



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 &
Social Council of the UN*

Executive Committee Members 2021

President:	Doreen Borg Zammit
Hon. Gen. Secretary:	Josette Barbara Cardona
1st Vice President:	Grace Attard
Vice President:	Lara Gail Dougall
Vice President:	Diane Xuereb
Hon. Treasurer:	Rebecca Wellman
Asst. Hon. Treasurer:	Therese Cassola
Membership Secretary:	Gertrude Abela
Asst. Hon. Secretary:	Marie Demicoli
Members:	Sarah Xerri
	Mary Buttigieg Said
	Nadya Anne Mangion
Legal Advisor:	Elizabeth Gaerty
Ex-Officio:	Mary Gaerty, Past President
Ex-Officio:	Doris Bingley, Hon. General Secretary

Front Cover Photos

Top: NCW Executive Committee 2021

Bottom: Food Handling Certificate
Ceremony at Villa Apap Bologna,
Marsaskala

Office Hours

Monday to Friday: 9.00 – 13.30

Membership Subscription Rates

New individual membership	€14.50
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Founded 1964

il-Mara

NEWSLETTER OF THE NATIONAL COUNCIL OF WOMEN - MALTA

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EDITORIAL

Dear Readers

Clouds ushered in Autumn, and strong winds and thundering rain ushered in Winter. Change begets change, so as we replaced our beach BBQs with cosy movie nights, we also changed our perception towards the world in 2021. We got more comfortable with our new normal; We are ever more aware of the importance of hand hygiene and personal space, and our masks are a little easier to wear. But do not take these for granted as we see Covid-19 numbers rise a little higher as our days get shorter and colder.

The NCW Executive Committee too gets more comfortable with a new normal, as our leading ladies stepped down from their posts to make space for a newly elected committee following an in-person Annual General Meeting last July. We would like to take this opportunity give a *heartfelt thanks* to our Ex-Officio **Mary Gaerty**, **Doris Bingley**, and **Therese Cassola** for their years of dedication and passionate work for our Council, as well as their continued support to the new Executive Committee. *Ladies, you've helped to establish a legacy which we are proud to remain dedicated to.*

We would like to give a *warm welcome* to **Doreen Borg Zammit**, **Dr Josette Barbara Cardona**, and **Dr Rebecca Wellman** as they pave the way for the future of NCW. Our new designates established their mark for years prior to their new roles and are now working very hard to deliver on new achievements. A special mention to a newly elected executive committee member, **Marie Demicoli**, who needs no introduction to our members and readers as she takes her rightful place on the new executive committee. We are proud to have a stellar committee working towards setting new goals.

We have already seen a few events and activities organized by this new dynamic NCW Executive Committee and have also reopened our face-to-face courses in October. We augur that you will find this issue of NCW newsletter il-Mara of interest and enjoy reading the articles, reports, and part one of NCW resolutions, which were approved by members at the Annual General Meeting.

The Editorial Board together with NCW President Doreen Borg Zammit and the New Executive Committee Members wishes all NCW Members and their loved ones a Holy and Peaceful Christmas, and a year fully loaded with happiness, success, and prosperity.

With warm season greetings,



Lara Gail Dougall
Editorial Board

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President's Message

Dear Ladies, Dear Friends

It is already four months since I was elected President of the National Council of Women during the Annual General Meeting, which was held in the middle of summer due to the COVID 19 health restrictions.

I would like to thank the many members that attended and supported my nomination and together with new Executive Committee, we promise to place all our energies and strengths to continue to work hard and build on the good work achieved by the previous council.

During these past months, members of the Executive Committee continued to participate on a national, European and international level, attending meetings, conferences, and events both virtually and in person.

With all the challenges around us the improvement in the quality of life of women and girls is top of our agenda. Education, employment, the environment and the elimination of Femicide and domestic violence are issues that we are constantly working on.

As in previous years, NCW's Centre in Blata l-Bajda is hosting in-person courses for individuals who would like to up-skill and re-skill for employment purpose or to be able to master a language for personal satisfaction or for integration in Maltese society.

In today's world there is a need for greater participation of women in various positions where decision-making takes place. We need more women CEOs as well as more women in top management positions in the Public Service and the public sector. Although this has improved, we still lag behind. On a positive note the private sector has been striving to increase the number of women on boards and in higher positions. This means that the first steps have started to take place. Hopefully this will continue to progress so we will see all hurdles removed.

However, we need more women to enter in the highest institution of Malta which is the Maltese Parliament. Presently, only 14% of MPs are women. We encourage our members to vote for women in the forthcoming

elections as having more women in politics is a need for an effective democracy. Contesting an election might be more challenging for women as women may lack the contacts necessary for an effective campaign. NCW welcomes the new bill on gender parity, which was approved by Parliament earlier this year. Women are underrepresented in the top echelons of our country so we urge you to support women, who would like to enter politics as the increase in the number of women could spur the parliament on to become more family-friendly and more diverse.

OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR) held a meeting in Malta and NCW was invited together with Members of Parliament and Parliamentary staff, other representatives of Civil Society organisations and other key executive institutions. The meeting aimed to identify good practices and challenges in integrating a gender perspective into the Parliament's work and to suggest concrete activities for Parliament to become more gender-sensitive and lead by example to encourage similar steps by other institutions in the country.

Unfortunately the COVID19 pandemic is still with us and 2021 was another year of challenges. Due credit should be given to the medical staff at Mater Dei and other hospitals and all those care workers and front liners, who worked endlessly to save lives. It is very important that we reap the benefits of the vaccine, so that we will manage to defeat the COVID 19 virus.

On behalf of the Executive Council members and myself, I wish you and your families a Merry Christmas and a prosperous new year filled with love, health, and happiness.

Doreen Borg Zammit
President



Ex-Officio Hon. General Secretary Doris Bingley awarded Woman of the Decade in International Education by the Women Economic Forum (WEF Malta)

Doris Bingley was awarded Woman of the Decade in International Education by Dr Harbeen Arora, Founder and Global Chairperson of the Women Economic Forum and Women's Indian Chamber of Commerce and Industry. The event was organized by Dame Jane Chircop Chairperson of the Women Economic Forum and the Women's Indian Chamber of Commerce and Industry Malta.

This award is for women who are pioneers, leaders and empowering role models in their respective entrepreneurial and professional endeavours. These women have a distinctive voice and vision and their accomplishments energise inspiration and innovation in different walks of life.



The National Council of Women Annual General Meeting

“Towards a regeneration for the Future”

NCW Malta Annual General Meeting 2021 was held at The Palace Hotel Sliema on Thursday 22 July 2021. In her opening address, outgoing NCW President, Mary Gaerty, called on the Assembly to join her in a prayer for past members of NCW, for those who lost their life due to the Covid-19 and for the women whose lives were taken away due to femicide, which saw an increase during Covid-19.

She highlighted her very valid work during her term as president of the National Council of Women. She emphasized the importance of Lifelong Learning as an opportunity to continue learning, developing our skills and reskilling as otherwise we risk being left behind. The digital transformation is key to the future for employment and for all areas of everyday life – be it work practices, addressing climate change and the green economy amongst many others.

Outgoing Hon. General Secretary, Doris Bingley highlighted the current and future role of the National Council of Women *‘towards a regeneration for the future’*. She referred to the impact of COVID 19 not only on NCW activities but more so the enormous social and economic implications at all levels of society. She gave an overview of the online courses that NCW organised in 2020. NCW went virtual through a number of very informative webinars that were very well attended.

The National Council of Women has recognition on a number of boards both locally and International, where NCW representatives share their expertise and experience on women's rights and equality.

Hon. General Secretary Doris Bingley concluded by stating that “the relevance and importance of the role of the National Council of Women after 56 years of existence has brought progress and success to many women in our society especially at grassroots level”. She urged the Affiliated Organisations to link with NCW, to share news updates and to continue to support NCW in 2021 to promote equality, fight discrimination and promote women in all sectors of decision making.

NCW programme 2021 will focus on a number of resolutions from previous years that are still relevant today. Vice-President Grace Attard gave a brief presentation on the Resolutions for 2021, stating their relevance to the present and future developments in line with the EU Commission's work programme.

As a Council of Women, NCW believes that its role is to ensure a ‘regeneration for the future’ more effectively for all sectors of society, men and women and urged all the members present to identify how they, as individuals can be instruments of change for themselves and for others in collaboration with the incoming Executive Committee 2021.

The following Resolutions 2021 were approved by the Assembly: *Digitalisation and Sustainability – need for action from a civil society perspective; Youth engagement in climate change and sustainability; New Skills/Social Inclusion; Gender Equality in the Energy Sector; Equal participation of women and men in the labour market and the changing face of work and family life under COVID-19; The need to guarantee real rights of persons with disabilities to vote in elections; The underlying factors in bridging the digital gender gap.*

The NCW Executive Committee for 2021 was approved by the Assembly:

President: Doreen Borg Zammit

Hon. General Secretary: Dr. Josette Barbara Cardona

1st Vice-President: Grace Attard MQR

Vice-President: Lara Gail Dougall

Vice-President: Diane Xuereb

Hon. Treasurer: Dr. Rebecca Wellman

Members: Therese Cassola, Marie Demicoli,

Gertrude Abela MQR, Sarah Xerri, Mary Buttigieg Said and Nadya Anna Mangion

Legal Advisor: Dr Elizabeth Gaerty

Ex-Officio: Mary Gaerty (Past President)

Ex-Officio: Doris Bingley (Hon. General Secretary)

In her concluding remarks, newly elected President Doreen Borg Zammit thanked the members who attended the AGM and who showed their trust by voting her as President. She promised to do her best to be fully committed to NCW Ideal of service and together with the newly elected Executive Committee continue to carry out the many worthwhile projects that NCW undertakes for the benefit of society. She took the opportunity to thank the outgoing members of the previous committee.



Food Handling Course

Presentation of Certificates

On Sunday 31st October 2021 the National Council of Women held a presentation of Certificate Ceremony for 22 participants, who successfully completed the Food Handling Course.

The ceremony was opened by Ms Doreen Borg Zammit NCW President, who spoke about the importance of Lifelong Learning, which helps to achieve more competencies at the workplace.

Mr Joseph Cassar, a qualified Trainer in Food Safety praised the participants for their great interest in the subject and the willingness to increase their knowledge especially if they wish to work in the food industry and the caring profession.

Mr Mauro Pace Parascandalo Chief Executive Officer Malta Council for Voluntary Sector spoke about the opportunities and support that MCVS gives to Non-Governmental Organisations and the importance of integration through various courses.

Ms Jennifer Icao Calleja representative of the Confederation of Filipinos in Malta thanked the National Council of Women for the support and for organizing various courses that many Filipinos have found useful for their careers.

Representatives of the participants thanked the National Council of Women for giving them the opportunity to further their skills in a very welcoming atmosphere.

The certificates and Licenses were presented by Mr Mauro Pace Parascandalo and NCW President Doreen Borg Zammit. Ms Doris Bingley Ex-Ufficio Hon. General Secretary and Ms Marie Demicoli Executive Committee Member were present.

The ceremony was held at Villa Apap Bologna Marsaskala with special thanks to the Parish Priest of Marsaskala Rev. Fr. Roderick Camilleri and Rev. Fr. Victor Agius, Chaplain of the English speaking community, for offering the premises and their support. A light lunch followed the ceremony and NCW would like to thanks all those who prepared the delicious traditional Filipino food.

Marie Demicoli
NCW Executive Committee Member



National Council of Women proposals in response to Budget 2022 and beyond

NCW believes that facing the challenges, National, European and global beyond 2022 requires a forward-looking approach in several aspects addressed by Budget 2022, ensuring that budget allocations adequately address these challenges.

One of the crucial challenges is ensuring a **socially, environmentally and economically sound digitalisation transformation**. Policy Objectives on a digital economy need to incorporate our societal values, to ensure that a digital wellbeing economy is as inclusive as possible, allowing workers, consumers, SMEs, large companies and non-profit economic actors to benefit alike, including in rural areas.

The COVID-19 pandemic is an opportunity to reflect on how we can remodel and innovate our economy to make it more environmentally and socially sustainable in line with the EU Green and Sustainability objectives. A Sustainable Digital Revolution entails: human factors as well as maintaining non-digital solutions, and carefully assessing the risks involved with special emphasis on resilience. The focus needs to be on SDG5 (gender), SDG8 (decent work), SDG12 (consumption and production) and SDG13 (climate action), and will therefore strongly link factors for environmental and social sustainability.

This needs to be accompanied by developing a fiscal policy to ensure that digital businesses pay their fair share of taxes and building upon the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) to develop a distinctive law on data protection in the workplace, on social media and in e-commerce.

NCW strongly advocates **Youth Engagement in Climate Change and Sustainability**, by creating incentives and opportunities to engage more young people in climate change.

Young people have the right to have a say on matters that concern them. The right to participate is anchored in the UN Sustainable Development 2030 Agenda, which acknowledges youth as “critical agents of change”, as set out in the Sustainable Development Goals.

Youth organisations play an important role in this context, as they are key actors in ensuring that young people are not only present in institutions but are also enabled to contribute to the decision-making process in a meaningful way. Young people possess the energy, creativity and motivation to challenge current unsustainable models. Youth participation and representation mechanisms create an opportunity for a partnership between policy makers, young people and youth organisations to shape decisions that impact young people's lives.

Many young entrepreneurs think of the ecological and social aspects of their activities right from the start. Business practices aiming to reduce environmental impact should be supported at national level, for instance, by tax exemptions and encouraged as positive trends mobilising young entrepreneurs' energy to create sustainable business models.

Addressing the needs of persons with disabilities: NCW supports the adoption by the European Commission of the European Disability Rights Strategy 2021-2030 (EDRS) and the leadership taken by the European Commission, to foster equality in Europe and the importance of a full and swift implementation of the strategy. More attention should be paid to the right to family life for persons with disabilities. NCW believes that Budget

2022 should further address Inclusive Education for building inclusive societies “Inclusive classrooms are the building blocks for inclusive societies” and increased efforts to give children with disabilities a great start in life.

NCW believes that allocation of funds needs to ensure measures for independent living and inclusion in the community as well as social services of excellence for persons with disabilities, inclusive and accessible education at all levels, with a special focus on inclusive Early Childhood Education and Care. NCW supports the intention to increase the involvement of social partners to collaborate with all levels of governance. Laws denying persons with disabilities their basic civil and political rights should be reformed. More efforts in raising awareness on disability, notably by including persons with disabilities and their families in every step of the policy making process is crucial.

Addressing the Digital Gender Gap: NCW strongly advocates a co-ordinated policy action to help narrow the digital gender gap. This requires raising awareness and tackling gender stereotypes; enabling enhanced, safer and more affordable access to digital tools; and stronger cooperation across stakeholders to remove barriers to girls and women's full participation in the digital world.

Gender equality is a keystone of a prosperous, modern economy that provides sustainable inclusive growth, recognising that gender equality is essential for ensuring that men and women can contribute fully for the betterment of societies and economies at large. ICT career perception is influenced by how familiar girls are with Computer Studies and its broad application.

Women are underrepresented in the ICT profession overall. Retention of female employees in the ICT sector needs to be addressed as more than half of women in technology occupations quit mid-career. Whereas in the broader workforce women comprise around 45%, the number of women in ICT jobs is around 28%.

NCW believes that Gender Equality in the Energy Sector is a key issue that goes beyond 2022 Budget proposals. Energy is a huge segment of the economy: it covers raw materials, finished products and services, production, sales, transport and distribution, diplomacy, and physical and geopolitical security, thus using oil, gas, nuclear energy, wind, the sun, water, etc. to ensure that citizens, consumers and businesses have access to electricity, heating and independent transport. One particular feature of this sector is that it is a key lever for other economic sectors. The energy sector is fast developing into clean energy solutions that Malta is aspiring to adopt.

All aspects of the energy sector are very stereotyped in terms of gender, with men in a dominant position, which leads to major career imbalances between men and women in both the public and private energy sectors. Women need genuinely equal opportunities if they are to enter the energy industries and recognition of their abilities if they are to stay and develop careers there.

The stereotypes that mathematics and physics are for boys must be abolished by modifying the structure of studies, altering the attitudes of teachers and educating parents as soon as children start primary school so that women change the way they think about themselves. Malta needs to develop a STEM-based

Career (in science, technology, engineering or mathematics) in the energy sectors, where women still face too many internal obstacles within their companies, in both the public and private sectors.

Further efforts are necessary to create a level playing field on the labour market in the energy sector for training in energy-related careers and ensuring binding measures regarding transparency of salaries and remuneration, as this is a prerequisite for real equal pay across the board. Other measures should ensure equality on company boards and developing social dialogue and collective agreements on equality in companies in the energy sector, as well as gathering qualitative and gender-specific data with appropriate indicators.

NCW is aware of the need to revisit **Work-Life Balance**: The COVID-19 has strongly revealed the acute need for work-life balance of working parents and caregivers. NCW highlights the importance of proactive policies aimed at fostering shared responsibility for childcare between men and women as, once again been brought forward due to the COVID-19. Studies also show that involving men in care responsibilities benefits families as well as the economy and competitiveness.

Boosting women's participation in the labour market would also improve businesses' access to skilled labour and talent, helping to unlock the full potential of women at a time when the EU's workforce is shrinking, the population is ageing and the demographic curve remains a serious challenge for public finances.

These policies should also focus on creating incentives for employers to increase labour supply on providing childcare support and on various forms of leave and flexible working arrangements in addressing work-life balance, and a more equal

sharing of tasks as a way of removing some of the more significant structural barriers to bringing women into employment.

Paternity Leave: The lack of uptake of paternity leave needs to be addressed by introducing an individual entitlement to non-transferable paternity leave of at least ten working days, paid at no less than the level of the existing sick pay entitlement. Currently paternity leaves stands at an average length of two and a half days. This duration is very short and regrettably the paternal uptake is largely still lacking. Compensation should be adequate, to encourage fathers to take their responsibility as well as and give parents more choice both before and after the birth of their child, taking into account national practices regarding maternity pay.

In addressing the above issues, NCW is aware that Businesses, especially SMEs and microbusinesses, may encounter organisational difficulties. Negotiation on the proposals should maintain a balance between the needs of employees and those of employers. Flexibility in working arrangements is essential to enable businesses to adapt their workforce to a changing economic context.

Carers Leave: The lack of adequate provision for leave to provide care for relatives with support needs also contributes to the unequal distribution of care responsibilities, with women often exclusively shouldering the care burden. This hampers their physical and mental health, social inclusion and participation in the labour market and consequently contributes to them having inadequate pension entitlements. Issues regarding Malta's ageing population call for effective legislation on access to leave for carers, duration, eligibility, benefit level and entitlement to social security rights should be treated as a priority.

Digital Entrepreneurship Ceremony

The Digital Entrepreneurship Course, which was held virtually over a number of weeks came to an end with the presentation of Certificates of Attendance to participants that successfully completed the course. The ceremony was held in the presence of HSBC Malta Foundation Representative Mariella Campbell and Lecturer Mary Downing a qualified Microsoft Trainer at the Palace Hotel, Sliema.



The National Co Annual Gene



Council of Women General Meeting



Annual General Meeting Approved Resolutions 2021

Digitalisation and Sustainability – need for action from a civil society perspective

**Justification/s and current situation to be addressed.
Towards a socially, environmentally and economically
sound digitalisation**

Current situation and looking towards the future

- The pandemic has transformed many of our daily routines into a large-scale field trial of digital implementation.
- Governments temporarily closed schools, asking pupils, students and teachers to work online, and employers quickly had to rethink their approach to remote working.
- As we slowly emerge from confinement, we need to reflect on how much digitalisation is desirable and appropriate, and how we can maintain intra- and inter-generational fairness aligned with the SDGs in the process.
- Addressing the digital divide within Member States requires public and private investment; the pandemic has highlighted both the opportunities and disadvantages of digital communication, particularly for those living in rural areas.

Recommendations

- Policies on a digital economy need to incorporate our societal values, to ensure that a digital wellbeing economy is as inclusive as possible, allowing workers, consumers, SMEs, large companies and non-profit economic actors to benefit alike, especially in rural areas.
- The COVID-19 pandemic is an opportunity to reflect on how we can remodel and innovate our economy to make it more environmentally and socially sustainable; the crisis should not distract the EU from its green and sustainability objectives.

A Sustainable Digital Revolution

As we reflect on the impact of COVID-19 at National, EU and at global level it is clear that a sustainable digital revolution entails:

- Human factors as well as maintaining non-digital solutions, and carefully assessing the risks involved with special emphasis on resilience need to be equally addressed.
- Equally addressing the digital divide both between and within countries worldwide, with special focus on the Member States, and with an eye on enlargement.

- The focus needs to be on SDG8 (decent work), SDG12 (consumption and production) and SDG13 (climate action), and will therefore strongly link factors for environmental and social sustainability.

EU Policies

Need to be further embedded in a digital economy incorporating our societal values, thus ensuring that a digital wellbeing economy is as inclusive as possible, allowing workers, consumers, SMEs, large companies and non-profit economic actors to benefit alike, especially in rural areas. Such policies should include:

- Developing fiscal policy to ensure that digital businesses pay their fair share of taxes;
- Building upon the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) to develop a distinctive law on data protection in the workplace, on social media and in e-commerce.
- Adjusting current competition and monopoly law in order to regulate digital platform markets; production chains, ambitious energy standards and an extension of the EU eco-design directive and.
- Review of corporate environmental, social and governance reporting and disclosure, 2019.

The European Commission needs to further address legislation

- Adapting EU legislation to make online shopping more sustainable, and develop.
- Responsible policies on packaging, deliveries and return of packages.
- Protecting small operators in the market against monopolistic platforms.
- Developing a comprehensive set of criteria and indicators for sustainable software.
- Products and a digital product pass.
- Improving GDPR regarding data sufficiency.
- Imposing restrictions on online advertising to create ad-free spaces.

Measures should include

- The COVID-19 pandemic led to a sudden and significant decrease in transportation, production and consumption; the increased use of ICT mitigated energy-intensive working practices and lifestyles.
- There is therefore the need for appropriate political measures to help consolidate these positive aspects after the pandemic. This, of course, raises wider questions

about the energy efficiency of the “cloud” and the data centres that sustain it.

- Establishing an EU inventory of data centres (covering energy efficiency, lifecycle, construction materials, etc.) and a top-runner scheme, to ensure that the most energy-efficient data centres become the norm.
- Requiring new data centres to be run by 100% renewable energies.
- Using Artificial Intelligence (AI) to support the climate and energy transition.
- Suggesting measures for sustainable AI solutions.

Equal participation of women and men in the labour market and the changing face of work and family life under COVID-19

Justification and current situation to be addressed

On October 14, the German Presidency of the EU chaired an Employment, Social Policy, Health and Consumer Affairs Council (EPSCO) Council meeting which included a debate on equal participation of women and men in the labour market. They exchanged views on ways to further promote gender equality and combat the segregation of women and men in the labour market.

Negative effects on Women as a result of the COVID-19

- The compulsory lockdowns, school closure and teleworking have pushed society into a “new reality and normality” in the family, working and social spheres of life.
- Parents who can telework are confined at home, trying to balance work, parenting, care and schooling, and are under increasing pressure with further consequences for the mental health of both children and adults.
- The situation of single-parent families during lockdown reveals a harsher reality.
- The vulnerabilities of families have now been magnified significantly with the global pandemic bringing all inequalities to the fore.
- “As infection numbers are climbing throughout Europe and we’re in the midst of a second COVID-19 wave.
- Last, but not least, there is an urgent need for going beyond the implementation of the transposition of the Work-Life Balance Directive. Extraordinary times call for extraordinary measures to boost investment in social and healthcare services to support families, in particular as a result of the COVID-19.
- A recent Eurobarometer survey on work-life balance indicates that over half of employees in the EU cannot change their work schedule, almost three workers out of ten feel that they are discouraged from taking family leave by managers and supervisors. One out of three workers claim that making use of flexible working arrangements has a negative impact on their careers.

Situation before the Covid-19 crisis

- At the European level, and before the outburst of the Covid-19 crisis, almost 9 out of 10 mothers in the EU

provided daily care for their children, compared to some 6 out of 10 fathers.

- In number of hours the gap is even wider as working women spend around 22 hours per week in unpaid work and men only 9 hours.
- This uneven share of care tasks even raises in households with children under 7 years old, where women spend 39 hours on unpaid work, 20 hours more than men do .
- On the other hand, with a gender pay gap at 16%, and that it has only decreased by 1% in the last eight years, it is cheaper for a family to renounce a woman’s income instead of the man’s.

Recommendations

Promoting women’s role in the labour market

Gender Equality is not a luxury

The coronavirus crisis has shown women keep things running. All over Europe more than 75 percent of critical workers are women. But in leadership positions, women are underrepresented.

- Women take on the greater share of unpaid care work – often at the cost of their own career and pension.
- Gender equality in the labour market is not a luxury. On the contrary: it will make the EU more socially and economically robust, especially in times of crisis.
- The crisis had also shown the urgent need, but also valuable opportunities, to promote gender equality in the labour market in general and in social professions in particular.
- The need for more efforts to achieve inclusive working environment, equal pay, a higher share of women also in decision-making, better remuneration for jobs usually performed by women and fight against gender stereotypes.
- Other areas of importance include gender equality topics to be included in early education and raising awareness about gender issues among key groups, such as young people.
- The EU strategy on gender equality needs to prioritise the EU Pay Transparency Directive and to finally move forward with the EU ‘Women on boards’ directive.
- Work-life balance is not only to be achieved through family leaves and income support. Employment rights and flexible work arrangements (FWA) are an essential part of the equation, and the EPSCO Council adopted conclusions in June 2020 on “Enhancing Well-being at Work” acknowledging the links between workplace practices and work-life balance and formulating a mix of recommendations.
- Flexible Work Arrangements allow workers to better reconcile professional and private life, as well as increasing their productivity, motivation and their professional progression, reducing absenteeism, boosting chances for entering the labour market and raising gender-equal opportunities.

Gender Equality in the Energy Sector

Current situation to be addressed

In 2020 – the 25th anniversary of the Beijing Declaration¹ – the EU presented the strategy document *Women, Gender Equality and the Energy Transition in the EU*, to take the necessary steps to eliminate inequalities and to promote equality between men and women by means of a new strategy.

Equality is a core value of the EU, a fundamental right and a principle of the European Pillar of Social Rights. It is part of the UN's Sustainable Development Goals. Article 8 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (TFEU) makes it a horizontal clause, mainstreaming equality in all policies.

The Commission believes that “in business, politics and society as a whole we can only reach our full potential if we all use our talent and diversity. Gender equality brings more jobs and higher productivity – a potential which needs to be realised as we embrace the green and digital transitions and face up to our demographic challenges”.

Energy is a huge segment of the economy: it covers raw materials, finished products and services, including mining, production, sales, transport and distribution, diplomacy, and physical and geopolitical security, thus using coal, wood, oil, gas, nuclear energy, wind, the sun, water, etc. to ensure that citizens, consumers and businesses have access to electricity, heating and independent transport. One particular feature of this sector is that it is a key lever for other economic sectors. It needs all available talent.

All aspects of the energy sector are very stereotyped in terms of gender, with men in a dominant position, which leads to major career imbalances between men and women in both the public and private energy sectors, with no widespread willingness to take action to “en-gender” the value chain as a whole.

Recommendations

The **position of women** is never considered as an issue in itself even though women are in a weak position in the energy sector and are always first in line for redundancies during crises, regardless of the nature of the crisis.

The policy gap cannot be closed without taking specific measures in their favour in all policy areas – especially given that this is part of the UN's Sustainable Development Goals.

There is the need to speed up the pace of change and to take simultaneous action in a number of areas to narrow the gender gaps, which are cumulative and interconnected including:

- **The energy access gap**
- **The policy gap**
- **Labour Market Gaps**
- **Training and Skills**
- **Careers and Salaries**
- **The role of national and European social dialogue**
- **Collective agreements**

Is the energy transition an opportunity or a risk for women?

What is the added value of women?

Is it to be social, a human face, capable of filing and making the coffee?

Or is it to be technicians, engineers, researchers?

- Women need genuinely equal opportunities if they are to enter the energy industries, and recognition of their abilities if they are to stay and develop careers there.

- Spain has noticed that, despite the introduction of measures to increase accessibility for women, some are not geared towards technical sectors.
- The stereotypes that mathematics and physics are for boys must be abolished by modifying the structure of studies, altering the attitudes of teachers and educating parents as soon as children start primary school so that women change the way they think about themselves.

Developing a STEM-based Career

- There are some inspiring examples: in Poland, the “**Little Polytechnics for Children**” project runs sessions for primary school children (girls and boys), familiarising them with technical subjects to prevent fear of STEM.
- In their **efforts to develop a STEM-based career** (in science, technology, engineering or mathematics) in the energy sectors, women still face too many internal obstacles within their companies, in both the public and private sectors. The Commission calls for everyone to be “free to pursue their chosen path in life”, in full equality.
- It needs to provide additional resources for women in a sector where **physical strength is no longer of primary importance**, but where this is still used as a yardstick of capacity.
- It must be possible to measure equality using **qualitative indicators on career opportunities** enjoyed, and by salary levels for the same qualification and grade.
- This should include **basic salaries and bonuses**.

Looking ahead: ensuring access to all aspects of energy for women

- Create the conditions for access to energy for all, reduce energy poverty, and gather qualitative and gender-specific data with appropriate indicators
- Strengthen and enforce existing legislation on equality at both EU and national level
- Provide for a targeted policy on gender equality in energy professions because women's talents matter
- Create a level playing-field for training in energy-related careers in the Member States and at European level – set up a European STEM College
- Encourage Member States to develop “little polytechnic schools” for young children to familiarise them with STEM subjects
- Change the mindsets of women themselves by means of role models, and create a network of EU outreach teams
- Change men's mindsets and management training approaches.

Creating a level playing-field on the labour market in the energy sector

- **Present gender-specific data for all parts of the sector**, including renewable energy and energy poverty
- Consider the opportunities for women but **avoid the energy and digital transitions trammelling their careers in traditional energy sectors**
- **Introduce binding measures regarding the transparency of salaries and remuneration** because this is a prerequisite for real equal pay across the board
- **Enforce equality** on company boards
- **Develop social dialogue and collective agreements** throughout Europe on equality in companies in the energy sector

¹ <https://beijing20.unwomen.org/en/about>

A Power of Attorney 'Prokura'

A Power of Attorney can also be referred to as a 'Mandate' or a 'Prokura' in Maltese. It is a legal document that authorises an individual to commit certain acts in the name and on behalf of another person. In a power of attorney, one would have the Mandator, who would be the person authorising and initiating another individual to do certain acts in his own name and, one would also have the Mandatory, who is the individual that is receiving the Mandate and thus, is authorised to act in the name of the Mandator. The latter would need to be of legal age and of full mental capacity. Therefore, the Mandator and the Mandatory would be the parties to a Power of Attorney.

General Power of Attorney & Special Power of Attorney

Article 1862 of the Maltese Civil Code provides that a Power of Attorney is two-fold. Firstly, there can be a **General** Power of Attorney. In this case, the Mandatory would be authorised to carry out any form of act in the name and on behalf of the Mandator. By way of providing some examples, these acts can include the Mandatory signing a Promise of Sale or a Final Deed on behalf of the Mandator, signing bank documents on his or her behalf as well as opening and closing bank accounts amongst other things. This type of Power of Attorney is quite broad and unrestricted. On the other hand, one could also have a **Special** Power of Attorney. This would be of a somewhat exhaustive nature as it narrows down what can be done by the Mandatory. The Mandatory would only be allowed to carry out acts that are

expressly mentioned and allowed in the Special Power of Attorney and hence, he or she would not be authorised to act out of the list of acts listed in this form of Power of Attorney. An example of this type of Power of Attorney would be one specifically drafted for the sole purpose of the Mandatory signing a Final Deed of Sale and Purchase in the name of the Mandate.



The Termination of a Power of Attorney

A Mandate can be terminated either by revocation of the Power of Attorney, by the death, interdiction or incapacitation of the Mandator to enter into contracts, bankruptcy, by the Mandator's termination of powers, the expiration of the Mandate and upon the Mandatory's renunciation.

This means that once a person passes away, the power of attorney is no longer valid. Furthermore, a power of attorney that comes from abroad, the signature of the legal professional receiving the power of attorney is to be apostilled – this means such person is verified by the relevant authority such as a Ministry or Consulate.

Doctor Rebecca Janelle Wellman

*Notary Public of Malta & Commissioner of Oaths
LL.B (Hons.) M.Notarial.St (Melit.) M.Advocacy (Melit.)*

'Commonwealth says NO More' launches initiative to prevent domestic and sexual violence in 54 countries

The Commonwealth Secretariat and NO MORE Foundation are launching a new "Join The Chorus" initiative to help the 54 member countries tackle an alarming rise in domestic and sexual violence during the COVID-19 pandemic while urging leaders to make prevention a top priority in rebuilding efforts.



Unjoni Ewropea tas-Saħħa

B'rabta mal-Konferenza dwar il-Futur tal-Ewropa, l-Aġenzija SEM qiegħda torganizza diversi laqgħat bit-tema, 'L-Ewropa li Nixtieq', sabiex jiġu diskussi numru ta' suġġetti li se jikkontribwixxu għat-tfassil tal-futur tal-Unjoni Ewropea fis-snin li ġejjin.

Dawn il-laqgħat huma intiżi biex ċittadini minn kull qasam tal-hajja jagħtu l-opinjoni, jaqsmu l-esperjenzi u l-aspirazzjonijiet tagħhom dwar kif jistgħu li jkun il-futur tal-Unjoni Ewropea f'dawn l-oqsma.

L-ghan aħhari ta' dan l-eżerċizzju huwa li anki f'Malta jkun hawn dibattitu u parteċipazzjoni attiva f'din l-inizjattiva tal-Unjoni Ewropea sabiex nibnu futur tal-Unjoni Ewropea bbażat fuq ix-xewqat u l-aspirazzjonijiet ta' ċittadini tagħha.

'Unjoni Ewropea tas-Saħħa'

Dan huwa s-suġġett tad-diskussjoni li sar nhar il-Ħamis, 16 ta' Settembru bejn il-5pm u s-6.30pm. Il-parteċipazzjoni fid-diskussjoni saret online fuq il-pjattaforma Zoom u giet trażmessa wkoll fuq il-paġna ta' Facebook ta' SEM.

Il-pandemija ġegħlitna naħsbu aktar dwar xi rwol nixtiequ li jkollha l-Unjoni Ewropea f'dan il-qasam fil-futur. S'issa, il-qasam tas-saħħa għadu fil-kompetenza tal-Istati Membri, iżda matul dawn l-aħħar xhur rajna diversi inizjattivi tal-Unjoni Ewropea biex ikun hemm aktar koperazzjoni bejn l-Istati Membri bħal xiri kongunt tal-vaċċini, ċertifikat tal-vaċċin komuni u fondi Ewropej sabiex

ikun hemm iktar riċerka għall-kura tal-COVID-19. Il-pandemija wrietna l-hteġa li naħdmu flimkien biex nibnu sistemi tas-saħħa aktar b'saħħithom u nipproteġu s-saħħa fiżika u mentali fl-Ewropa.

Minkejja dan kollu, is-saħħa mhijiex biss il-COVID-19. Hemm ħafna aktar temi li jolqtu b'mod dirett li-ċittadini Ewropej u li wiehed irid jahseb aktar dwar ir-rwol tal-Unjoni Ewropea f'dan ir-rigward. Dawn jinkludu:

- Il-protezzjoni tas-saħħa ta' ċittadini Ewropej;
- Id-digitalizzazzjoni tas-sistemi tas-saħħa;
- It-titjib fil-prevenzjoni, it-trattament u l-kura segwenti għal mard transfruntier bħall-kanċer;
- Tagħmir aħjar tas-sistemi tas-saħħa tal-Istati Membri biex jipprevjenu u jindirizzaw aħjar il-pandemiji futuri;
- It-tishih tal-kordinazzjoni fil-livell tal-UE meta jiġi ffaċċjat theddid transfruntier għas-saħħa.

Il-laqgħa, tmexxiet mill-gurnalista ta' TVM, Mario Xuereb, u kienet tikkonsisti f'interventi minn numru ta' persuni involuti f'diversi setturi tal-qasam tas-saħħa f'pajjiżna u f'interventi minn dawk li ssiehbu onlajn.



MEA Online SME National Forum 2021 SMEs and Green Growth

The Journey Ahead 3.11.21

Protecting jobs and our planet are not conflicting objectives – MEA SME National Forum 2021 brought together industrial, political and social leader in discussing SMEs and Green Growth: The Journey Ahead

"The protection of jobs and our planet should not be conflicting objectives. Without the planet, we will have no jobs. So we must learn to adapt, find the right balance and think long-term. Awareness, knowledge, technology are the tools that will help us get there". This was the key message shared by the Malta Employers Association's President, Ms Joanne Bondin, while opening the SME National Forum.

Industry leaders, social partners, politicians and entrepreneurs got together on the initiative of the Malta Employers Association to share their views, exchange best practice and find common ground for a way forward in Malta's efforts to embrace the green revolution towards a more sustainable future for our country.

During the hybrid event, stakeholders from the private and public sector enjoyed a healthy discussion on the latest developments in tech and the green economy, the need for greener planning, and challenges in moving towards greener mobility. A common underlying issue that was raised during the discussion related to the role of education at the foundation of the efforts needed to address these new realities.

Representatives from the Malta Development Bank and Malta Enterprise shared details about incentives and grants

that businesses can utilise to implement their transition towards sustainability.

The event was also addressed by Ms Jeannette Axisa, DG Foundation for Transport. She noted how green growth gives the opportunity to become part of a global community working for a more sustainable future. "Transport has to be associated with climate change and for this to happen it requires not only investment, but also needs alignment with the country's policy on issues such as education, employment and FDI", she remarked.

A number of Government Ministers and the Leader of the Opposition, Dr Bernard Grech, also shared their views with the audience.

Concluding the event, Mr Joseph Farrugia, Director-General of the Malta Employers Association said that society needs to look beyond immediate gratification and re-orient ourselves towards a more sustainable economy: "We owe it to our children so that they inherit a better society. We need to ensure that all stakeholders benefit from the green transition, leaving no one behind. All this implies a change in culture, and the earlier we have an acceptance of a newer way of life, it will be easier to bring about the changes that we desire".

The event was organised by the Malta Employers Association and the Ministry for the Economy and Industry with the support of the Foundation for Transport, Malta Enterprise, the Malta Development Bank.

Grace Attard
Vice President

International Council of Women

Report on the COP26 at Glasgow, 15th November, 2021

Wendy Rainbird, ICW Environment Adviser

All 197 participating countries adopted the Glasgow Climate Pact, despite watering down to “phase down” coal rather than “phase out coal”. The other main target not achieved was that countries renew greenhouse gas emission targets for 2030 that would align with limiting global heating to 1.5 degrees C.

At the close of the 26th Conference of Parties, COP, at Glasgow, the United Nations Secretary General, Antonio Guterres, said:

“The approved texts are a compromise. They reflect the interests, the conditions, the contradictions and the state of political will in the world today. They take important steps, but unfortunately the collective political will was not enough to overcome some deep contradictions.

As I said at the opening, we must accelerate action to keep the 1.5 degree goal alive. Our fragile planet is hanging by a thread. We are still knocking on the door of climate catastrophe. It is time to go into emergency mode – or our chance of reaching net zero will itself be zero.

I reaffirm my conviction that we must end fossil fuels subsidies. Phase out coal. Put a price on carbon.

Build resilience of vulnerable communities against the here and now impacts of climate change. And make good on the \$100 billion climate finance commitment to support developing countries.

We did not achieve these goals at this conference. But we have some building blocks for progress.

Commitments to end deforestation. To drastically reduce methane emissions. To mobilize private finance around net zero. (Ref. <https://www.un.org/sg/en/node>)

“Science tells us that the absolute priority must be rapid, deep and sustained emissions reductions in this decade.

Specifically – a 45% cut by 2030 compared to 2010 levels.

But the present set of Nationally Determined Contributions – even if fully implemented – will still increase emissions this decade on a pathway that will clearly lead us to well above 2 degrees by the end of the century compared to pre-industrial levels.”(ibid)

What was good?

Most Nations agreed that methane emissions should be tackled.

Agreement says emissions have to fall by 45% by 2030.

China and the USA struck a rare climate deal.

The failures

1. Rich countries did not make clear pledges for finance for developing and most vulnerable countries

“Much has been made of the Glasgow Financial Alliance for Net Zero (GFANZ), a global coalition of financial institutions which aims to accelerate the decarbonisation of the economy. But many of its efforts will be undermined while governments continue to subsidise the fossil fuel industry. With fossil fuel subsidies globally running at US\$11 million (A\$15 million) every minute, GFANZ is insufficient to halt emissions because subsidising the cost of production and sale of fossil fuels continues to make the industry feasible. Moreover GFANZ is voluntary, when we need commitments to be binding. It also includes banks who have recently provided US\$575 billion (A\$787 billion) in fossil fuel finance to some of the world’s biggest polluters.”(<https://theconversation.com/cop26-leaves-too-many-loopholes-for-the-fossil-fuel-industry-here-are-5-of-them>)

2. Current National pledges put global warming on track for 2.4°C

“One of the most glaring failures of COP26 is the failure to connect emission cuts with production cuts. Nowhere is this more apparent than in countries such as Norway which have impressive domestic reduction targets (55% by 2030) yet continue to champion fossil fuel production through oil and gas exploration.

A key to progress at future COPs and domestically is ending the false idea one can make progress on climate by cutting domestic emissions

while simultaneously supporting fossil fuel production. If countries such as Australia and Norway can’t come together to agree on cutting support for production, then we will continue to see loopholes that allow the industry to flourish.” (Prof J. Moss: <https://theconversation.com/cop26-leaves-too-many-loopholes-for-the-fossil-fuel-industry-here-are-5-of-them>)

3. Instead of the term “Phase out” coal, it was changed to “Phase down” coal

“Despite the overwhelming evidence that most of the world’s fossil fuel reserves must stay in the ground, governments are still approving new projects. The UK government has 40 fossil fuel projects in the pipeline despite being host of COP26. Australia, too, continues to approve new gas and coal developments. The NSW government has approved eight new projects since 2018, despite the state’s target of 50% emissions reduction by 2030.

Until future climate negotiations put a ban on new fossil fuel projects and agree to a clear and rapid phase out of current production levels, the fossil fuel industry will continue to thrive.” (ibid)

4. Flawed deal on carbon trading

“In a crucial outcome, COP26 also finalised rules for global carbon trading, known as Article 6 under the Paris Agreement. However under the rules, the fossil fuel industry will be allowed to “offset” its carbon emissions and carry on polluting. Combined with the “phasing down” change, this will see fossil fuel emissions continue.” (ibid)

The consequences

One major consequence is sea level rise that will affect all low-lying coastal places. For example, the people of the Solomon Islands have had sea level rises of up to 10 mm per year, resulting in sea intrusion into homes causing communities to move to higher ground, their coastal crops damaged or ruined, and their water wells becoming undrinkable. (Ref Uni Queensland Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre.) They are just one example.

The people of the Pacific Islands spoke passionately at COP26 because they are living with the changes. Will it take sea inundation of major cities like New York, Shanghai, London and Tokyo for people to wake up to how serious the changes will be?

Heat stress is already affecting people, and especially those who work outside, where high temperatures, or places with high humidity too, will cause severe heat stress. With global temperatures going higher, more people will die during heat waves. Places are likely to become un-inhabitable. With increased extreme weather events, whether flooding, or heat desiccation of the land, or wildfires, there will be more destruction of homes, businesses, people, food crops or animals.

What should we do?

We should urge our political leaders to make deeper cuts to emissions by 2030, and urge them to target at least 45% reductions in greenhouse emissions by 2030.

We need to ask them to put a price on carbon that will accelerate such reductions and to phase out coal. In some countries that would mean making a just transition for workers, so they can have jobs in other industries other than coal production.

Support programs for reforestation and banning deforestation. Making good on the billions of dollars for vulnerable and developing countries so they can transition to a clean energy future.

Women need to speak out against short-term political thinking and duplicity and to demand of our leaders longer-term goals for the good of humanity.

We need more than the cliché “Save the Planet” if we want our only home, Earth, to continue to be habitable.

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

Christmas Drinks at the Palace Hotel, Sliema

Friday 10th December, 2021 at 7.00pm

The President and the Executive Committee Members invite representatives of the Affiliated Organisations and members of the National Council of Women for Christmas Drinks at The Palace Hotel High Street, Sliema on Friday, 10th December 2021 at 19.00hrs. Places are limited due to COVID restrictions. A donation of €12.50 will be appreciated. Kindly send your bookings by Wednesday, 8th December 2021.

Weight Management Programme at the NCW Centre

Due to popular demand the National Council of Women in collaboration with the department for Primary Health Care are organising a Weight Management Programme starting Monday 17th January 2022 to help overweight and obese individuals lose weight, prevent weight regain and avoid further weight gain for life.

The programme consists of eleven sessions of 2 hours duration each. Here, various topics relating to healthy nutrition and weight loss are presented and discussions take place in a group setting.

For registration please phone NCW Malta office on 21248881 or send an email to ncwmalta@camline.net.mt

Food Handling Courses at NCW Centre Blata I-Bajda

Date: Saturday 26th February / Sunday 27th February 2022

Tutor: Mr Joseph Cassar Lecturer ITS

Duration: 5 hr training programme

The course will be held at NCW Learning Centre. It is a one day course covering the following topics:

- Food Safety and Hazards – Biological, Chemical and Physical
- Allergens and intolerances
- Pre requisite program- pest control, personal hygiene, cleaning and sanitation, temperature control, etc
- The HACCP system
- Legal requirements
- Other related topics

International Council of Women General Assembly 16th to 21st May 2022 – Avignon France

The International Council of Women President Jungsook Kim and the Conseil National Des Femmes Francaises President Marie Claude-Bertrand are most pleased to invite you to the 36th ICW-CIF General Assembly (GA) which will be held with the theme of “Social Protection for All Women and Girls: Sustainable Development for the World” from the 16th to 21st of May 2022 in Avignon, France.

For further information kindly contact the office.

Italian Conversation Course at NCW Learning Centre Blata I-Bajda

The National Council of Women in collaboration with the Directorate for Research, Lifelong Learning and Employability will be organizing an Italian Conversation Level 2 Course starting in February 2021. Course Tutor: Mr. Carmel Debono. For further information and booking please visit <https://lifelonglearning.gov.mt> or send an email to ncwmalta@camline.net.mt or phone NCW Office on 21248881/99291936.