to teach skills to marginalized youths to help them break out of the poverty cycle. Aim to raise €15,000
- Murphy Runs for Hospice Malta – A project set up by Malta University Holding Company in conjunction with the BRND WGN & University Ring Road Races to help raise funds for Hospice Malta through running. Aim to raise €1,000

- Adina – A short film based upon female empowerment expressed through the element of dance. Aim to raise €500

"These projects are all benefiting from the fact that ZAAR.com.mt is local, as not all international crowd-funding platforms are easily assessable," Karl continues. "Some require a company to be registered in the country the platform is operating in, as well as a bank account in that country."

Zaar.com.mt will also be facilitating the crowd-funding process by being more accessible, approachable, and by seeking to fulfil the local needs. "We aim to create an eco-system that will support ideas that need access to finance. This has been kick-started through a partnership agreement with the Arts Council Malta and a support agreement with Grant Thornton."

In fact, Grant Thornton will be supporting ZAAR.com.mt by providing training and toolkits for project initiators and start-ups. They will also be giving one-to-one assistance and business advice to project initiators considering crowd-funding as an alternative source of finance for their innovative ideas or projects.

Arts Council Malta, meanwhile, are partnering with ZAAR.com.mt as part of the Arts Council Malta strategy that will be rolled out later in December. "Together we aim to support and offer the best space for idea creatives and supporters to share their ideas on the ZAAR.com.mt platform and get great ideas funded," Karl adds. "We will continually be looking to improve the way we support project owners with their crowd-funding campaign in a more manageable way."

Do you think your next project could benefit from ZAAR.com.mt? Get in touch! Contact Karl on karl@zaar.com.mt or call 2340 3982 to get the ball rolling.

DIARY OF EVENTS

January

- 5th Geminarie Group Meeting with Anna Lindh Foundation, Amb. Hatem Atallah
- 8th Meeting Dr Josianne Cutajar at Access Birgu Mary Gaerty, Doris Bingley and Marie Demicoli attended Reception organised by Partit Laburista Mary Gaerty and Marie Demicoli attended
- 11th Public Dialogue, EU Presidency Trio, Taking Forward the Strategic Agenda at The Palace Valletta Mary Gaerty and Doris Bingley attended
- 12th From Rome to Lisbon and Beyond at the Auberge d'Aragon Mary Gaerty, Doris Bingley and Marie Demicoli attended
- 14th Signing of MOU with the Ministry for Education
The Europeanization of Interest groups in Malta and Ireland. A Small State Perspective Book Launch at the Aula Magna Doris Bingley attended
- 15th Promoting the Empowerment Course at Access Birgu. Doris Bingley and Marie Demicoli attended
- 19th Meeting with Minister Chris Cardona at the Millennia Building Mary Gaerty and Grace Attard attended
- 20th MCESD Civil Society Committee elections postponed
Monitoring Committee at St Elmo Doris Bingley participated
- 21st Doris Bingley and Marie Demicoli promoting the Empowerment Course on RTK Radio
- 22nd US Ambassador Farewell event Mary Gaerty attended
- 25th Commencement of the 2nd Advancing in Society through Empowerment Course
- 26th Reception to celebrate Australia Day at the Australian High Commission Doris Bingley and Mary Gaerty invited
- 27th The last Executive Committee Meeting for the year 2015
- 28th Chinese Embassy Spring Festival Mary Gaerty and Doris Bingley attended
- 30th National Council of Women Annual General Meeting at The Palace Hotel Sliema

February

- 1st MEUSAC, Circular Economy Consultation at Europe House
- 3rd SIS Grants Awards by MCVS at

Europe House

- Mary Gaerty, Doris Bingley and Grace Attard held a meeting with Mr David Spiteri Gingell at NCW Centre
- 8th Concert at San Anton Palace, Julia Zahra Soprano, Doris Bingley and Therese Cassola attended
- 9th MEUSAC Consultation on Small States
- 12th Meeting with Minister Chris Cardona Mary Gaerty and Grace Attard attended
Soroptimist International of Malta Dinner at Villa Arigo Mary Gaerty Doris Bingley, Grace Attard and Therese Cassola attended
- 14th Unborn Child Movement Annual Event, Meeting with the President of Malta, Cortege to St John's Cathedral for Mass and Presentations in favour of the Unborn Child.
- 15th Council of Europe CoE Group of Experts on Action against trafficking in Human Beings (GRETA) meeting at the Grand Hotel Excelsior. Doris Bingley and Grace Attard attended
- 17th Advisory Board meeting of the Core Platform, Mary Gaerty and Doris Bingley attended
- 18th MEUSAC, Disability Consultation, Grace Attard and Amy Zahra Camilleri attended
- 22nd 1st Executive Committee Meeting 2016
- 26th Monitoring Committee Meeting Doris Bingley attended

March

- 1st Meeting on Gender Equality/ Mainstreaming in Research preparing Malta's ERA Roadmap Priority 4 on Gender. Grace Attard participated
- 3rd Nisa Giljanizi seminar at Cavalieri Hotel
- 4th Women refugees and asylum seekers Photo Reportage Exhibition organised by the Malta European Parliament Information Office Doris Bingley and Mary Gaerty attended
BPW Mentoring Event for Sixth Formers held at Ta Qali, NCW members participated
Centru Nazzjonali Laburista Working Lunch Mary Gaerty attended
- 8th Women's Day Lara Tonna participated at Newsfeed Prog on Net Television
Amy Camilleri Zahra participated as

a speaker during the MNPN seminar
Doris Bingley participated at the Commonwealth International Women's Day event at Marlborough House, London

- 9th Chinese Ambassador to Malta invitation for Lunch Mary Gaerty and Doris Bingley attended
- 14th Commonwealth Day Reception at Marlborough House Doris Bingley attended
- 15th Meeting at the Ministry for Economy, Investment and Small Businesses Mary Gaerty and Grace Attard attended
- 16th Interfaith Forum San Anton Palace
- 17th Symposuim – Gender Issues Committee Women in the STEM Sciences
China Cultural Centre Exhibition. Doris Bingley and Mary Gaerty attended
- 18th Reception on the occasion of Commonwealth Day – Ministry of Foreign Affairs Doris Bingley attended
- 19th Annual General Conference of the national Association of Pensioners
- 21st Lunch hosted by H.E. G.Kathleen Hill Ambassador of the United States of America. Mary Gaerty and Doris Bingley attended
Reception hosted by the Ambassador of the Republic of Tunisia Mary Gaerty attended.
- 1st Central Committee 2016 and 2nd Executive Committee Meeting
- 22nd Celebrating Women's History Movie A League of their Own at the American Embassy.
- 23rd Half Day of Recollection and Mass at NCW Centre
- 28th Office of the President Forum on the Occasion of a Visit to Malta by a Head of State (President of Kosovo)
The forum discussed Sexual Violence in Conflict and Beyond. Mary Gaerty, Grace Attard, Doris Bingley and NCW Affiliated Organisations attended
NCPE seminar "Equality beyond Gender Roles" at the Waterfront Hotel
- 29th Microsoft Malta -Technology for Good Marie Demicoli attended
- 30th Domestic Violence and Children seminar to mark the Ten years of the Commission on Domestic Violence Jeanette Cassar attended

FORTHCOMING EVENTS:**Foundation Day Dinner**

Members, Spouses and Friends are encouraged to attend the traditional Foundation Day Dinner. This is being held at The Corinthia Palace Hotel, Attard on Friday 29th April 2016 at 19.30hrs.

Please contact our Secretariat office on telephone nos. 21248881/21246982 at the very earliest of your intention if you wish to join us.

**Commemorating the Jubilee Year of Mercy,
International Women's Day and Workers' Day
Saturday 30th April 2016 - 3.30pm**

The National Council of Women, together with the Catholic Action Women's Branch would like to invite you, your families and friends to a pilgrimage followed by a Thanks giving Mass in commemoration of International Women's Day, Workers Day and the Jubilee Year of Mercy.

We will be meeting at the Main Gate of Mdina at 3.30pm and together we shall pass through the 'Porta Santa' followed by Holy Mass.

His Grace Archbishop Mgr. Charles J. Scicluna will be the main celebrant

**Talk on Non-Contributory Pensions
Wednesday 18th May at 4.00pm**

Speaker: Mr George Cremona Assistant Director of Non-Contributory Pensions

Date: Wednesday 18th May

Time: 4-6pm

Venue: National Council of Women, Pope Pius XII Flats, Mountbatten str, Blata l Bajda HMR02, Malta

Rsvp: email: ncwmalta@camline.net.mt or tel 21248881

Renewal of Membership

May we remind members that have not yet paid their membership for the year 2016 to do so please. Cheques are payable to The Treasurer, NCW.

If you wish to settle payment by internet banking, these are NCW Bank details:

BANK: APS Bank Ltd.

IBAN: MT98APSB77046002866912866930013

BIC: APSBMTMT

Reference: Your name

We thank all members for their cooperation and support

Therese Cassola - Hon Treasurer

