

The dynamism of a university is reflected in the diversity of its activities. While the Annual Report does not reflect each and every area of specialisation available, the *Round-Up* for the years 1999 and 2000 conveys a sense of some of the bustle that is associated with any vibrant institution.

In recent years, we have been stressing more and more, the need for strengthening links with business and industry. Fostering such relations will result in a mutually beneficial dialogue through which the world of work can become acquainted with what the University has to offer and a University sensitive to its needs can adapt accordingly. In this Annual Report, Dr. Godfrey Baldacchino explores the measures taken by the University to adapt to the needs of prospective employers and the career paths taken by our graduates. In any such discussion, specific fields come to mind, engineering and information technology, for example. In order to strike a balance, Dr. Anthony Frendo evaluates the perennial relevance of the Humanities in a technological age.

Conscious of its public role, the University is geared towards the infrastructural and industrial needs of the country so as to provide expertise in crucial fields. The Faculty of Engineering is a prime mover in its search for new partners in industry with which there is ongoing collaboration and its endeavour to forge stronger links with the labour market in general. This is discussed by Dr. Ing. Paul Micallef in his article *Building Bridges with Industry*.

A Socrates Office has recently been established and through it the University also participates in Comenius and Transnational Cooperation Projects (TCP) and its various sub-divisions such as Lingua and Minerva. The implementation of the Fifth Framework Programme is expected to permit participation in collaborative research projects in various fields. Dr. Joseph Mifsud looks at *Europeanisation within the University of Malta*. In the light of the new post-Bologna environment, the University was found to fulfil all the necessary requisites in pre-accession negotiations with Brussels. In contrast, but equally topical, Professor Angela Xuereb examines *Gender and Science at the University* and asks why it is that women in Malta are still, to a great

degree, not inclined towards a career in the sciences.

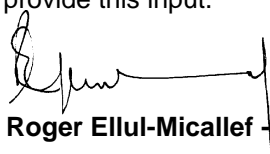
The last year has seen some twenty members of staff obtaining Doctorates in their respective fields from various universities, while a good number completed their Masters. This is of great satisfaction and an achievement for the University.

In an age in which the internationalisation of higher education is becoming of paramount importance, the drive by the International Office to attract more full-time foreign students to the campus is bearing fruit while the implementation of the ECTS has given rise to an increase in the number of exchange students. The *Summer Schools and Short Courses* conducted under the umbrella of the International Office in conjunction with other European universities, have become increasingly more popular. Subjects covered have included art, music, pharmacology (in collaboration with the University of Minnesota), archaeology, anthropology, the Mediterranean Environment and Banking Law which is run together with the *Università La Sapienza, Rome*.

The New Lecture Centre has been completed. This building is now fully operational and is providing much needed lecturing facilities. Another major project, was the third floor extension with lift on the main Administration Building which, in the near future, will considerably extend the existing office space.

The University Library saw a major Senior Management re-structuring. Its Online Public Access Catalogue (OPAC) is now providing an essential service to readers. Harmonisation of the currently existing three types of classification into the Library of Congress system is a current major undertaking.

"Universities and other institutions of higher education need to take on the challenge to build up a compatible, effective system within Europe, and a competitive one towards the rest of the world ...The real challenge is that in Bologna, as already before at the Sorbonne, the higher education community has been invited to make an input." (*Address by Dr. Guy Haug to the EAIE Conference, Maastricht, December, 1999*). I believe that the University of Malta is well poised to provide this input.



Roger Ellul-Micallef - Rector