



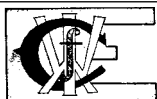
Founded 1964

N-Mara

Newsletter of the National Council of Women - Malta

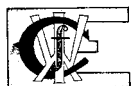


Members of


**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 &
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*ICW ECM meeting at the Taipei
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*Meeting with the Hon Minister
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Founded 1964

Il-Mara

NEWSLETTER OF THE NATIONAL COUNCIL OF WOMEN - MALTA

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EDITORIAL

Dear Colleagues and friends
As we look back on the past year, we are already gearing towards the new one starting with our plans in the pipeline on current and future issues. NCW is fully aware of the changing societies we are living in and the challenges – or rather, the opportunities they bring with them!

At the National Council of Women, we prepare strong resolutions to address the above and other issues together with our affiliated organisations - resolutions that we hope will go beyond words into action.

Malta's EU presidency starts in January and Malta will be at the helm of the European Council. The priorities for the Maltese Presidency have been announced and we at NCW will keep our readers informed about different important issues which will be given priority during the Maltese Presidency.

One of the most crucial challenges is the elimination of Gender and Domestic Violence. Immediately after the launch of national legislation to reflect the Council of Europe Convention on Gender violence and Domestic violence, incoming Commissioner for Domestic Violence Joe Gerada invited all organisations to get together to set up a network to address the various issues in a more coordinated and effective manner. On Sunday 4 December a march from Blata il-Bajda to Castille Place, Valletta was organised as a first awareness raising initiative.

Only a few weeks ago, European Commissioner for Justice, Consumers and Gender Equality, Vera Jourova was in Malta holding meetings with several representatives of Institutions and Civil Society. NCW was invited to meet her and discuss a number



of areas which Malta needs to address. (see *Il-Mara* Issue no 105 for more details) Commissioner Jourova outlined her various plans on gender equality for 2017. She also announced her commitment to address violence against women and girls through different measures as a priority. Addressing Domestic Violence is on the agenda for Malta's EU Presidency and an EU-wide conference on the elimination of Domestic violence will be held in Malta in February 2017.

The most important event in the NCW's calendar is the Annual General Meeting which will be held on the last Saturday of January (28 January 2017) and you can view the agenda in this issue. This is a very important forum for our members and we encourage you to take the opportunity to attend, send in your nomination if you wish to form part of the Executive Committee or if you would like to join one of our sub-committees. We also look forward to your suggestions on various topics. But most of all it is a time when we can meet and even informally share some time together.

Our appreciation to all those colleagues and friends who have helped and supported the National Council of Women in one way or another, and we look forward to another successful year together in 2017.

We wish you and your loved ones a Happy New Year full of achievements.

**Marie Demicoli,
Editorial Board**

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President's Message

Dear NCW Members and friends

I do hope that you had a wonderful Christmas Day shared with your loved ones. As I write this message on Boxing Day, I cannot but think about Christmas Day itself and its meaning. For many of you reading this message, it is a time of sharing, of family gatherings, of exchange of gifts, but it is also means loneliness to many others. Let us try to keep the Christmas feeling throughout the year.

As we approach another New Year we evaluate our gains and losses of the ending year. We are not talking about accounting, well that too, a healthy bank balance gives a sense of security to its owner, but I am thinking about achievements and failures and if we can say hand on heart, if we are enriched persons a year later. The School motto where my daughters attended school was - EVERY DAY BETTER. Amongst other mottos that have guided me along the years, I have also adopted this motto as a principle. But in truth what is considered as better today and better for me, might be the wrong decision in the long run. History has proved this to be true for several circumstances and therefore when deciding we must be sure that the decisions we take and stands we uphold, should be based not only on what we need and want at the particular time, but also what effect these opinions will bear on others. There have been several of these issues in the last months, about which there has been even protests, but it seems that those who wish for changes are the ones that shout loudest and are therefore their voices heard and their requests granted. Standing by our values does not make any of us weak because we are afraid of change, on the contrary it depicts us as people with strong principles. Certain things are better left as they are, we will only be a poorer society without them, especially when half truths are said or no education is given before the change. Change yes, but for the better!

Malta will be assuming the EU Council Presidency as of

January 2017, for six months. We have already had several meetings regarding topics that will be discussed and we encourage all those who can attend to do so. This will be our opportunity as Civil Society to propose any changes and be protagonists during the event –

European Event On Violence Against Women, to be held at the Meridien Hotel, St Julians on the 3rd of February 2017. Registration is now nearing the end so please go ahead and register. Another important event is the "Gender, Science and Sustainable Development: The Impact of Media From Vision to Action". This will be Convened by Ministry of Social Dialogue, Consumer Affairs and Civil Liberty, The Government of the Republic of Malta; and The Royal Academy of Science International Trust (RASIT) on the 10 – 11 February 2017 at the Mediterranean Conference Center – Valetta. You can register on the RASIT website.

Civil Society through the MCESD (Malta Council for Economic and Social Development) will also participate in a dedicated conference in March, where a few of Malta's priorities will be discussed. These will include education, transport, migration etc. This will also offer an opportunity for Civil Society to express its views on important issues.

The NCW's Annual General meeting (AGM) will be held at the Palace Hotel, Sliema on the 28th of January. I hope to see most of you. There are a number of resolutions that we need to discuss and your contributions are essential.

I leave you by wishing you all A Healthy and Prosperous NEW YEAR.

Au revoir

Mary Gaerty,
President



First Aid Course at NCW Learning Centre

The National Council of Women with the support of the Voluntary Organisation Council organised a course in First Aid at NCW Centre Blata l-Bajda.

Ms Gemma Siroll from St John Ambulance Training Branch conducted the sessions.

The Participants enjoyed the informal setting – the practical work with the dummies and the clear diagrams and information sheets combined with the flexibility of teaching. Ms Gemma Siroll was very approachable and the delivery of her subject was excellent. The First Aid course is recognized by The Malta Qualifications Council, and by local Occupational Health & Safety Regulations.

Marie Demicoli - Office Administrator



Stop to Violence Project Malta Girl Guides Association

Since its foundation in 1923, the Malta Girl Guides (MGG) pledged to make a difference in the lives of girls and young women within the Maltese society. MGG clearly has a responsibility towards our members and the Guiding programme is an opportunity to empower them to speak out and take action.

As an association, which is considered as an expert in non-formal education for girls and young women, MGG hereby recalls its commitment (i) to contribute to the safeguard of the rights of girls and women; (ii) to raise awareness about the signs of violent relationships; (iii) to collaborate with the national authorities in projects aiming at eradicating violence and (iv) to advocate for better protection and assistance to victims of violence.

In 2011, the mother organisation, World Association of Girl Guides and Girl Scouts (WAGGGS) launched the Stop the Violence Campaign. The campaign was chosen based on a consultation with girls and young women about what concerns them the most and what they most want to take action on. WAGGGS joined forces with UN Women to design the badge curriculum on violence against girls and young women. MGG was chosen as one of the pilot Member Organisations which reviewed this curriculum on how it can be implemented effectively with our members. It contains a wide range of age-appropriate activities to be carried out in a safe space by trained leaders. Although the rate of violence is very high around the world, there are too few conversations, too little action, poor data and limited investment

to stop the violence – especially on girls. In view of our mission, the MGG welcomes with great satisfaction the initiatives of the Government of Malta to ratify the Istanbul Convention and to table the proposed bill on gender-based violence and domestic violence. For more information about our campaign, go to <https://www.waggs.org/en/what-we-do/stop-the-violence/about-campaign/>

MGG joined forces and partnered with Agenzija Zghazagh & National Council of women for various activities. Since 2011, MGG has managed to do the following:

- Held a conference on FGM (Female Genital Mutilation)
- Presented the resolution on violence against women and to amend the age of criminal responsibility for children, we worked jointly with the National Council of Women.
- We invited an ex-survivor of domestic violence in one of our training sessions on domestic violence as a key speaker. We had also invited 4 residents to our Convention in which they took part in MGG activities/sessions on self-esteem.
- We organised a silent march in Valletta with the attendance of our members, the general public

and distinguished guests and our partners

- Carried a survey and drew the conclusions in a report on violence in relationships, which was then presented to Parliament.
- Launched a comic book on violence in dating relationships with our partners.
- Submitted resolutions to have current laws amended on violence against women and on gentlemen's clubs.
- Ongoing training to our Leaders.
- Trained teachers on the badge curriculum
- Submitted further proposals to the government to a launch of a consultation process to amend the legislation on gender-based violence and domestic violence
- Submitted recommendations to the National Commissioner of Domestic Violence,
- Various partners are supported us throughout the journey: National Council of Women, Agenzija Zghazagh, Dar Qalb ta' Gesu, Dar Merhba Bik, Ministry of Education and Employment, Ministry of Social Dialogue, Consumer Affairs and Civil Liberties, Ministry for Health, Commission on Domestic Violence

MGG recommends that girls take centre stage in this. Girls are even more vulnerable than women due to their young age, physical and psychological repercussions on their well-being. The protection of the best interests of children, especially those of the girls are to be on the forefront of our activities.

Joyce Schembri
Project Coordinator



Conference organised by Victim Support Europe (VSE)

Venue: The European Economic and Social Committee (EESC)
Tuesday 29 November 2016

The Victims Rights Directive – where are we now?

The EESC invited Grace Attard to attend the Conference **Establishing Victims Rights and Support Services in Challenging Times** organized by Victim Support Europe (VSE), the leading European Umbrella organization advocating on behalf of all victims of crime, no matter what the crime, no matter who the victim is. It represents national member organizations providing support and information service to more than 2 million people affected by crime every year in 26 countries. For over 25 years, VSE has been working for a Europe where all victims have strong victims rights and services, whether they report the crime or not.

After an introductory address by the Chair Joao Lazaro, President VSE, representatives of different countries spoke about initiatives both legislative and practical measures that their country has been working on. Dr Roberta Lepre', representing Malta, spoke about The Victims of Crime Act adopted in 2015. She also highlighted the proposal for the setting up of a Victims Unit within the Judiciary, but so far it is not clear what its remit is. Other points she raised concerned the right to legal aid for victims, which currently is only provided for offenders and the need for training of legislators and other stakeholders including the police force.

During the second session we listened to various experiences of victims, including an 18 year old survivor (Netherlands) of stabbing assault that left her handicapped and wheelchair bound. She spoke about the difficult time going through court procedures during which as a victim she hardly had any legal rights to civil claims for damages, the right to speak during court sessions, no information on investigations among others, although she won the case.

The UN representative spoke about new forms of crime including organized

crime, travel crimes, street crimes, terrorism, cyber-crime, hate crimes and refugee crimes. Referring to the Victims Directive (2012) four years on (2016) the EU Commissioner Security Union, Sir Julian King and Monika Hohlmeier MEP rapporteur on Directive Combating Terrorism spoke about the introduction of further legislation and a comprehensive coherent strategy to address emerging forms of crime. The strategy aims to address victims of crimes, in particular children, relatives, friends and the general public affected by traumas of these crimes and victims who are confronted by recurring videos of these attacks. The strategy also aims at



long term planning for national support structures and preventive measures to work more effectively at 'the moment' of the attack



**Grace Attard,
NCW Vice-
President**



Strengthening victims' rights in the Eu

Many people fall victim to crime in the EU every year - around 30 million crimes, excluding minor offenses, alone are reported to the police. More and more people are travelling, living or studying abroad and are therefore potential victims of crimes committed in a country other than their own. The EU has a mandate to ensure that citizens and foreigners moving within its borders are protected.

Objectives

The very nature of a criminal act leaves a victim vulnerable and often in need of assistance. Victims are, often for the very first time, involved in the criminal justice system and may have to speak to police officers, lawyers and judges and ultimately go to court. Victims can find the process confusing and overwhelming, particularly when they are abroad.

The EU therefore acts to ensure that victims:

- are recognised and treated with respect and dignity;
- are protected from further victimisation and intimidation from the offender and further distress when they take part in the criminal justice process;
- receive appropriate support throughout proceedings and have access to justice;
- have appropriate access to compensation.

Victims must be guaranteed a minimum level of rights without discrimination across the EU, irrespective of their nationality or country of residence. These rights should apply whether a minor or serious crime is involved. Victims, and their family members, should also have access to support services - whether or not they have reported the crime - and be protected from further harm.

EU legislative framework

The national laws and policies on victims' rights and the role of victims in criminal proceedings differ considerably from one Member State to another. To ensure minimum level of victims' rights in all Member States, the EU has adopted several **EU legal instruments** setting

up common rules aimed at protecting and assisting victims of crime: horizontal instruments dealing with victims' rights in general, more specific instruments on protection measures and financial compensation to victims of crime and on substantive law instruments regarding trafficking in human beings and child sexual exploitation.

- The **Directive 2012/29/EU** establishing minimum standards on the rights, support and protection of victims of crime ensures that persons who have fallen victim of crime are recognised, treated with respect and receive proper protection, support and access to justice. The Directive replaces the 2001 Framework Decision on the standing of victims in criminal proceedings and considerably strengthens the rights of victims and their family members to information, support and protection and victims' procedural rights in criminal proceedings. The Directive also requires that the Member States ensure appropriate training on victims' needs for officials who are likely to come into contact with victims and encourage cooperation between Member States and coordination of national services of their actions on victims' rights.

The EU Member States must implement the provisions of the Directive into their national laws by **16 November 2015**. DG Justice has issued a guidance document to assist Member States in this process. This document clarifies the provisions of the Directive, in order to help national authorities, practitioners and relevant service providers understanding what is required to make the victims' rights set out in the Directive a reality everywhere in the EU.

With regard to **specific groups of victims**, EU legislation further establishes protection and support for victims of human trafficking and child victims of sexual exploitation and child pornography.

Right to continue to benefit from protection measures when moving to another Member State

To effectively protect victims of violence and harassment, national

authorities often grant them specific measures which help preventing further aggression or re-assault by the offender. To ensure that a person who has been granted a protection order in a Member State continues to benefit from this protection when moving or travelling to another Member State, the EU put in place a mechanism for the mutual recognition of protection measures. National protection measures can be of civil, criminal or administrative law nature and their duration, scope and procedures of adoption vary among the Member States. Due to separate legal bases in EU law for mutual recognition of civil law measures and criminal law measures, two separate instruments were required to ensure the circulation of the three most common types of protection measures within the EU.

- The **Directive 2011/99/EU on the European Protection Order (EPO)** sets up a mechanism allowing persons who benefit from a protection order in criminal matters issued in one Member State to request a European Protection Order. Such an order allows for protection also in other Member States where the protected person travels or moves. Protection orders covered by the Directive concern situations where victims, or potential victims, of crime benefit from a prohibition or regulation of entering certain places, being contacted or approached by a person causing risk. The Member States shall implement the provisions of the Directive into their national laws by **11 January 2015**.

- The Regulation (EU) No. 606/2013 on **mutual recognition of protection measures in civil matters** sets up a mechanism allowing for a direct recognition of protection orders issued as a civil law measure between Member States. Thus, persons who benefit from a civil law protection order issued in the Member State of its residence may invoke it directly in other Member States by presenting a **certificate** to competent authorities certifying their rights. The Regulation applies as of **11 January 2015**.

Right to compensation

The **Directive 2004/80/EC relating to compensation to crime victims**

provides that persons can apply for state compensation when they have fallen victims to crime abroad, and receive assistance to do so. The Directive requires that all Member States have a state compensation scheme which provides fair and appropriate compensation to victims of intentional violent crime. The directive also creates a system of cooperation between national authorities for the transmission of applications for compensation in cross-border situations, notably victims of a crime committed outside their Member State of habitual residence can turn to an authority in their own Member State to submit the application and get help with practical and administrative formalities.

The **Directive 2012/29/EU establishing minimum standards on the rights, support and protection of victims of crime** (Article 16) provides the right to obtain a decision on compensation by the offender, within a reasonable time, in the course of criminal proceedings (or other legal procedures). It also encourages mechanisms to recover compensation awards from the offender.

Non-legislative actions

In addition to legislative action, the Commission has funded hundreds of projects aimed at supporting victims of crime, in the fields of criminal justice [JPEN and JUSTICE 2014-2020] and combating violence against children, young people and women [Daphne and REC_Rights, Equality and Citizenship Programme 2014-2020].

Next steps

Since the “**Budapest Roadmap**” adopted by the Council in 2011, the EU has been working very hard to put victims at the heart of the criminal justice agenda. In particular, the adoption of



the package of legislative proposals described above was a great success. It is not enough, however, to have victims' rights only on paper. These rights must be applied and implemented in practice. Adequate transposition, implementation and application of the newly adopted EU measures is a priority for the Commission's actions in the area of victims' rights.

Year 2015 is a crucial moment for making the victims' rights a reality in all EU countries. The Member States must ensure that all the provisions of the Victims' Rights and EPO Directives are correctly transposed to the national law and that the provisions of the Regulation on civil law protection measures are correctly applied by the relevant authorities. The Commission will keep assisting Member States in these tasks. In particular, the Commission organises experts meetings with national authorities on various subjects related to the application and implementation of these instruments. The Commission also assists the Member States by providing guidance and promoting best practices and possible solutions.

Key dates

(See Table 1)

Background

General minimum standards to address the rights and needs of victims in criminal proceedings were first established through the 2001 Council Framework Decision on the standing of victims in criminal proceedings. This legal instrument was adopted to ensure that victims can participate actively in criminal proceedings, have adequate rights and are being treated fairly within criminal proceedings.

However, the Framework Decision proved insufficient to properly address the needs of victims and ensure they benefit from procedural rights in the Member States. Therefore, the Council stated in the Stockholm Programme (2010-2014) that an integrated and co-ordinated approach to victims is needed and called on the Commission and EU countries to examine how to improve legislation in this area.

To reinforce existing national and EU measures on victims' rights, a package of legislative proposals (the **Victims package**) was adopted in May 2011, accompanied by a **Communication presenting the Commission's current and future action in relation to victims** [COM(2011)274].

Malta

Minimum sanctions have been present in Maltese Criminal Code since its first promulgation in 1854 and have remained present till this very day. The concept and legal application has remained unchanged throughout the years. Amendments have been made to a few select offences throughout the years with the aim of increasing specific minimum sanctions

http://ec.europa.eu/justice/criminal/victims/index_en.htm

Table 1

EU act	Adoption date	Transposition/implementation date
Directive on Victims' rights	25 October 2012	16 November 2015
Directive on the European Protection Order in criminal matters	13 December 2011	11 January 2015
Regulation on mutual recognition of protection orders in civil matters	12 June 2013	11 January 2015



President Mary Gaerty at the launch of the European E-Platform on Women Entrepreneurship



English Language Sec Level Class



English Language MQF1 Class



Mathematics Sec Level Class



NCW members visit Manoel Theatre



Meeting with NCW Austria member Antonia Beck Manngetta



EESC President Mr George Dassis with NCW Vice President Grace Attard



Italian Language MQF2 Class



NCW Christmas Celebration



Domestic Violence

An Approach to Early Detection and Intervention

Domestic Violence is a very serious crime. The prevention of violence against women and children is a social and political issue and a priority for all levels of Government. It calls for an integrated and comprehensive strategy based on the three Ps: Active Prevention of crimes of violence against women and children• Adequate Provision of support services• Appropriate legal Protection for women and children who are victims of violence

It is right that the Police, the Criminal Justice System and Social Services, Probation and the voluntary sector should be given the focus on domestic violence, but we also know that the best way of ensuring that we tackle this crime, is through a multi-agency, multi-disciplinary approach and one that is rooted in early intervention. There is the need to build on this approach and to recognize that there are specific areas where a targeted and focused response is required and the Health Service is one of them.

Why the Health Service?

The Health Service has a particular contribution to make. Domestic violence affects health, both physical and mental health and so the Health Service may offer the best contact point with staff that can recognize domestic violence and help those affected by it. Women make use of the Health Service whether for illness injury, family planning, pregnancy and childbirth or in their role as a carer for children or older people. Those who suffer from domestic violence are more likely to suffer poor health; chronic pain, depression and suicide attempts and will be seen by health professionals in routine services. Domestic violence in pregnancy has been associated with foetal distress, poor pregnancy outcome, low birth weight, pre-term labour.

How can the Health Service help?

Health Service professionals should be able to recognize when abuse is occurring and to understand that often for good reasons the woman is reluctant to talk about it. She may be completely unable to talk about it. Even though they consult their GP they conceal their experience of domestic violence. There are very good reasons for this – shame, stigma, fear, fear that their partner might find out that they have told someone or fear that their children may be taken into care or the doctor, nurse, midwife, health professional may seem in a hurry, uninterested, unsympathetic and occasionally even hostile. They may feel embarrassed; the

health professional may seem awkward, ill informed and out of their depth.

Training and Intervention

It is clear that if health professionals are to offer services which women who experience domestic violence need, and are entitled to expect, the staff must have two things: a greater understanding of the issues and the competence and the confidence to take appropriate action. If we do not identify domestic violence we are failing some of those who are most vulnerable in our community, women and children. The health professional that intervenes without understanding the complexity of the issues can in fact place the woman at greater risk. The focus is clearly on women, but we recognize that where there is domestic violence against women, abuse towards children and vulnerable adults in the family is also at risk.

Health professionals have responsibilities to do two things: first to ascertain whether domestic violence is a problem. Health professionals should be alerted to the possibility and prepared to ask questions moving from the general to the more specific. Certain injuries should trigger concern, for example, injuries on the face and hands, abdominal injuries and multiple and recurrent injuries. Secondly, the health professional should be able to take the necessary action, believing the woman and responding to her immediate problems, assessing further risk to her and to her children, if she has children, keeping care records and providing information. In most cases, it is information that women need and not advice and to ensure continuing support and follow-up. Appropriate action can not only deal with the immediate problems which the woman is facing, but also help in the longer term, including provision of evidence for a criminal justice intervention, to prevent repeat abuse to the woman herself or her children.

Moving Forward

We need to create a culture which takes collective responsibility for tackling domestic violence rather than hoping that someone else, somewhere else will do what needs to be done. In Maternity Services and Primary Care we have opportunities to establish a relationship of trust with women. In other settings such as the Emergency Department, staff must be trained to respond to an immediate crisis. Protocols and referral processes should be in place and staff trained and supported in their use. This is particularly important, as other initiatives which Government is taking, will make it more likely for women to seek help from health professionals. For

the strategy to succeed, training is essential. It can be very damaging if, for example a midwife asks a question and does not understand why a woman answers in a particular manner rather than in another. Professional training also enhances the support that health professionals can give within their own community, social and family groups.

Data collection

We also need to improve the data gathering systems to enable information on domestic violence to be analysed and shared. If we are to begin to plan local services better, we must be able to describe current services, detail how these services are being used and by whom and identify ways in which we need to improve them.

The Health Promotion Department

Health Promotion plays an important role as a mass media education campaign raises awareness of the extent and nature of crimes of violence against women and also looks at why these crimes happen. Campaign material should include pictures of positive images of women and children. A Health Promotion mass media campaign should promote health in its broadest sense that is by promoting the prevention of many health consequences of domestic violence: homicide, serious injuries, injuries during pregnancy, injuries to children, unwanted or early pregnancies, STD including HIV and AIDS. There are also the psychological consequences including suicide, mental health problems, and the effects on children of witnessing violence. Finally there are societal consequences, for example, added health care costs and the effects on productivity and employment.

A Social Health Care Model in a hospital setting

It is not easy to introduce a social health care model into a hospital setting. This means a whole change of culture within the medical profession, especially within the hospital setting where a change from a medical model of health care to a social model is necessary.

I hope that this quotation from a resource manual will make us all realize the urgency with which we need to move forward. "I wish I had been asked about what had happened, I was so ashamed, but I really wanted to tell them, they did not ask me though and I did not have the courage to tell them myself. Even though he was not there I lied for him just like I always did. They just gave me some pain killers and sent me home"

Grace Attard NCW – Vice President

Overview of Key Events October-November 2016

Launch of Istanbul Convention new Legislation on Gender Violence and Domestic Violence 17 September 2016.

The aim of the new legislation is to harmonise national legislation with the CoE Istanbul Convention, covering different forms of gender violence. President Mary Gaerty, Vice-President Grace Attard and General Secretary Doris Bingley attended the launch. Grace Attard compiled a set of recommendations on behalf of NCW, which were sent to the team working on the relevant legislation

Brussels Launch event of the European E-Platform on Women Entrepreneurship -WeGate Platform, Friday 30 September 2016.

The EU Commission launched an EU funded online platform network aimed at assisting female entrepreneurs or prospective entrepreneurs as a tool for Web entrepreneurship and digital business. Experts covered areas including: filming and the digital media, digital marketing, software for recruitment, communicating with brands' consumers on social channels and Inclusive Digital transformation among others. In his concluding remarks Michel Catinet, European Head of Unit, Clusters, Social Economy and Entrepreneurship highlighted that the e-platform has been set up as a tool. Improving it, keeping it alive depends on the engagement of all women entrepreneurs. President Mary Gaerty and Vice-President Grace Attard were invited to participate together with Marie Claire Testa, Manager, MEIB

First meeting with the Commissioner for Domestic Violence Mr Joe Gerada 3 October 2016.

DV Commissioner proposed the setting up of a network of NGOs to coordinate various practices and policies being carried out. He also proposed that a list of members of the network and the details of the organisations they represent to be compiled for easier access. During the meeting a brainstorming session was carried out reflecting current issues that need to be addressed as well as new initiatives to be promoted. The next meetings dealt with the formulation of a strategy to address barriers that the different professionals encounter in their work and how the network group can provide ways to ensure better results

President's Foundation for the Wellbeing of Society: Wellbeing in Retirement 8 October 2016, Verdala Palace

The interactive discussion addressed a number of issues including preparing for active ageing at an early stage in life; changing attitudes in Maltese society with regards to elderly people; decent income; employment opportunities; adequate digitalisation training among others. Other issues dealt with health, in particular mental health, heart conditions, dementia and stress. Several participants raised issues from their personal experience and the lack of adequate measures to address their problems

Dialogue with First Vice President of the European Commission Mr Frans Timmermans, 6 October 2016 Grand Hotel Excelsior Floriana.

The public dialogue with the Commissioner served as an opportunity for the Maltese public to address a number of

concerns: migration, youth unemployment, lack of trust in EU Institutions, climate change and the environment, stronger measures to address individualism and extreme nationalism, the need for the EU to communicate better to create awareness of success stories to address the uneasiness in society and European diversity to be seen as an opportunity.

SME Week : Malta Chamber of Commerce in collaboration with ICON 4 October 2016 - Social Media and Trends in online retail.

The Conference served as an initiative during SME week to address the needs of SME and NGOs when applying digitalisation. The speakers highlighted innovative measures that can be useful to improve their working methods and economic perspectives and more effective communication with consumers

SME week : Conference Women mean Business, Dolmen Hotel, Qawra, 6 October 2016.

NCW President Mary Gaerty and Vice-President Grace Attard were on the organising committee set up in preparation for the Conference. During the Conference, Mary Gaerty spoke about her experience as an entrepreneur and Grace Attard acted as rapporteur for one of the workshops. Both of them assisted participants, answering their queries regarding female entrepreneurship.

MEUSAC and the US Embassy in Malta - discussion on Friday 14 October, Old University Valletta 'Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (TTIP): State of Play and Future'

The public dialogue which was chaired by EESC member Stephano Mallia reviewed the current state of affairs of the TTIP. MEUSAC Head Dr Vanni Xuereb welcomed the participants and H.E. Kathleen Hill, Ambassador to Malta for the US gave an overview of the negotiations regarding trade relations between the EU and the US. Speakers included MEP Dr Alfred Sant, MEP Dr Roberta Metsola (video presentation) amongst others. The Brexit situation vis-a-vis the current TTIP negotiations was highlighted pointing out implications that can affect the EU and Malta negatively. Comments from the floor addressed the fact that the panel did not include a representative of consumers, the importance of the EU to ensure high levels of standards, issues concerning health in the TTIP negotiations, working conditions as a result of the agreement, amongst others. The US Ambassador was hopeful that the nearing presidential election in the US will not change the course of the EU-US negotiations

UN International Day of the Girl on 11 October 2016

Women of the World at the Southbank Centre organized an event to celebrate International Day of the Girl 2016 by Speed Mentoring school girls from 30 different London Schools on the London Eye. Every capsule was filled with girls aged 11 - 18 being mentored by a whole range of women from activists to scientists, from entrepreneurs to writers. NCW General Secretary Doris Bingley mentored girls from Ursuline High School of Wimbledon. All the girls were

dreaming up possibilities, talking through ideas and discussing the joys and challenges of being girls. This was an opportunity to empower the future generation. For the rest of the day the schoolgirls enjoyed an inspirational afternoon of creative workshops, debates, discussions and performances at Southbank Centre.

MED FORUM 2016 at MCC Valletta from 23 - 25 October 2016

The Anna Lindh Foundation together with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Malta organized this special Forum which was attended by 640 delegates from 50 countries, including representatives of civil society organisations, youth leaders, media networks, and policy-makers. NCW Malta was represented by President Mary Gaerty, General Secretary Doris Bingley and Environment Committee Coordinator Marie Demicoli. Minister for Foreign Affairs of Malta, Dr. George Vella underlined that MED FORUM 2016 has been a "defining event for the future Maltese EU Presidency". The Forum, which resulted from 18 months of preparation undertaken by the Foundation and partners, was conceived from the outset as a far-reaching process to bring cultural relations and people-to-people cooperation to the heart of the policy rethink on how to effectively construct relations between Europe and its southern Mediterranean neighbourhood

EESC President George Dassis visit to Malta and the MCESD CS in 1 November 2016

During an official visit to Malta, President George Dassis had a series of meetings with Prime Minister Hon Dr Joseph Muscat, Leader of the Opposition Hon Dr Somen Busuttil, MCESD Core Group and MCESD Civil Society (a poor turn out) as well as separate meetings with social partners. Former EESC members and currently EESC delegate on the CCMI Grace Attard and Edwin Calleja were invited to a working lunch with Mr Dassis and his Secretary Daniela Rondinelli during which they discussed the future of the EU and the upcoming Maltese Presidency

The International Council of Women held its General Assembly in Taiwan from 12 to 17 November 2016

The International Council of Women (ICW), the oldest international organization in the world, held its general assembly and executive meeting in Taiwan for the first time. The theme of this year's executive meeting was "Transforming society through women's empowerment".

The National Council of Taiwan offered to host this year's meetings with the support of the government as Taiwan has been able to make progress in gender equality and on other gender issues. Council Members also wanted to see firsthand and learn more about how Taiwan achieved greater participation for women in the political, economical, social and other spheres. The executive meeting was held at the Grand Hotel and brought together more than 100 experts and members of women's rights group from around 40 nations to discuss women-related issues. NCW Malta was represented by General Secretary Doris Bingley who is also ICW Vice-President.

Report on the ICW ECM in Taiwan November 2016



The National Council of Women of Taiwan (NCWT) with President Linda Liu and her talented and enthusiastic team organized a very successful International Council of Women Executive Committee Meeting (ECM) at the Grand Hotel Taipei. This was the first time that NCWT had the opportunity to host an ICW-CIF meeting. The Organising Taiwanese Committee members were excellent hosts from the moment the delegates arrived at Taipei's airport to their departure.

First to arrive in Taipei were the ICW Board Members as their meeting started

on the 11 November 2016. Then the delegates from 40 nations arrived for the ECM which had its opening conference on 14 November 2016.

President Tsai Ing-wen, President of Taiwan welcomed all the visitors while the important keynote speakers among them, Hon Pau-Ching Lu, Deputy Minister of Health and Welfare, Republic of China and Hon Mervat Tallaway, Director General, Arab Women Organisation addressed the delegates on the ICW theme "Transforming Society through Women's Empowerment" which was adopted at the Izmir ICW General Assembly in May last year. The ECM also focused on the programme of action 2015 – 2018.

Having the President of Taiwan joining the conference with other High Profile Personalities and Speakers demonstrated that ICW's efforts in the journey towards ICW's common goal of transforming society toward gender equality is working. It was heartening to realize that women are achieving equality in many countries but more so in Taiwan where the progress in equality has been established in nearly all fields of society.

The delegates then participated in the various workshops held in the next two days. They had the opportunity to exchange views and best practices on how to empower women to better adapt to the changing workplace, the environment and the world. They gained knowledge on how to develop networks and enhance their capacities to promote greater progress by having women in



political, economic and social decision-making positions as only this will lead to transformation of society and stimulate further ideas for developing programmes to raise the status of women to actively achieve the 50 per cent participation in public and private entities.

Apart from attending the productive and fruitful conference the delegates had time to enjoy the warm Taiwan hospitality and the scenic beauty of the country.

Doris Bingley
ICW Vice-President
NCW Hon General Secretary



Commonwealth theme for the year 2017: A Peace-building Commonwealth

At a time of increasing instability and uncertainty in the world, the Commonwealth family of nations in its rich diversity becomes an ever more-needed source of strength and hope for all its members. 'A Peace-building Commonwealth' is a natural follow-on from 2016's theme of 'An Inclusive Commonwealth', and reaffirms the Commonwealth Charter principle that 'international peace and security, sustainable economic growth and development and the rule of law are essential to the progress and prosperity of all'.

Doris Bingley
On behalf of the
Commonwealth Women's Network



Women leaders speak out on International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women

The Commonwealth is holding an event at its headquarters in London today to mark the International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women. Called Empowering girls and women: The role of health and education in eliminating violence against women, it has a special focus on the abandonment of Female Genital Mutilation (FGM). Here are some thoughts on the subject from women leaders around the world:



Patricia Scotland
Commonwealth Secretary-General

"Every day, everywhere, women and girls suffer pain and trauma as a result of physical and sexual violence. Millions of minds and bodies are scarred for life. Many die.

This scourge on humanity is avoidable - it is not the result of any agency other than our fellow human beings. Working together we can and must eradicate the stain and suffering.

If the moral imperative is not enough, as it should be, we can add the economic costs of spiralling social dysfunction, demands on health provision, and lost productivity. In all these areas our Commonwealth values and principles call us to action.

I want us to pledge to remove International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women from the calendar. We can only do that once the fear and terrible reality of mental and physical violence is removed from the daily lives of our mothers, sisters and daughters - and those of every woman and girl in our own local community and worldwide.

Let us today and always speak out loudly with one Commonwealth voice and vow - 'No silence on violence'."



Phumzile Mlambo-Ngcuka,
Executive Director, UN Women

"The extent to which violence is embedded in society means that uprooting it is also a job for all of society. That includes men and women, the media and the religious community. We can work together to address the inequality and prejudice that enable and enflame violence against women and girls. We can scale up prevention and increase appropriate services. And we can engage allies, such as young people and other groups in the society, through sports, arts, business and academia.

Together we can begin to bend the curve down and bring the scourge of violence against women and girls to an end."



Ann-Marie Wilson, Executive
Director, 28 Too Many

"The work to end FGM is vital in the empowerment of women and girls, and, as our new Kenya report shows, there is positive progress being made in countries such as Kenya, where support for anti-FGM schemes comes from all levels. This is key to success, and the Commonwealth is in a strong position to aid this by facilitating partnerships and disseminating information. Our recent report on FGM in Nigeria also highlighted the importance of media and it is good to see how youth networks are actively using the media, along with our research and resources, to develop informed anti-FGM programmes and advocacy campaigns."

Commonwealth Girls Education Fund

"Some Commonwealth Countries are at last beginning to recognise the enormous untapped resource they have in their women. The first vital step is to educate young women, rather than permanently stunting their future and their potential through early marriage - or worse, before their adulthood even begins.

Educated girls become empowered women, influencing their own communities and cultures as well as discovering new and positive life choices for themselves."



Julia Lalla-Maharajh, CEO and
Founder, Orchid Project

"Female genital cutting (FGC) affects 200 million women worldwide and a further 3.6 million girls are at risk every year. Orchid Project has a vision of a world free from FGC and is witnessing incredible social change at the grassroots - communities are choosing to abandon the practice.

International efforts to end FGC are gaining momentum, from the 2012 UNGA resolution and an increase in global attention, to FGC being enshrined within the Sustainable Development Goals. But urgent action is needed to end the practice in our generation.

FGC is prevalent within 15 Commonwealth countries. As an association with a global reach, the Commonwealth's role is vital in supporting organisations to end violence against women and girls by helping to create enabling environments for change."

- See more at: <http://thecommonwealth.org/media/news/women-leaders-speak-out-international-day-elimination-violence-against-women#sthash.njbD2cOd.dpuf>



Kehkashan Basu from the United Arab Emirates wins International Children's Peace Prize 2016

Sixteen-year-old Kehkashan Basu from the United Arab Emirates is the 2016 winner of the International Children's Peace Prize. Today, she was presented with the prestigious award for her fight for climate justice and against environmental degradation. Kehkashan received the prize from Nobel Peace Laureate Muhammad Yunus in the presence of the world press and many prominent guests. Professor Yunus, who won the Nobel Peace Prize in 2006 for his efforts for economic and social development, today underlined the urgency and importance of Kehkashan's work,

as more than three million children under the age of five die every year from environment-related diseases and many more suffer deeply from environmental issues.

Upon receiving the prize today, Kehkashan confirmed that her work will continue: "I will keep encouraging children and adults to create a more sustainable future. I call upon everyone to think of ways to contribute to the preservation of the environment. Take that extra step; walk that extra mile to get the future we want. Time is not on our side – we have to act now, or we will have polar bears under palm trees."



Nadia Murad and Lamiya Aji Bashar were honoured with the 2016 Sakharov Prize for Freedom of Thought in a ceremony held at the European Parliament in Strasbourg, France.

Nadia Murad Basee Taha and Lamiya Aji Bashar are survivors of sexual enslavement by Islamic State (IS) and have become spokespersons for women afflicted by IS's campaign of sexual violence. They are public advocates for the Yazidi community in Iraq, a religious minority that has been the subject of a genocidal campaign by IS militants.

In November 2014, Nadia Murad Basee Taha managed to escape with the help of a neighbouring family who smuggled her out of the IS-controlled area, allowing her to make her way to a refugee camp in northern Iraq and then to Germany. A year later, in December 2015, Murad addressed the UN Security Council's first-ever session on human trafficking with a powerful speech about her experience. In September 2016, she became the first United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) Goodwill Ambassador for the Dignity of Survivors of Human Trafficking, participating in global and local advocacy

initiatives to raise awareness around the plight of the countless victims of trafficking. In October 2016, the Council of Europe honoured her with the Václav Havel Human Rights Prize.

Aji Bashar tried to flee several times before finally escaping in April with the help of her family, who paid local smugglers. On her way over the Kurdish border, and while racing towards Iraq's government-controlled territory with IS militants in pursuit, a landmine exploded, killing two of her acquaintances and leaving her injured and almost blind. Luckily she managed to escape and was eventually sent for medical treatment in Germany, where she was reunited with her surviving siblings. Since her recovery Aji Bashar has been active in raising awareness about the plight of the Yazidi community and continues to help women and children who were victims of IS enslavement and atrocities.



Request for Membership Renewal 2017

We would like to remind our members to pay their yearly membership fee, if possible before the end of January, and thus be eligible to vote at the AGM.

Ordinary membership:	€12
Affiliated membership:	€20
Life Membership:	€95

Payment can be done by cash, cheque or via NCW's bank account mentioned below:

Bank Details: APS Bank Ltd, APS Centre, Tower Street, B'Kara BKR4012

NCW Details: National Council of Women, Pope Pius XII Flats No 3, Mountbatten Street, Blata l-Bajda HMR 1579

IBAN: MT98APSB77046002866912866930013

BIC/SWIFT Code: APSBMTMT

Payment Ref: (Your name) Fee 2017

DIARY OF EVENTS

October

- 3rd Meeting with the Domestic Violence Network Mary Gaerty and Grace Attard attended
- 4th Social Media and Trends in Online Retail seminar at Exchange Building Valletta
- 5th Women Directors in Malta in collaboration with Microsoft, HSBC and Nexia bt. Information Session entitled Sharing the Boardroom at SkyPark Mary Gaerty, Doris Bingley and Grace Attard invited
- 6th Female Business Conference entitled, "Women Mean Business" Mary Gaerty and Grace Attard attended
- New Skills Agenda for Europe Conference Marie Demicoli attended
- Citizens Dialogue with First Vice President of the European Commission Frans Timmermans Grace Attard attended
- 10th MCESD elections Gender Equality Sector
- MCESD CS committee meeting Mary Gaerty attended
- 11th Europa Donna Breast Cancer Support Group
- BPW Women's Role and their health Marie Demicoli attended
- 12th First Aid Course organised by NCW with the support of the VO council
- 12th Invisible Women organised by MCWO, Mary Gaerty attended
- 11th -12th Doris Bingley mentored London School Girls at a UN International Day of the Girl event organised by Women of the World South Bank on the London Eye
- 17th Meeting with Brian Farrugia Mary Gaerty and Doris Bingley attended
- 17th Start of Ms Sarah Ifanga Internship
- 18th Launch of the 2016 MCCF Fund for NGOs at San Anton Doris Bingley and Marie Demicoli attended
- 19th Migrant Women in Malta representative meeting with NCW President Mary Gaerty and General Secretary Doris Bingley
- 20th *Precarious Work leads to Poverty* Seminar organised by GWU Mary Gaerty made a presentation. Doris Bingley attended
- 21st Meeting of the Commonwealth Foundation at MCVS. Follow up of the People's Forum. Doris Bingley participated.
- Public discussion *Small States in the EU The Economic and political Perspectives* Grace Attard attended
- 23rd -25th The Anna Lindh Foundation

MED Forum organised with The Malta Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Mary Gaerty, Doris Bingley and Marie Demicoli attended

- 26th NCFHE Meeting with Mr Kenneth Camilleri Mary Gaerty, Doris Bingley and Marie Demicoli attended.
- Executive Committee meeting
- 28th The European Commissioner for Justice, Consumers and Gender Equality Vera Jourova met representatives of the National Council of Women, Mary Gaerty, Doris Bingley and Grace Attard
- Turkish Day Reception at the Hilton, Doris Bingley and Marie Demicoli represented NCW Malta
- 29th MCVS organised VOPs information Session

November

- 1st EESC President George Dassis meets NCW vice President Grace Attard during his visit to Malta
- EESC President George Dassis meets NCW President Mary Gaerty at the MCVS meeting
- 2nd NGOs network meeting with Commissioner for Domestic Violence Joe Gerada Grace Attard, Marie Demicoli and Jeanette Fava Cassar attended.
- Isma Ha Nighidlek: Lejn Izjed Gharfine tad-dritt għall Partecipazzjonie tat tfa' b'Dizabilita
- 8th CSF funds ceremony Therese Cassola attended
- 9th Soroptimists Reception at Verdala Palace Grace Attard and Marie Demicoli attended.
- 11th - 18th Doris Bingley participated at ICW Board Meeting, ICW Conference and Executive Committee Meeting and ECICW Regional Meeting organised by NCW Taiwan at the Grand Hotel in Taipei.
- 13th Remembrance Day Mass at St John Co Cathedral
- 17th Optimising Maternal and Child Healthcare Conference organised by the Midwives Association
- Il-Ferh fl'Azzjoni - Assemblée Fergha Nisa Azzjoni Kattolika
- 18th Guided tour of the Manoel Theatre by Ms Josette Portelli organised by NCW
- EIRA u Xoghol Dicenti organised by The Hon. Minister Helena Dalli. Mary Gaerty attended
- 22nd Tapping into the Online Market seminar organised by GRTU
- Monitoring Committee Therese

Cassola attended

- 23rd Violence against Women and Domestic Violence Everybody's business Conference Mary Gaerty and Grace Attard attended
- 25th Ministry for Foreign Affairs – Briefing on the results of the Anna Lindh Foundation Med Forum Marie Demicoli attended
- 30th Meeting with Dollsy Darmanin Head of HR Vodafone at the Skypark office Mary Gaerty, Doris Bingley and Marie Demicoli attended
- Executive Committee meeting

December

- 1st Malta Health network in collaboration with the Bioethics Research Prog organised a seminar entitled, "Innovative Medicines and Patient involvement for better outcomes"
- 2nd CRPD Konferenza nazzjonali, Dmirijiet u Drittijiet – Il-karta tad-dizabilita tal-Unjoni Ewropea f'Malta. Seminar ta' Informazzjoni dwar il-Presidenza u r-rabta tagħha mal-Parlament Ewropew, il-kuntest u l-isfidi ewlenin. Mary Gaerty attended
- National Volunteer Award 2016 Doris Bingley and Marie Demicoli attended
- Australian High Commissioner Reception Mary Gaerty and Doris Bingley invited
- 3rd Candlelit March organised by the Life Network. Mary Gaerty and Grace Attard attended.
- 4th Walk to raise awareness about violence against Women and Domestic Violence organised by the NGOs network Doris Bingley and Marie Demicoli attended
- 5th Central Committee meeting
- 6th RASIT meeting at MCVS Centre in Valletta. Doris Bingley and Mary Gaerty attended
- 7th NCW Christmas Celebrations Party
- 8th Minister Scicluna presentation to NGOs Therese Cassola and Doris Bingley attended
- Doris Bingley and Therese Cassola met NCW Austria member Antonia Beck Manngetta to discuss ICW and UN representation in Vienna
- 14th MCVS meeting. Mary Gaerty attended
- Doris Bingley and Marie Demicoli held a meeting with The Palace Hotel Manager Mr Kevin Callus to organise 2017 NCW Malta AGM
- 21st Farewell meeting with H.E. Jane Lambert, Australian High Commissioner

FORTHCOMING EVENTS:

**Annual General Meeting Saturday 28th January 2017 at The Palace Hotel, High Street, Sliema.
All members are urged to attend and participate in the discussion to implement
the vision and the way forward of the National Council of Women.**

AGENDA

- 8.30 Registration & Coffee
- 9.00 Welcome and Notices.
Nomination of Tellers
- 9.15 Minutes of the last General Meeting.
- 9.25 President's Address.
- 9.35 Annual Report by General Secretary
- 10.00 Financial Report by Treasurer.
- 10.15 Elections
- 10.30 Reports of Standing and Sectional Committees.
Coffee Break
- 11.15 Results of Election
- 11.40 **Reaffirmation of Policy**
 - 1. Addressing Gender-Specific Health and Medicine: a Major Challenge of the Future – NCW
 - 2. Setting up an Alongside Midwifery Led Unit at the New Mother and Baby Unit in Mater Dei Hospital - Malta Midwives Association
 - 3. Addressing the Gender Gap in Pensions – NCW
 - 4. Diverting Food Waste from Landfills to combat Global Climate Change – NCW Environment Committee
- 11.55 **Adoption of Resolutions. (5 mins each)**
 - 1. Promoting Women in the Digital Society - NCW
 - 2. Long-term care in ageing societies -NCW
 - 3. Addressing the challenges of work-life balance for working parents – NCW
 - 4. Precarious work in current socio-economic changes – GWU
 - 5. Links between gender equality, economic growth and employment rates - NCW
 - 6. The European Accessibility Act - A new strategy for persons with disabilities – NCW Social Issues Committee
 - 7. Fighting obesity by promoting breastfeeding in the work place and community Environment – MUMN
 - 8. Women and transport – NCW
 - 9. Changes in employment relations – NCW
 - 10. No to violence against children – NCW
 - 11. A fairer agro-food supply chain in Malta
- 13.10 – Correspondence ICW, ECICW, EESC
- 13.15 - Other Matters
- 13.20 - Concluding Address by President

End of AGM - L U N C H

Notes:

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

Doris Bingley

Hon. General Secretary

National Council of Women Malta

14 December 2016

**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**